A tale of one city: actors of globalization versus bakufu hegemony in early modern Nagasaki, c. 1571-1800

Knoest, J.J.A.

満州族の音域

CHAPTER 5

To Be, or Not To Be... Involved?

5.1 Introduction

In 2016, I published part of the preliminary research I conducted for this PhD project in my article: J.J.A. Knoest, "'The Japanese Connection': Self-Organized Smuggling Networks in Nagasaki circa 1666-1742" in Cátia Antunes and Amélia Polónia, eds. *Beyond Empires. Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800*, pp. 88-137. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016. Since then, other scholars have gathered new insights related to the case studies I presented in this article, which led me to revisit and restructure this topic. Incidentally, these case studies concerning the litigation around the illicit arms trade with Korea and China in respectively 1667 and 1676, still proved to be essential in the context of this chapter. Thus, parts of section 5.3 (pages 161-170, 174-177), which contains these case studies, are verbatim representations of the text in "'The Japanese Connection'" (pages 100-120).

The 1640s were a period of rising tensions and possible dangers throughout East Asia. While the *bakufu* was in the final stages of dealing with the Christian threat, other storm clouds were gathering on the horizon. The rise of a Manchu state in the north, early seventeenth century, and their eventual descent into Korea and China proper had the *bakufu* especially worried. While the Koreans were able to keep their independence (albeit as a vasal-state), by 1644 the Chinese Great Ming 大明 regime, weakened by multiple internal peasant uprisings, was eventually forced to its knees. The Ming fled to the south of China, where it received the support of the Zheng family, who, with bands of pirates and seafaring merchants, had carved out a vast (Ming-based legitimate) maritime empire for themselves that stretched across the Chinese Sea from Japan to Luzon (Philippines), Annam (Vietnam) and Ayutthaya (Thailand), encompassing holdings of various cities within the Chinese province Fujian, and on the island of Formosa.[376] In their fight against the Manchu, who eventually established the Qing 清 dynasty in China, the Ming and the Zheng repeatedly requested aid from the polities around them.

Although there were many elements, both in Nagasaki and Edo, that heavily sympathized with the Ming, the Tokugawa did not haphazardly rush to their aid, but frequently had to deliberate whether it needed to get involved, and if so, in what capacity? Should they send troops, should they send food

376 Hang, *Conflict and Commerce*, pp. 68-69; Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, See Chapter 4.

and weapons, should they limit themselves to only moral support, or none of the above? In the end, the Ming and the Zheng were unable to sustain their empire(s) and slowly but surely the Zheng network operators in Nagasaki began to be replaced by Qing operators. The Ming-Qing transition (c. 1627-1683) was arguably *the* most important East Asian geopolitical event (or more accurately combination of events) of the seventeenth century. As such, it has received much scholarly attention with excellent works from scholars as Ishihara Michihiro, Komiya Kiyora, Ronald Toby, Patrizia Carioti, Hang Xing, and Timothy Romans, who all have studied multiple aspects of Japan's role in this event's various stages.

This chapter aims to contribute to this topic by assessing the involvement and the degree of organization in these events of individual actors operating both within institutions as well as self-organized networks. The common idea is that in order to maximize their profits, people of different backgrounds engage in relationships with each other outside the formal system of institutions (bureaucracy, legal codes, tribunals et cetera). In their inventive work on cross-cultural trade, Philip Curtin and Avner Greif stressed the importance of trust enforced through the circulation of information, and group identity such as blood ties, shared religion and ethnicity within these networks.[377] Francesca Trivellato challenged this conventional understanding of commission agency by revealing that merchants without shared blood, kinship, or ethnic affiliations formed commercial alliances across categories of collective identity, often in contravention of legal prohibitions. These relationships proved crucial to the success of their partnerships and emerged in areas where legal safeguards for property rights were inadequate.[378] More recently, Cátia Antunes moved even further beyond this idea. She argues for the existence of so-called 'free agents', who organized themselves in cooperation-based informal networks, moving both outside and within the institutions of empires, defying state-monopolies in order to safeguard their personal economic interests, often doing so by means of illegality (contraband, smuggling, privateering), defiance (personal alliances with state competitors), and litigation (suing monopolies).[379]

377 Curtain, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*, pp. 1-3, 5-7; Greif, "Cultural beliefs and the organization of society", pp. 912-914, 942-943.

378 Trivellato, *The familiarity of Strangers*, pp. 3-4, 8, 10-11.

379 Antunes, "Free Agents and Formal Institutions", pp 174, 180-181, 185.

Not only did the events of the Ming-Qing transition, and – more importantly – the choices and actions of individual actors herein, play a crucial part in transforming the global networks in Nagasaki, they also demonstrate that, either *purposely*, *unintentionally*, *knowingly*, or *unknowingly*, the *bakufu* left a certain amount of discretionary authority in the hands of the Nagasaki community with regard to diplomacy, defense, and economic policy. There is no denying that after the definitive defeat of the Zheng in 1683, both the Qing government and the *bakufu* sought more control over the China trade in Nagasaki. This not only changed the composition and position of the global networks active in Nagasaki, it also presented other ways in which *bakufu* authority in Nagasaki was being challenged.

5.2 Japan and the Geopolitical Turmoil of the Ming-Qing Cataclysm

Tokugawa Standpoint(s) on the Manchu Threat and Military Aid

Late sixteenth century, as the Imjin War was raging between Japan on the one side and Chosŏn Korea and Ming China on the other, Nurhachi (1559-1626) had free reign to unite the Jianzhou Jurchen (*Jiàn zhōu nǚzhēn* 建州女真) into the Aisin Gurun (Later Jin *Hòu Jīn* 後金, 1616-1636), who occupied the Liaodong territory between China proper, the Mongolian Khanate and Chosŏn Korea.[380] The Koreans had always been in a somewhat difficult position with the Jurchen on their border, with regular skirmishes that reaffirmed or adjusted the parameters of the relationship. In order to be better prepared for theses border skirmishes, the Koreans had been importing Japanese weaponry, such as long swords, muskets and gunpowder, for quite some time. For a long time, this worked quite well till after their unification the Jurchen had set their sights on expansion. The Jurchen needed to establish a secure base from which to attack China proper, which meant it did not want to worry about a Chosŏn front at its back. Therefore, the Jurchen pushed for a treaty after a show of force during the invasion of 1627. As a result, the treaty, albeit loosely enforced, was signed and rituals performed to show Chosŏn was the party with lesser status in this

380 Kim, *Ginseng and Borderlands*, p. 2.

relationship. As a result of the early threat of the Later Jing and the treaty of 1627, Han Myŏng'gi argues that the Koreans were forced to redefine their relationship with Tokugawa Japan. On the one hand they were still suspicious of Japan as an enemy so soon after the Imjin war, but on the other hand they started to see that they might need Japan to counter-balance their relationship with the Later Jin (and afterwards the Qing).[381]

When Pusan reports of the Jurchen invasion of Korea in 1627 finally reached Japan, it caused somewhat of a stir among *bakufu* officials. According to Ronald Toby, shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu sent Tōdō Takatora 藤堂高虎 (1556-1630) on a reconnaissance mission to Seoul, with a message to the Tsushima daimyo that he would send Japanese troops to help resist the invading Jurchen if Seoul was still in military danger. In spite of shogunal edicts issued in 1621, Tsushima was already heavily involved in the arms trade with Chosŏn Korea, and, anticipating Iemitsu's reaction, had already offered 200 *catties* of gunpowder and 500 Japanese long swords to the Korean king. Although the war materials were accepted, the Korean king refused the offer of Japanese troops no matter how strong the Jurchen were, giving the excuses that there was no precedence for such an act. Given the fact that only three decades earlier, with the greatest difficulty and loss of life, Korea had repelled a Japanese invasion from its country, it is not difficult to see the threat of another possible Japanese invasion as the real reason why the Korean king did not want any Japanese soldiers on his soil.[382] Meanwhile, under Nurhachi's son, Hong Taiji 皇太極 (1592-1643), the Jurchen, the Manchus, Mongols, and several Hang Chinese were consolidated into the Qing dynasty, which identified predominantly as Manchu. At this time, the Korean king was required to make a show of fealty to the new Qing emperor, which was harshly refused. As a result, Korea was invaded a second time and decisively defeated in 1636. Hostages were taken and the Qing put pressure on the Korean king to comply with Qing demands or face being replaced.[383] There were some within the Korean court that opted for Japanese intervention in order to check the Qing, but at the same time Qing agents also pushed the Koreans to persuade Japan to come over to their side.

381 Han, *Chŏngmyo, Pyŏngja Horan kwa Tong Asia*, pp. 17-20, 263-267, 286, 292, 299.

382 Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, pp. 112-113, 117; Han, *Chŏngmyo, Pyŏngja Horan kwa Tong Asia*, pp. 262, 271, 309.

383 Kim, *Ginseng and Borderlands*, p. 2; Han, *Chŏngmyo, Pyŏngja Horan kwa Tong Asia*, pp. 161-168.

All the while, Korea had not completely broken-off with the Ming neither. For Korean officials these geopolitical developments required walking a delicate and very dangerous tightrope.[384]

Even though eventually the Koreans may have had no wish for active Japanese involvement, the opposite was true for the Ming loyalists in China. In 1645, about a year after Beijing had fallen to the Manchus, a Chinese merchant arrived in Nagasaki with two letters from Ming loyalists, in which they asked the Japanese government for 3.000 troops and 200 pieces of artillery in support of the Ming cause. This initiated lively debate in Edo, after which an official reply was sent back to Nagasaki stating that the request was not filed according to the proper protocol, and thus could not be taken into consideration. According to Ishihara Michihiro, although the *bakufu* officially denied the request, privately plans were drawn up for an invasion of the Chinese coast line and the mobilization of daimyo and samurai across western Japan.[385] Although there are no sources that describe the decision-making process behind the curtains of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, there is, however, correspondence between some of the participants of these debates and their relatives and retainers that shed some light on the case.

Toby, shows us a letter dated the twelfth day of the first month (1646), in which Itakura Shigemune 板倉重宗 (1586-1657) writes to his nephew Itakura Shigenori 板倉重矩 (1617-1673) that Iemitsu had contemplated sending a force of 20.000 troops to the Chinese coast in order to establish fortifications and then push further inland.[386] However, according Patrizia Carioti, the phrasing in this letter clearly shows this expedition was not so much about Japan helping the Ming against the Qing, but rather was meant to "subjugate the Great Ming". Whether Iemitsu was behind this plan to conquer mainland China or if it was a private idea by Itakura Shigemune remains unclear.[387] One month later, Tachibana Tadashige 立花忠茂 (1612-1675), lord of the Yanagawa domain, wrote to one of his retainers that he thought it highly unlikely a Japanese expeditionary force would be sent to China, but if requests kept coming from more reliable sources, Iemitsu might just send one, and, if so,

384 Han, *Chŏngmyo, Pyŏngja Horan kwa Tong Asia*, pp. 341-342, 351-359.
385 Ishihara, *Minmatsu Shinsho Nihon kisshi no kenkyū*, pp. 31-38.
386 Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, p. 122-126.
387 Carioti, "Asking for Japanese Intervention", pp. 160-162.

he wanted to go with it! Therefore, his retainer had to purchase weapons just in case.[388]

New requests did indeed come in 1646. According to Toby, an envoy of the Longwu 隆武 pretender (Zhu Yujian 朱聿鍵, 1602-1646) and his main supporter Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍 (1594?-1661) was sent to Nagasaki; the letters with requests for Japanese military aid were forwarded to Edo; and renewed discussion about involvement ensued. This time, representatives of the three shogunal houses of Owari 尾張, Kii 紀伊 and Mito 水戸, as well as Ii Naotaka 井伊直孝 (1590-1659) were in favor of sending an expeditionary force. They even wanted to ask the Koreans for permission of safe passage, which the Tsushima lord Sō Yoshinari 宗義成 (1604-1657) argued against. Yoshinari pleaded, Korea had still not recovered from the Manchu invasion of 1636 and was in no position to provide provisions for the Japanese expeditionary force on its way to China. Moreover, other unnamed opponents of these plans also argued such actions would only create more enemies for Japan.[389] According to Carioti, however, this envoy – who maintained good connections with the Shimazu during his pirate days – did not go to Nagasaki, but straight to Satsuma. Without asking permission from Edo, the Shimazu immediately agreed to send a military contingent of 30.000 troops within a few months. When a few months later the envoy returned to verify the promise, it appeared the agreement had been nullified and Carioti argues it is fair to assume that the *bakufu* had vetoed any military operation.[390]

Whether it was to render assistance to the Ming or to subjugate them, scholars generally believe that, in any case, behind the scenes there was a plan to send troops to China. They believe the reasons why this plan was never acted upon have everything to do with the circumstances under which the requests arrived and the development of the war effort in the field. After the fall of Beijing in 1644, the legitimate Ming emperor had perished and many pretenders claimed the Ming throne. The correspondence of Tachibana Tadashige suggests Iemitsu was not about to send reinforcements to illegitimate Ming rulers. However, evidence presented by Carioti indicates that exactly this

388 Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, pp. 122-126.

389 Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, pp. 126-128, 130-131; Carioti, "Asking for Japanese Intervention", pp. 164-165.

390 Carioti, "Asking for Japanese Intervention", pp. 163-164.

situation with illegitimate Ming rulers might warrant a Japanese force to conquer (former) Ming territory. Before any action could be taken, however, news reached Edo of the death of the Longwu pretender and the capitulation of Zheng Zhilong to the Qing. If the Japanese force was meant as aid, there was no more point now, and if it was meant for conquest, the battle situation just changed too much for the *bakufu* to blindly send soldiers into China. In the case of the requests made to Satsuma, Carioti argues Iemitsu could not let Satsuma autonomously join the fight against the Qing, nor could he risk a mobilization of Satsuma's impressive army, in case the Satsuma decided to go after the Tokugawa instead of the Qing. By this time the *bakufu* was still in its consolidation phase. Therefore, Carioti claims that from the *bakufu*'s point of view any notions on intervention reflected Japanese central-local power struggles rather than a concrete plan for invading China. She also points to the significance of the troop sizes. Iemitsu was said to have been planning for a force of 20.000 soldiers and the Shimazu for 30.000, concluding that Tokugawa military power alone was not so impressive.[391]

Komiya Kiyora has likewise pointed to domestic developments to take into consideration. Around the 1640s, waning economic conditions had caused a drop in rice prices, which in turn stimulated the growth of the number of masterless samurai (*rōnin* 浪人) in society, which roamed the various cities. The ideology of this group focused especially on military prowess to make up for their lack in economic success. Upon hearing rumors of a possible expedition force to China, many of these *rōnin* wanted to partake. Many sources that mention a possible expedition echo these rumors and Komiya argues that while most daimyo felt they needed to show loyalty and be ready for one of Iemitsu's famous sudden changes of heart, none of them actually thought there would be an expedition, because such an expedition carried a huge potential for failure of various kinds. Although the call for such action became increasingly louder among the *rōnin*, Iemitsu had to be careful not to make a decision that could potentially undermine Tokugawa authority. Even though the few disgruntled rebellious groups of *rōnin* that started to emerge, were quickly neutralized by the *bakufu*, domestic concerns must have won out over foreign concerns.[392]

391 Ibid.

392 Komiya, "Meishin kōtai-ki bakufu gaikō no shakai-teki zentei", pp. 236-238, 256-264.

Nevertheless, the *bakufu* wanted to remain informed about developments at the front, and Sō Yoshinari was ordered to gather intelligence from Korea. In his work *State and Diplomacy*, Toby shows us how difficult this proved to be for the Tsushima daimyo. The Korean interpreters, who were on a mission to Tsushima, refused to share information, claiming they were not authorized to discuss such matters. Over the coming months, Yoshinari frantically tried to have the Koreans cooperate, for he feared their unwillingness to provide information started to jeopardize his position as intermediary, and perhaps the entire Japanese-Korean relation. In the meantime, people in Edo started to notice the tardiness of the Koreans in providing the information, and began to question Yoshinari's competence. In addition, people began wandering if Korea perhaps had been compromised and had become a vassal state of the Qing (which technically it already was since 1636). Whether true or not, Yoshinari had suggested to the Korean court that their tardiness had irritated the *rōjū* to such an extent, they were now considering sending an army to Korea. In the end, the Koreans gave in and sent the report. According to Toby, although the report was extensive, it did not contain much new information for the *bakufu*. It did however accomplish to show that Yoshinari was able to perform, saving his position as Tsushima lord, and mediator with Korea.[393]

Since no new information came to light, it seems that the invasion plans for China were now permanently shelved. This did not mean, however, that the *bakufu* lost interest in the military developments in China, nor did it mean that no more requests for help were coming in. Up until the final demise of the Ming and the Zheng in 1683, the Zheng kept sending requests for aid to Japan. Officially all these requests were denied as well. However, scholars have found indications that behind the scenes, individuals in Nagasaki, whether condoned by the *bakufu* or not, were organizing help for the Zheng on private initiative.

393 Toby, *State and Diplomacy*, pp. 131-136; According to Han Myŏng'gi, the Koreans decided to cooperate with these information requests in order not to jeopardize their Japan-relation. Especially now that more people began to see Japan as a possible counterweight to the Qing. See: Han, *Chŏngmyo, Pyŏngja Horan kwa Tong Asia*, pp. 275, 355-359.

5.3 Central Institutions, Self-Organized Networks, and Covert Operations

Nagasaki's Chinese Community and the Zheng Network

For centuries, (ca. 300-1600), 'Japanese pirates' (*J. Wakō, Ch. Wōkòu, K. Waegu* 倭寇) have stood at the center of (East) Asian maritime affairs. This name, however, is somewhat misleading, as according to the current leading theory these pirate bands, groups and organizations consisted of a myriad of different peoples from multiple political and economically unstable Asian coastal regions. Yet there were pirates who had their most important bases of operation located on the Japanese islands of Hirado and Tsushima, from where they mostly raided the Korean and South Chinese coasts.[394] However, not all those deemed pirates where necessarily violent plunderers. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Ming banned maritime movement for its subjects. Since the bulk of its revenue came from agricultural taxes, the court did not see any direct reason to allow trade activities outside the strict limits of official tributary missions. In the eyes of the Ming court such maritime activities with foreigners posed an uncontrollable security risk. Whereas during the Song 宋 and Yuan 元 dynasties common people from China's coastal regions established overseas trade networks to supplement their insufficient agricultural production, under the Ming maritime ban they suddenly became smugglers and pirates.[395]

One such a band, under the leadership of the Chinese Li Dan, was operating out of Hirado and controlled the maritime route between Fujian, Formosa, and Japan. Among its associates was a young Chinese called Zheng Zhilong, who acted as Dan's agent in Nagasaki, where he quickly became friends with the wealthy merchant Suetsugu Heizō Masanao and other high placed Nagasaki officials. Not long after, Zhilong was relocated to Hirado where he continued to build relations with local high placed Japanese and foreign merchants. There he also met and married Tagawa Matsu 田川松 (1601-1647), the daughter of a low foot soldier.

394 Lim, *Lineage Society on the Southeastern Coast of China*, pp. 10-12; Toyama, *Hizen Matsura ichizoku*, pp. 110-118.

395 Chang, "The Sea as Arable Fields", pp. 22-23; Danjō, "Mindai 'Kaikin' no jitsuzō", pp. 145-149.

Their union brought forth a son, Zheng Chenggong, but a few months after the birth of his son, Zhilong was send to Formosa by Li Dan to assist in the restoration of 'smuggling' operations between the island and the Chinese mainland. As an early Christian convert, he had quickly learned Portuguese and now earned his stripes as a mercenary and interpreter in the service of the VOC. In 1626, while Zhilong was away on Formosa, Matsu gave birth to another (probably illegitimate) son, Tagawa Shichizaemon 田川七左衛門 (1626-1696) After the demise of Li Dan in 1625, Zhilong eventually managed to take (partial) control over the former's organization and used it to harass the Fujian coast. In the pirate wars that followed, the Zheng organization managed to defeat the Ming navy, after which Zheng Zhilong was offered an official Ming position and a firm base in Fujian in an attempt to curtail the other pirate bands. With Ming legitimacy behind his organization, Zheng Zhilong managed to extend his raiding and trading activities far across the China Sea. Most of his spoils found their way to Nagasaki where his good friend Suetsugu Heizō Masanao provided a market for them. According to Hang Xing, as was custom in maritime China, Zhilong had taken another wife, who managed his affairs on the Chinese mainland, while Matsu was taking care of his business in Nagasaki and Hirado. In 1630, Zhilong took Chenggong back with him to China, and would send for Matsu in 1645. Shichizaemon, on the other hand, never left Japan.[396]

After Zheng Zhilong surrendered to the Qing in 1646, his son Chenggong became the new head of the organization. It is often claimed that his embrace of his partial Japanese heritage, his organizational skills, his reliability as a trading partner, and his fight against the Qing as a Ming loyalist made Zheng Chenggong quite popular among many layers of Japanese society. For example, after Chenggong sent a congratulatory note in 1651 to the new shogun Tokugawa Ietsuna 徳川家綱 (1641-1680), Hang Xing argues that Ietsuna reciprocated by agreeing to an unspecified formal relationship with Chenggong, which according to Chinese narratives took the form of a fictional nephew-uncle relationship with Ietsuna performing the role of uncle. However, he also states there were no mutual embassies between them nor any other documentation to verify the exact nature of that relationship.[397] Moreover, Hang also beautifully displays, how

396 Yao, "Yooroppa seiryoku to Jō-shi ichizoku", pp. 165-168; Hang, "The Shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 114-115, 118.

397 Hang, "The Shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 119-120.

Zeng Chenggong expanded his organization's influence into Nagasaki, where he had set up his half-brother Shichizaemon in Moto-Hakata no machi 本博多町 as the main Zheng agent. When independent Chinese merchants wanted to make use of the Zheng-controlled shipping lanes to Nagasaki, they were required to purchase a pass from Shichizaemon, who would then deposit these at the *bugyō* office, which in turn would assist in the enforcement of payment. The proceeds of this trade in passes would go to the Zheng organization. If Chinese merchants did not purchase such a pass, they faced bankruptcy and harsh repercussions back in China. According to Hang, however, it appears that Shichizaemon might have taken bribes from Chinese traders to circumvent these passes. At the same time, Chenggong placed his older clan brother Zheng Tai 鄭泰 (?-1663) in charge of the organization's finances in Xiamen 厦門. In the early years, Tai had often frequented Nagasaki as a Zheng merchant, and during his stay he had forged meaningful connections with several *machidoshiyori* and Chinese interpreters to the extent that as head of Zheng finances he had stored 300.000 *taels* of the organization's silver at the Chinese interpreters guild in Nagasaki.[398] Moreover, the Zheng organization used the forged relations throughout the levels of the Nagasaki hierarchy to protect their shipping network from predatory actions by the VOC in the form of court cases, which were always decided on in favor of the Zheng (see chapter 3). In combination with the vast fleet of the Zheng organization and the steady flow of products that were even coming from Qing-occupied territory, the Zheng managed to make Japan economically dependent to a certain degree.

Zheng Chenggong tried to further utilize these connections by once more requesting the *bakufu* military aid in his fight against the Qing.[399] Even though all requests were officially denied by the *bakufu*, Scholars such as Ishihara Michihiro, Patrizia Carioti, and Hang Xing have pointed to the number of weapons and war materials, present among the cargo of Chinese ships leaving Nagasaki, as well as the large contingents of Japanese troops in Japanese armor fighting in Zheng Chenggong's campaigns, as proof that behind the scenes the Chinese community in Nagasaki was vigorously laboring to provide aid for the Ming cause. Every Chinese in Nagasaki was registered at one of the Chinese temples and these temples acted as meeting grounds for conversations and important decision

398 Hang, "The Shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 120-122,

399 Carioti, "Nagasaki no Tōjin shakai", pp. 97, 99-101; Matsui, "Nagasaki Dejima to Tōjinyashiki", pp. 383-384.

making. The Chinese interpreters (many of whom had Chinese roots) were appointed as overseers in a mutual responsibility system, with a reserved role for Chinese literati who had come to Nagasaki as fugitives. According to Ishihara, Zheng Chenggong had repeatedly asked one of these refugees, called Zhu Zhiyu 朱之瑜 (1600-1682, also known as Zhu Shunshui 朱舜水) to request Japanese daimyo in the vicinity of Nagasaki for military aid. During the late 1640s and 1650s, praised for his scholarship, Shunshui had established connections with some in Japan's highest circle, who arranged permission for him to stay in Nagasaki and later even got him a position in the Mito domain. Through his connections Shunshui met many influential people in Edo, and robustly lobbied for Zheng Chenggong.[400] Although he could not manage to arrange troops, he did manage to secure, either officially or unofficially, shipments of weapons and other war materials for him from Nagasaki. Therefore, according to Ishihara these Japanese troops in the service of Chenggong most likely consisted of Japanese from the overseas diaspora who were unable to return to Japan after the edicts of the 1630s.[401]

Although Hang likewise agrees to the high possibility that the Japanese fighting in the ranks of Chenggong were members of the overseas diaspora, he does inform us of interrogation reports by Korean officials on Cheju-do of crews from shipwrecked junks in 1667, which mention that among the crews of these ships people were found wearing Chinese and Japanese garments. These reports claim that although Chenggong's requests for aid in 1658 were denied by the *bakufu*, nevertheless 'Japan' raised a huge expeditionary force in 1660. According to Hang, 'Japan' could refer to the *bakufu*, a coalition of daimyo, or the Chinese community in Nagasaki. Members from this community went along as guides and crew members. The plan was for this force to attack Beijing from the sea, while Chenggong would attack from the north (making Korea perhaps an important part of this plan). However, Hang admits such a force would have made little sense since Chenggong's northern campaign had already ended in disaster in 1659; this was, incidentally, the main reason why the *bakufu* had denied the request, but did

400 Ishihara, *Shu Shunshui*, pp. 101-104, 124-181.

401 Ishihara, *Minmatsu Shinsho Nihon kisshi no kenkyū*, pp. 39-40, 54, 57-60, 443-458; Ishihara, *Kokusen'ya*, pp. 40-41; Carioti, likewise, argues that through mediation and lobbying of the Chinese community Chenggong was at least able to get weapons, ammunition, grain, and other materials for his campaigns. Many of the Ming literati had escaped to Nagasaki and labored to gain support among Japan's upper classes, who were very inclined towards Chinese civilization, for the Ming loyalist cause. See: Carioti, "Nagasaki no Tōjin shakai", pp. 97, 99-101.

permit the delivery of armaments. Yet, for Hang, these reports provide enough evidence to state that Japanese mercenaries were traveling from Japan to the Chinese coast in one capacity or another. He further states the possibility that the *bakufu* was involved passively behind the scenes by condoning things otherwise prohibited. This way the *bakufu* had plausible deniability.[402]

Although (some in) the Chinese community might have had the real intention of helping the Zheng, Komiya Kiyora has argued that the motives of the western daimyo – whom they were asking for help – were less altruistic. For them the Ming-Qing conflict mostly presented good business opportunities. With rice prices in Japan being low and rice prices skyrocketing in China, there was real money to be made in war profiteering, which in turn strengthened their position.[403] Since these fugitive Chinese literati now started to increasingly mix in local political processes, it feels only natural the *bakufu* might have perceived this as a dangerous development. Let us now first turn to two examples of 'free agent' activity in seventeenth century Japan to add a little more perspective to the assessments presented above.[404]

Itō Kozaemon: The (Illicit) Arms Trade with Chosŏn Korea, 1667

These Korean reports incidentally coincided with one of the most famous Japanese smuggling cases of the seventeenth century. During the years 1662-1666 a large smuggling ring operated between Tokugawa Japan and Chosŏn Korea. In 1667 their activities came to light after one or more subordinates of Eguchi Iemon 江口伊右衛門 reported the undertakings of their master to the authorities of the Yanagawa domain. (Iemon was originally from the Yanagawa domain, but had taken up residency in the Hama district of Nagasaki).[405] According to the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* they claimed that: "[…] our master Iemon, and people like him were secretly shipping a plentitude of weapons and horse equipment to Chosŏn Korea, and for many years we conducted business for him."[406] After the investigations were concluded, five people were crucified,

402 Hang, "The Shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 121-125.
403 Komiya, "Meishin kōtai-ki bakufu gaikō no shakai-teki zentei", pp. 247-248, 250.
404 The next two sections are slightly revised and expanded versions of my previously published article Knoest, "'The Japanese Connection'".
405 *KBKEMSK*, p. 301; *NSHKC*, 1: p. 2; *TKIR*, 3: p. 515.
406 *KBKEMSK*, p. 301.

fourteen people were decapitated with their heads put on display on top of the prison gates, eighteen people received capital punishment, fifty-one people were banished, and six people were pardoned. With a total as high as ninety-four, this case involved the highest number of people under interrogation by far compared to the other cases between the years 1666-1700.[407]

Japanese scholars often focus on the person Itō Kozaemon 伊藤小左衛門, who is frequently argued to have been the ringleader of the operation.[408] Although Japanese and Dutch sources merely refer to a single person called Itō Kozaemon, scholars Toyama Mikio and Egoshi Hiroto state that most likely there have been two people with this name: Itō Kozaemon Yoshitsugu 伊藤小左衛門吉次 (dates unknown), and his son Itō Kozaemon Yoshinao 伊藤小左衛門吉直 (?-1667).[409] The Itō family moved to the city of Hakata in the Fukuoka domain around 1600, and accumulated a vast fortune in the Vermilion-seal trade and other business ventures such as the iron trade in Hiroshima 広島 and Izumo 出雲. It was not long before Itō Kozaemon Yoshitsugu gained the patronage of the Kuroda 黒田 family, the lords of the Fukuoka fiefdom. Together with the wealthy merchant Ōga Sōhaku 大賀宗伯 (dates unknown) he was appointed to *go-yōshōnin* 御用商人, and as such they played an important part in the domain's official every-day commerce, foreign trade, mining, forestry et cetera.[410] In addition, according to Takeno Yōko, the Itō family made several meaningful connections with other powerful merchants in Fukuoka. For example, Itō Kozaemon (presumably Yoshitsugu) married the daughter of Suetsugu Munetoku 末次宗徳, who ran the Suetsugu family head-branch in Hakata and was the older brother of Nagasaki *daikan* Suetsugu Heizō. Munetoku also moved to Nagasaki at some point and became one of the *Dejima-chōnin*. Besides establishing strong marital ties to the upper circles of Nagasaki, Kozaemon also entered into partnerships with Tsuruta Mune'etsu 鶴田宗悦 (dates unknown), and Nishimura Ryōkei 西村良慶 (dates

407 The *Kaban kōeki meisaiki*, the *Tsūkō Ichiran*, and the *Hankachō* have several discrepancies in the number of people, the characters in which their names are written, their origin, and the number of punishments. In cases of doubt, I follow the *Hankachō*, because I believe that this text has the closest relation to the events.

408 Toyama, *Nagasaki Bugyō*, p. 146; Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, p. 138; *KBKEMSK*, p. 301.

409 Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, p. 138; Toyama, *Nagasaki Bugyō*, p. 146.

410 *Goyōshōnin* are merchants who act as purveyors to the government, in this case the government of the Fukuoka Domain.

unknown), who had belonged to the Matsura-tō 松浦党 pirate organization of the sixteenth century. During its heydays, the Itō family business is said to have had branches in Ashiya 芦屋, Aoyagi 青柳, Iki 壱岐, Tsushima 対馬, Gotō 五島, and Kŏje-do 巨済島 (a Korean island next to Cheju-do).[411]

In the late 1640s the Fukuoka and Saga domains were made responsible for the defense of Nagasaki against foreign invasions, and on the basis of alternating duty years they had to provide garrisons, pay the upkeep for the coastal batteries in the Nagasaki area, and were obliged to station troops in and around the city. Throughout two centuries of coastal defense service, their core duties came to include three main tasks: the defense of the city of Nagasaki; the enforcement of *bakufu* anti-smuggling regulations in the waters surrounding Nagasaki, and the defense of the Dutch merchants at their Nagasaki trading post.[412] Scholars such as Harold Bolitho, George Tsukahira, and Noell Wilson have argued that although the main goal was the establishment of coastal defenses, this was also used by the *bakufu* to keep the various powerful Kyushu daimyo in check by burdening them financially. According to Wilson:

> As much as the Nagasaki assignment was a privilege, given the additional access to Nagasaki trade and information networks the duty afforded Fukuoka and Saga, it was also a fiscal and manpower burden that in many years monopolized as much as 15 per cent of domainal expenditures. In addition to making three annual processions to Nagasaki during on-duty years, the Fukuoka and Saga *daimyō* were required to maintain Nagasaki residences, as in Edo, with permanent "intelligence" staff.[413]

Not long after the Fukuoka domain was burdened with Nagasaki's coastal defense, the domain got into economic difficulties. During this time apparently it was Itō Kozaemon Yoshitsugu who came to the rescue with financial aid. In gratitude for his services, the lord of the Fukuoka domain, Kuroda Tadayuki 黒田忠之 (1602-1654),[414] rewarded Kozaemon with a stipend for fifty men.[415] This is remarkable

411 Takeno, "Kokusen'ya to Hakata shōnin Itō Kozaemon", p. 12.
412 Wilson, *Defensive Positions*, p. 4.
413 Wilson, "Tokugawa Defense Redux", p. 7.
414 Most Fukuoka daimyo held the title Chikuzen no kami 筑前守 and the honorary name (and title) Matsudaira Emon-sa 松平右衛門佐 and are often referred to as such in the sources.
415 Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, pp. 138-139.

because stipends were usually reserved for the samurai caste.

In the 1640s, just as many other wealthy Hakata merchants had done, Itō Kozaemon Yoshitsugu had extended his business to the city of Nagasaki and opened up a branch in the Gotō district. In 1647, he had provided the Fukuoka domain with the necessary armaments for their harbor guard duties, but at the same time he was also among the merchants who pleaded for reinstatement of the Portuguese trade, in which the Itō family had been a long-time participant.[416] In addition, he soon expanded his business to the Dutch as well. When on July 29, 1652, Kuroda Tadayuki visited the Dutch on *Dejima*, Itō Kozaemon was amongst his entourage. According to the chief of the Dutch trading post:

> Among the group was a powerful and rich Hakata merchant by the name of Itō Kozaemon-dono. He dared not place himself before the lowliest of their servants, but sat at the back, notwithstanding that the amount of money that he can spend yearly is as many thousands of taels as most of them can spend in candareens. The interpreters and the *otona* confirmed that he has a capital of more than 700.000 taels of silver. I have only added this to demonstrate the low esteem this proud nation has for such a powerful merchant compared to a miserable and poor soldier.[417]

That Itō Kozaemon Yoshitsugu was there with a specific purpose becomes apparent from an entry in the *Deshima Diaries*. On September 5, 1652, the Dutch agreed with Itō Kozaemon that by October 15, 1652 he would try to supply them with 12.000 *taels* in cash with an interest rate of 14 *maas* per 1.000 *taels*. This cash was meant for the Dutch trading post in Tonkin, which had placed the order at the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki. In other words, Itō Kozaemon would act here as a moneylender to the VOC, though it remains uncertain if this deal truly materialized for there is no trace of it in the trade ledgers surrounding this period.[418] Besides these activities, as Takeno Yōko mentions, after the Qing cut off the Zheng organization's access to the ceramic production areas

416 Takeno, *Han bōeki-shi no kenkyū*, pp. 223-237; Wilson, *Defensive Positions*, pp. 59-60.

417 Viallé and Blussé, *The Deshima Dagregisters 1650-1660*, p. 73. (Translation by Viallé and Blussé).

418 Viallé and Blussé, *The Deshima Dagregisters 1650-1660*, p. 79; NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 851-853 "Negotie Journalen 1651-1654".

of the Jingdezhen region in 1647, the Zheng started to export Imari porcelain in bulk through the Chinese Kōfuku temple in Nagasaki, which in turn had frequent business dealings with the Itō family, for which the latter were allowed to use the Fukuoka mansion in Nagasaki.[419] Somewhere around this time, Itō Kozaemon Yoshinao must have taken control of the family business from his father. He left the main branch in Hakata in the hands of his eldest son Jinjūrō 甚十朗 (?-1667), after which he went to Nagasaki to take care of the branch in the Gotō district.[420]

Although the secondary literature provides us with insights into Itō Kozaemon's background, when it comes to the actual smuggling case, it is usually just listings with a number of people affiliated to the case that are provided, which include some of their names, some of the places of their origin, and a number of various punishments. However, when taking a closer look at the criminal records we can paint a more detailed picture. Compiled from the profiles of each individual suspect, Table 3 (page 212) shows the specifics of this case. When we look at this table, we see that between the years 1662-1666 a total of seven ships had been equipped, two of which never reached Korea and had to return mid-way due to bad weather conditions. Furthermore, we can see that the composition of the network changed on a yearly basis. Some of the financiers were committed to investing across multiple years, and some of the crew made the journey more than once as well. However, people usually did not participate longer than three years. Most of the early investors originated from the city of Hakata, and Tsushima (the domain that was sanctioned by the *bakufu* to maintain official relations with Korea). By 1665-1666 many investors from (mainly) Nagasaki and other parts of Kyushu also became involved. When these investors did not go with the ships themselves, they usually sent one of their servants along as a supercargo or hired somebody from their home territory for this job. There are two exceptions. In 1664, Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門 employed Denemon 伝右衛門 from Shinozaki 篠崎 as his supercargo. However, Kakuemon may not have trusted him completely for he also employed Kumamoto Jibei 熊本次兵衛 from Tsushima. Most likely he had sold to some Korean(s) on credit at least once, because he commissioned this Kumamoto

419 Takeno, "Kokusen'ya to Hakata shōnin Itō Kozaemon", pp. 10-11; Takeno, "Kuroda-shi no bōeki", p. 158.

420 Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, 138-139.

Jibei to go to Korea on his behalf and collect the debt on these accounts.[421] In 1666, Harano Yoichizaemon 原野与市左衛門 from Tsushima commissioned Hachirōzaemon 八郎左衛門 from Aoyanagi as his supercargo, but, at the same time, he also employed Tsunoe Shichirōbe 津野江七郎兵衛 from Tsushima to get a list of commodity prices along with a voucher from the Koreans.[422] In addition to these supercargoes, a contact person and an interpreter, both from Tsushima, usually also tagged along to facilitate dealings with the Koreans.

Although, Itō Kozaemon is often called the ringleader, his name only appears amongst the investors as a major financial backer in the years 1663 and 1664. A more suitable candidate for a central position in this network is Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 from Tsushima, who had taken up residence in Osaka. From 1663 onwards he appears every time as an investor who went with the ships to Korea as his own supercargo. There is also some indication that this smuggling was going on for more than five years, for the *Tsūkō Ichiran* states that Komoda Kanzaemon made the trip to Korea as many as fifteen times.[423] Furthermore, although the *Hankachō* does not tell us exactly what kind of weapons were smuggled, according to the *Tsūkō Ichiran* these weapons amounted to: "50 suits of armor, 100 spears, 10 crates of long swords, regular swords, and short swords, and 200 *kin* 斤 musket gunpowder."[424] Moreover, it also states that it was Komoda Kanzaemon who placed the orders for the suits of armor over the past few years. The authorities tried to establish the identity of the armorer, but "due to various circumstances" this remained unknown.[425] Could it be a strange coincidence that in 1666 a shop hand of Kichibe 吉兵衛, an arms dealer from Sakai, was listed amongst the investors of one of the ships?[426] Furthermore, weapons were not the only things Kanzaemon ordered. One year before the case came to light, he ordered the murder of one of the investors who went by the name *Jingu Sōbe* 神宮惣兵衛.[427] Unfortunately, neither the *Hankachō* nor the *Tsūkō Ichiran* gives us any insight regarding the motive for his murder.

421 *NSHKC*, 1: p. 9.
422 Ibid., p. 8.
423 TKIR, 3: pp. 515-517.
424 There is no mention of actual muskets, but given the popularity of Japanese muskets and the frequency with which these smugglers ventured to Chosŏn Korea it is not inconceivable that the muskets were delivered with a shipment that had not been discovered.
425 TKIR, 3: pp. 515-517.
426 NSHKC, 1: p. 3.
427 Ibid., p. 9.

Let us now turn to the crew of the ships. In the years that Itō Kozaemon invested most of the crewmembers originated from the Fukuoka domain, and more *specifically* from Kozaemon's home base Hakata. Besides Hakata there were also a few seamen employed from Nagasaki, and two from Osaka. In the following year of 1665, almost the entire crew consisted of people from Osaka. The year after that, when Eguchi Iemon from Yanagawa was investing, they commissioned Captain Kizaemon, likewise from Yanagawa, for one of the ships. In this case we know that as captain he was mustering most of the sailors, which resulted in an almost entirely Yanagawa-based crew. For the other ships it seems probable that the captains had a smaller part in picking the crew as their origin differed greatly.[428] Given the geographical background of these people, and seeing as investors Itō Kozaemon (Hakata) and Eguchi Iemon (Yanagawa) had both taken up residence in Nagasaki, and Komoda Kanzaemon (Tsushima) in Osaka, it is likely these three played a central part in bringing these crews together.

428 When looking at the composition of the crew another name of interest pops up, namely that of captain Abiru Yabe 阿比留弥兵衛. The influential Abiru family was counted amongst the so-called '60 merchants' that kept close ties with Chosŏn Korea. See: Tashiro, *Kinsei Nitchō tsūkō bōekishi no kenkyū*, pp. 422-424.

Table 3. The Illicit Arms Trade with Chosŏn Korea (1667)

1662			
	Investors	**Passengers**	**Crew**
Ship 1	Jingu Sōbe 神宮惣兵衛 (Tsushima) Nakajima Rizaemon 中嶋利左衛門 (Tsushima) Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person Hitaka Saburōemon 日高三郎右衛門 (Tsushima) Interpreter – Supercargo –	Captain – Seamen –
1663			
	Investors	**Passengers**	**Crew**
Ship 1	Itō Kozaemon 伊藤小左衛門 (Hakata) Takagi Sōjūrō 高木惣十郎 (Hakata) Zenzaburō 善三郎 (Hakata) Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門 (Tsushima) Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person Yoshida Magobe 吉田孫兵衛 (Tsushima) Interpreter Yasuki Tokube 安木徳兵衛 (Tsushima) Supercargo Kyūbe 久兵衛 (Hakata)[i] Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima)	Captain – Seamen Ichibe 市兵衛 (Hakata) Ichisuke 市助 (Hakata) Magozaemon 孫左衛門 (Hakata) Seisaburō 清三郎 (Hakata) Tarōbe 太郎兵衛 (Hakata) Yosōzaemon 与惣左衛門 (Hakata) Zenzaburō 善三郎 (Hakata)
1664			
	Investors	**Passengers**	**Crew**
Ship 1	Itō Kozaemon 伊藤小左衛門 (Hakata) Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima) Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person Kojima Matabe 小嶋又兵衛 (Tsushima) Yoshida Magobe吉田孫兵衛 (Tsushima) Interpreter Kumamoto Sakuzaemon 熊本作左衛門 (Tsushima) Supercargo Kisaburō 喜三郎 (Hakata)[ii] Denemon 伝右衛門 (Shinozaki)[iii] Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima) Kumamoto Jibe 熊本次兵衛 (Tsushima)[v]	Captain Sebe 瀬兵衛 (Fukuoka) Seamen Magozaemon 孫左衛門 (Hakata) Yosōzaemon 与惣左衛門 (Hakata) Jirōkichi 次郎吉 (Nagasaki) Nizaemon 仁左衛門 (Nagasaki) Chōbei 長兵衛 (Osaka)[iv] Jirō 次郎 (Osaka)
Ship 2 (did not reach destination)	Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門 (Nagasaki) Nakasato Yajiemon 中里弥次右衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person – Interpreter – Supercargo Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門 (Nagasaki)	Captain Abiru Yabe 阿比留弥兵衛 (Tsushima) Seamen Denbei 伝兵衛 (Hakata) Jinsaburō 甚三郎 (Hakata) Heishirō 平四郎 (Hakata) Sakubei 作兵衛 (Hakata) Shichirōemon 七郎右衛門 (Hakata) Kahyōe 加兵衛 (Nagasaki) Kizaemon 喜左衛門 (Nagasaki) Rihyōe 利兵衛 (Obama village) Yahyōe 弥兵衛 (Tsushima) »

[i] servant of Itō Kozaemon 伊藤小左衛門
[ii] servant of Itō Kozaemon 伊藤小左衛門
[iii] agent of Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門
[iv] different persons (cf note vi)
[v] agent of Ōgi Kakuemon 扇角右衛門

1665					
	Investors	**Passengers**		**Crew**	
Ship 1	Magoemon 前野孫右衛門 (Fukuoka, Maeno) Ichiemon 市右衛門 (Fukuoka, Murata) Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門 (Nagasaki) Rokurōemon 六郎右衛門 (Tōtsuki) Kameoka Heiemon 亀岡平右衛門 (Tsushima) Kihara Ichiemon 木原市右衛門 (Tsushima) Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima) Nakasato Yajiemon 中里弥次右衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person Interpreter Supercargo	Kojima Matabe 小嶋又兵衛 (Tsushima) Shiramizu Kiemon 白水喜右衛門 (Tsushima) Kobe 小兵衛 (Fukuoka, Maeno)[vi] Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門 (Nagasaki) Rokurōemon 六郎右衛門 (Tōtsuki) Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima)	Captain Seamen	Sebe 瀬兵衛 (Fukuoka) Kobe 小兵衛 (Fukuoka, Maeno) Nagakura 長蔵 (Hakata) Chōbei 長兵衛 (Osaka)[vii] Heidayū 平太夫 (Osaka) Jinkurō 甚九郎 (Osaka) Jirō 次郎 (Osaka) Saburōbe 三郎兵衛 (Osaka) Shōgorō 庄五郎 (Osaka) Shōzaemon 庄左衛門 (Osaka) Yoshirōbe 四郎兵衛 (Osaka)
1666					
	Investors	**Passengers**		**Crew**	
Ship 1	Gorōemon 五郎右衛門 (Miazaki) Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門 (Nagasaki) Asami Shichizaemon 浅見七左衛門 (Nagasaki) Jingu Sōbe 神宮惣兵衛 (Tsushima) Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima) Eguchi Iemon 江口伊右衛門 (Yanagawa)	Contact person Interpreter Supercargo	Hitaka Saburōemon 日高三郎右衛門 (Tsushima) – Rokuemon 六右衛門 (Nagasak)[viii] Imamura Hanzaemon 今村半左衛門 (Ōkubō)[ix] Denemon 伝右衛門 (Shinozaki)[x] Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門 (Tsushima)	Captain Seamen	Kizaemon 喜左衛門 (Yanagawa) Jihyōe 次兵衛 (Arima, Aoki village) Izaemon 伊左衛門 (Kokura, Yatome village) Kichibe 吉兵衛 (Kokura, Yatome village) Kichizaemon 吉左衛門 (Kokura, Yatome village) Mohei 茂兵衛 (Kokura, Yatome village) Nagaemon 長右衛門 (Yanagawa) Nagazaemon 長左衛門 (Yanagawa) Nizaemon 仁左衛門 (Yanagawa) Rokuzaemon 六左衛門 (Yanagawa) Tokuemon 徳右衛門 (Yanagawa)
Ship 2 (did not reach destination)	Eguchi Jirōsuke 江口次郎助 (Nagasaki) Chihaya Denbe 千早伝兵衛 (Nagasaki) Hachibe 八兵衛 (Nagasaki)[xi] Nakao Yajibe 中尾弥次兵衛 (Nagasaki) Noguchi Kyūzaemon 野口久左衛門 (Nagasaki) Harano Yoichizaemon 原野与市左衛門 (Tsushima)	Contact person Interpreter Supercargo	– – Hachirōzaemon 八郎左衛門 (Aoyanagi)[xii] Noguchi Kyūzaemon 野口久左衛門 (Nagasaki) Tsunoe Shichirōbe 津野江七郎兵衛 (Tsushima)[xiii]	Captain Seamen	Yozaemon 与左衛門 (Himi village) or Shōemon 庄左衛門 (Himi village) Kahyōe 加兵衛 (Himi village) Izaemon 伊左衛門 (Yatsushiro) Kurōzaemon 九郎左衛門 (Yatsushiro)

[vi] servant of Magoemon 孫右衛門
[vii] different persons (cf note iv)
[viii] agent of his elder brother Aburaya Hikōemon 油屋彦右衛門
[ix] servant of Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門
[x] scribe of Komoda Kanzaemon 小茂田勘左衛門
[xi] servant of arms dealer Kichibe 吉兵衛 (Sakai)
[xii] agent of Harano Yoichizaemon 原野与市左衛門
[xiii] agent of Harano Yoichizaemon 原野与市左衛門

Compiled using data from: *NSHKC*, 1: pp. 2-12.

The above shows that each 'business trip' involved multiple investors carrying the financial risk of the enterprise. Together they equipped multiple ships, and brought together a crew. They commissioned supercargoes to protect their investments once it went overseas, and they made use of contact persons and interpreters to facilitate contact. Moreover, some investors even seem to have used systems of credit for sales in Korea. Thus, the way this smuggling network operated did not differ much from other Early Modern trading ventures.[429]

As is often the case with criminal affairs, what gets uncovered might be just the tip of the iceberg. Once again, we return to Itō Kozaemon. It was said that at the time of his arrest Itō Kozaemon Yoshinao had built up a fortune of 80.000 *kanme* (130.000 *ryō* in golden *koban*). For his smuggling offence he was crucified at age forty-nine, his two sons were beheaded, and his possessions confiscated.[430] According to Egoshi Hiroto there had been a rumor that the state of affairs within the Kuroda family played a role in this matter, but if this was the case, Egoshi argues, "then should the enormous wealth of the Itō family not have flowed to the Fukuoka domain?"[431] If not to the Fukuoka domain, then where did Itō Kozaemon's fortune go? In the entries for January 16-19, 1668 of the *Deshima Diaries* the Dutch give us some indication:

> On these dates nothing came to pass other than that we let the interpreters request permission from the governors to commence the [court] journey to Edo on the 20th of February. To this end we also requested permission to pack the goods necessary for the court journey, and permission to borrow money on interest. [Furthermore,] we requested permission to order a batch of boxes for storage of the copper that is to be received coming trade season, and permission to make a contract with the camphor merchant on the quantity we wish to obtain. The interpreters requested to delay these matters for two or three days, since the secretaries of the governors were busy making an inventory of the houses and assets of the people who were executed because of the trade with Korea, and with dividing their wives, children, and servants, who were to

429 For comparisons with the workings of other early modern business ventures see for example: Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*; Antunes, *Globalisation in the Early Modern Period*; Engels, *Merchants, Interlopers, Seamen and Corsairs*; Ina B. McCabe, Harlaftis, and Minoglou, *Diaspora Enterpreneurial Networks*.

430 Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, pp. 138-139; *NSHKC*, 1: p. 2.

431 Egoshi, *Nagasaki no Rekishi*, p. 139.

> be allotted to the ward elders, the interpreters of the Company, and those of the Chinese. This way his Japanese Majesty[432] is confiscating all the goods and assets of those who traded with Korea, and terminates their family [lineages]. One of the merchants who were crucified, named Itō Kozaemon, who frequently traded with the Company, has left as much as 700.000 *taels*, or according to the current rate, 2.450.000 guilders.[433]

Whether or not these numbers are accurate, Itō Kozaemon left a large fortune.[434]

The ones immediately benefiting from Itō Kozaemon's demise seems not to be the Kuroda family, but rather the *bakufu* and local lower Nagasaki officials. No doubt the loss of possible access to such large financial wherewithal must have been some sort of financial setback for the Fukuoka domain. It might be tempting to treat this matter as another power struggle between *bakufu* and domain. Especially, since Noell Wilson has demonstrated that during the investigation the soldiers of the Fukuoka domain were used to police the trial, detain the defendants in the Kuroda mansion in Nagasaki, and acted as witnesses. Wilson argues that these practices demonstrate that the domains responsible for defending the harbor were expanding their responsibilities, and thus their influence. Furthermore, by doing so, they demonstrated the limits of *bakufu* authority in Nagasaki: the need for Fukuoka troops shows that the *bugyō* were actually understaffed, and the use of Fukuoka officials as witnesses during the interrogations and sentencing suggest they were also acting as a legitimizing tool for the judicial decisions of the Nagasaki *bugyō*, implying that without domanial manpower, shogunal law in Nagasaki could not be enforced.[435] Although I agree with Wilson's overall point on the expansion of influence by the Fukuoka and Saga domains through their interpretation of coastal defense duties at the expense of Tokugawa authority in

---

432 This refers to the Japanese shogun.

433 NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 81, "Deshima Dagregister 1667-1668", no page numbers (English Translation by J.J.A. Knoest).

434 To give an indication of his wealth, assuming the numbers regarding Itō Kozaemon's fortune are correct: if we look at the Dutch Republic the richest family was the Orange family with *f*25.000.000, the second wealthiest person was Hans Willem Bentinck with *f*11.000.000, and the third richest person was Elisabeth Tiellens with *f*1.900.000. In other words, Itō Kozaemon had a fortune that surpassed the third richest person of the Dutch Republic. See: Zandvliet, *De 250 rijksten van de Gouden Eeuw*, p. XL.

435 Wilson, *Defensive Positions*, pp. 59-63.

Nagasaki, I am not entirely convinced that Fukuoka's role in the Itō Kozaemon trial actually demonstrates a limit of *bakufu* authority. The more so, because Wilson also mentions that after Kozaemon was accused he was still invited to banquets and official Fukuoka business, indicating his continued worth to the domain.[436]

If this was the case, then why could the Kuroda lord not save Kozaemon from execution? One reason may have been that this case could possibly be linked to the Zheng organization and their fight against the Qing, for it looks like too much of a coincidence that Itō Kozaemon and his network were arrested in the same year as the Korean shipwreck reports came out with information on a possible Chinese attack on Qing-held Beijing via the sea and Korea, involving Japanese mercenaries, and armaments. The armament shipments to Korea made by Itō Kozaemon's network are said to have started in 1662. However, we have seen that there were also indications that these practices were going on since the mid-1650s. Moreover, scholars have claimed that the *bakufu* was aware of weapon deliveries to the Zheng organization. If this is true, then what happened in 1667?

According to Hang Xing, after the sudden death of Zheng Chenggong in 1662, a vicious succession battle ensued between Chenggong's eldest son Zheng Jing 鄭經 (1642-1681) and his clan brother Zheng Tai. Jing – who predominantly identified with his Chinese heritage and not so much his partial Japanese one – eventually was victorious and executed Tai, who was quite popular in Nagasaki. In 1664, the Dutch allied themselves with the Qing, since Nagasaki officials continued taking the Zheng side regarding court cases involving damages sustained by Chenggong's conquest of Dutch Formosa. Together with the Dutch, the Qing managed to oust Zheng Jing from Xiamen and drove him back to Formosa. Meanwhile, relatives of the deceased Tai and Zheng Jing were both claiming the 300.000 *taels* in silver Tai had stored at the Chinese interpreter's guild in Nagasaki, with the interpreters taking the side of Tai's relatives and Shichizaemon the side of his nephew Jing. Moreover, Japanese officials did not back his claim, while in the same year of 1664 the *bakufu* forbade the export of silver and allowed Qing merchants to trade in Nagasaki. This enraged Jing, and he started to obstruct shipping to Japan and even attacked a tributary junk from Ryukyu on its way to the Qing. Jing thought himself justified since the junk was on its way to pay tribute to his

436 Ibid., p. 60-61.

enemies. The *bakufu*, however, did not see it that way and seized the first Zheng vessel to arrive in Nagasaki. The Zheng and the *bakufu* were at an impasse.[437]

I think, the crackdown on Itō Kozaemon's weapon smuggling network might be the result of these souring relations with the Zheng, but in light of the *bakufu*'s overtures to the Qing in 1664, it could also have been a show case, signaling that the *bakufu* did not support Qing enemies, even more so now that rumors of Japan's involvement were spreading through Korean shipwreck reports that Hang talks about. Eventually, the *bakufu* still needed Chinese shipping and the outbreak of the Revolt of the Three Feudatories against the Qing (1674) changed the situation for Jing as well. The rift was mended and Hang suggests Japanese weapons were being delivered again. In addition, Jing reconciled with Tai's relatives, and was allotted the 300.000 *taels*.[438] Zheng ships started to frequent Nagasaki again, and Chinese merchants even got the opportunity to export silver or gain favorable exchange rates for gold in order to make them profitable in spite of the new regulations on the Nagasaki markets. Even though the relationship appeared strong again, ties were about to be permanently severed.

Suetsugu Heizō: The (Illicit) Arms Trade with Ming China, 1676

The next case under discussion highlights the involvement of Suetsugu Shigetomo, alias Heizō 末次平蔵茂朝 (1633-?) in the very activities he was supposed to be countering as Nagasaki *daikan*. In 1605, it was the first time that a merchant, instead of someone from the warrior class, came to occupy the position of Nagasaki *daikan*. This merchant, called Murayama Tōan, was a well-seen Christian merchant in Nagasaki, and after he successfully mediated in economic affairs on behalf of the Jesuits, they in turn managed to arrange a dismissal of the current *daikan* in favor of Tōan.[439] However, the failed

437 Hang, "The shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 125-128; Clulow and Hang, "Restraining Violence on the Sea", pp. 149-154.

438 According to Hang, Shichizaemon was the real loser in this case. For supporting his nephew in this court case, he was promised a tidy sum, but now that Jing had reconciled with Tai's relatives, Shichizaemon got nothing. This angered Shichizaemon deeply, but it remains unclear how this incident affected his relationship with the Zheng organization. See Hang, "The shogun's Chinese Partners", pp. 125-128.

439 It is not clear where Murayama originated from, but it is thought to be either Hakata, Hiroshima or Nagoya. At some point in his youth, he traveled to Nagasaki and took up residency

expedition of 1616 to bring Formosa under influence of the *bakufu* had dealt him a hard financial blow and left him out of favor with the new shogun Tokugawa Hidetada. At the same time in Nagasaki, Tōan's expedition to Formosa and his raiding of the Chinese coast gained him the hatred of the Chinese community, and because of his overtures to the Dominicans, the underground Jesuit mission did no longer support him. Nagasaki's high society was looking for a replacement.[440]

The Suetsugu merchant family had its roots and main operations in Hakata, and sometime during the 1580s, Suetsugu Kōzen 末次興善 (1520-1614) decided to invest heavily in the port city of Nagasaki. His name was even given to one of the city's districts his money helped to expand. Although Kōzen never went to Nagasaki himself, his second son, Suetsugu Heizō Masanao, did in the 1590s, in order to set up a family branch there. Under Heizō, the Suetsugu star rose even further. Through a network of family ties between Hakata and Nagasaki, the Suetsugu made a fortune in the Vermillion-seal trade and the silk trade.[441] Supported by many of the Nagasaki *machidoshiyori*, as well as the underground Jesuit mission, Heizō decided in 1618 that it was time to make a move on Tōan and grab real power within the city of Nagasaki. According to Reinier Hesselink, Heizō instigated the fight by accusing Tōan of defaulting on a debt going back to the 1580s, which Tōan refused to acknowledge. When the case was presented before the *bakufu* court, Heizō had included additional charges such as the murder of eighteen innocent people because proposedly they refused Tōan their daughters. However, Hesselink argues that Heizō's proposal of paying 5.000 *ryō* for the privilege of tax-farming Nagasaki's *outer city* instead of the 2.000 *ryō* Tōan was paying, made the real difference. The

in the district Kanaya no machi. Jesuit and Japanese sources tell us that he was baptized there and took up the name Antonio. He displayed an aptitude for trade and amassed a considerable fortune, but also gained fame for is knowledge of Iberian cooking and his skill in preparing these dishes. His wealth, humorist nature and hospitality made him a popular citizen of Nagasaki. When in 1592, Hideyoshi tried to further expand his influence over the city, its urban government had sent an envoy to negotiate with him, and among its members was Murayama Antonio. Hideyoshi took a liking to Antonio but could not correctly pronounce his name and called him Tōan. Thereupon, Antonio permanently changed his name to Tōan. Because of his fondness for Tōan, Hideyoshi gave him a red-seal license for oversees trade and the right to tax farming in the outer city of Nagasaki for a sum of 25 kanme of silver a year. See: *NSJKNDR*, pp. 9-11; Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, pp. 273-275, 333-334.

440 Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki*, pp. 168-171.

441 Takeno, "Kuroda-shi no bōeki", pp. 160-166; Oka, *The Namban Trade*, p 102.

case was decided in favor of Heizō, who now gained the office of *daikan*, but Heizō went a step further and denounced Tōan and his family as Christians and supporters of missionaries secretly hiding in Nagasaki. As retaliation Tōan returned the accusation, and even though Tōan and Heizō both denounced each other as Christians, Tōan's son eventually proved his downfall. During the siege of Osaka in 1615, Tōan's son had disregarded his exile from Japan and even returned with a ship in aid of Tokugawa Ieyasu's enemy, Toyotomi Hideyori 豊臣秀頼 (1593-1615). Because of his previous high position in Nagasaki, Tōan was saved the death penalty, but all his possessions were seized and he was exiled to one of the smaller islands of the coast of Japan.[442]

In the time that followed, over four generations of Suetsugu Heizō were occupying the office of Nagasaki *daikan* and used it to expand their business into moneylending and investing practices both with foreign and domestic parties. The Suetsugu were lending to various Kyushu daimyo as well as Chinese merchants operating under the Zheng organization. For a decade they managed these practices without any problems, till in 1633, the *bakufu* prohibited its vassals from making maritime loan agreements.[443] It remains to be seen if the Nagasaki *daikan* was considered to be a shogunal vassal or not. We know that up until the late 1680s, Japanese merchants were providing the VOC with loans till the *kaisho* took over these practices. Meanwhile, it seems that the Suetsugu family also continued these practices with the Chinese, which ran smoothly till the 1670s.[444]

In 1676 Heizō's house servant and secretary Kageyama Kudayu 陰山九太夫 (1632-1676) was accused of equipping a Chinese junk under the patronage of Heizō, sending it out to trade in Cambodia. Kudayu had used a bottomry bond from his master as well as the latter's seal. Moreover, through the mediation and connections of junior Chinese interpreter Shimoda Yasōemon 下田弥惣右衛門 (1647-1676), Kudayu managed to employ two Chinese from Quanzhou 泉州[445] as his agents to conduct his business outside of Japan.[446]

442 Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki*, pp. 171-174.

443 Takeno, "Kuroda-shi no bōeki", pp. 167-168; Oka, *The Namban Trade*, pp. 98, 102, 113.

444 Romans, "Mysterious Ships, Troublesome Loans, and Rumors of War", p

445 The *Hankachō* refers to these Chinese as Wang Renshang 王仁尚 and Wang Chenguan 王辰官, whilst the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* gives them as Zhuo Shunguan 卓順官 and Wang Xiguan 王喜官.

446 *NSHKC*, 1: pp. 28-29; *KBKEMSK*, p. 311.

Furthermore, Yatomi Kurōemon 弥富九郎右衛門 (1632-1676), a scribe at the financial department of the Nagasaki magistracy, decided to provide these two Chinese employed by Kudayu with a bottomry loan, with which they were able to obtain a seaworthy ship.[447] The *Deshima Diaries* and the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* state that after Kudayu's agents returned to Nagasaki, they were apprehended by the Nagasaki *bugyō*.[448] According to the *Deshima Diaries*, they were thought to be pirates at first, because their small junk was manned with over 60 heads, carried an unusually large number of weapons on board, and had 3.000 *taels* of unmarked Japanese silver in its hold. After their arrest the Chinese claimed to be subjects of Zheng Jing, a name that invoked great awe amongst the Japanese.[449] Therefore, the Nagasaki *bugyō* did not dare to try and extract the truth by means of torture and requested instructions from Edo.[450] In the mean-time, the Chinese captains seem to have confessed to something, as on February 23, 1676 Johannes Camphuys (1634-1695), Chief of the Dutch trading post, states that the Dutch had received more news regarding the affair:

> Since most of the talk regarding this matter is loosely based, I will just say this. The captain of the junk claims to be a factor of Heizō, whose secretary is also arrested and tortured for information. Some people believe that Heizō's head is beginning to get loose on his shoulders and that whether the blow will come depends on his skill and coin purse. Furthermore, the Nagasaki magistrate had raided the Chinese interpreters' residences and from their ledgers it became apparent that they were involved in dirty business. We also heard that some of our accountants in the *Geldkamer* were involved.[451]

On June 7, 1676, Camphuys commented that the above-mentioned Chinese captain later added to his confession that this trade was going on for about

447 *NSHKC*, 1: pp. 28-29; *KBKEMSK*, p. 311.

448 *KBKEMSK*, p. 311; NL-HaNA, VOC, inv. 1322 "Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren (1676)", there copy of the "Deshima Dagregister 1675-1676", folio 1467v, 1469r-1469v.

449 Zheng Jing was a Chinese pirate and warlord, Ming loyalist, eldest son of Zheng Chenggong and heir to the Zheng maritime network. Around 1676 he controlled most of the areas in Fujian such as Amoy (Xiamen), Quemoy (Jinmen), Quanzhou, and Formosa. In the sources he is also often referred to as Jin She 錦舍. For treatises on the extent of the Zheng family's power and influence see, for example: Andrade, "The Company's Chinese Pirates", pp. 415-444.

450 NL-HaNA, VOC, inv. 1322 "Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren (1676)", folio, 1469r-1469v.

451 Ibid., folio 1471r-1471v (English translation by J.J.A. Knoest).

three to four years, and that amongst other places they were also trading on the Portuguese bulwark of Macao. Furthermore, he declared that in order to protect them when being visited at sea, Heizō had provided them with a pass, showing that they were working for subjects of the Japanese shogun.[452] Both the *Deshima Diaries*, and the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* state that in 1675 these Chinese employed by Kudayu were hit by a storm at sea and stranded somewhere in the territory of Zheng Jing.[453] At first their ship and cargo were confiscated, but after they showed the pass and revealed its maker, they were offered all available help in salvaging the cargo and building a new ship.[454]

In the early seventeenth century, usually when venturing abroad to trade, merchant ships carrying the vermilion seal of the Tokugawa shoguns were relatively safe from being prayed on by other Asian and Western parties that were engaged in Japanese trade. Even decades after the Tokugawa shoguns had put an end to the Vermilion-seal trade the pass of the Heizō family still seemed to carry much weight. Therefore, the above illustrates how by acting as Heizō's agents the Chinese protected themselves and their investment from being seized, and circumvented the regulations of the Zheng maritime network, which controlled a fair portion of the sea between Xiamen, Formosa and Japan. In turn, when faced with criminal charges from the Nagasaki *bugyō* they attempted to utilize their homeland by shifting identity, and claimed to be subjects of the same Zheng Jing that Heizō's pass was giving them protection from.

Furthermore, the *Deshima Diaries* and the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* state that Edo called for a thorough investigation. To this end, the Edo administration had ordered the daimyo of Shimabara, the Karatsu daimyo, the old daimyo of Hirado, as well as the secretary of the Fukue 福江 daimyo to travel to Nagasaki and assist the *bugyō* with the investigation as well as the sentencing in this case.[455] Although we do not know to what degree these neighboring daimyo were involved, it does raise further questions about the range of the Nagasaki *bugyō*'s power and authority. Especially since Wilson has showed how the Nagasaki *bugyō* had the greatest difficulty in exerting their authority over the

452 NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 89 "Dagregister 1675-1676", pp. 107-108.
453 The *Deshima Diaries* refer to Formosa, and the *Kaban kōeki meisaiki* to Xiamen.
454 *KBKEMSK*, p. 311; NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 89 "Dagregister 1675-1676", pp. 108.
455 NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 89 "Dagregister 1675-1676", pp. 108-109; *KBKEMSK*, p. 311.

Kyushu daimyo in the case of Nagasaki's defense system. The *Hankachō* tells us that during the investigation it did not became clear whether Yatomi Kurōemon had anything to do with the conspiracy of Kudayu and Yasōemon. However, the authorities considered it clear that he had provided the above-mentioned Chinese with a bottomry loan. For their substantial offences Kudayu was crucified, Yasōemon received the death penalty, and Kurōemon got his head put on display above the prison gates. Some of their family members were likewise put to death. Furthermore, although Heizō made foreign investments (on bottomry) while he was Nagasaki *daikan*, it was not clear to the investigators whether he was actively involved in his secretary's endeavor. They stated that since Heizō had never showed any signs of corruption during his position in Nagasaki, he was saved the death penalty, but his property was confiscated.[456]

However, not everybody shared this opinion. The *Tsūkō Ichiran*, for example, directly implicates Heizō, who was claimed to have built the above-mentioned (Quanzhou) ship with a double bottom. Supposedly, he secretly transported Japanese weapons to China in this ship for several years, namely: "50 short swords, two long swords, and Japanese paintings, which he was selling for 2.000 *kanme*."[457] Furthermore, according to Johannes Camphuys:

> Some claim that he [Heizō] is only punished for the crime of his secretary. Although it could be true that the ownership of the junk and the granting of the pass were unknown to him, and that his secretary did other things without his knowledge, it is not very likely that he had absolutely no knowledge of this trade with the Chinese. Heizō was not the man to during 3 or 4 years never once ask his secretary for an account on the administration of his assets, for he displayed the common Japanese character traits of mistrust, greed, and other harmful miserliness. Moreover, for some time up until the present [Heizō] provided the Chinese [merchants] with cash loans on bottomry, on half interest, and even on his own risk. Officials have been turning a blind eye to these practices and happily allow them.[458]

456 *NSHKC*, 1: pp. 28-30.

457 *TKIR*, 4: pp. 437-438.

458 NL-HaNA, NFJ, inv. 89 "Dagregister 1675-1676", pp. 111-112 (English translation by J.J.A. Knoest).

Most likely these cash loans that Camphuys refers to are the foreign investments mentioned by the *Hankachō*. Camphuys further mentions that at the time of his arrest Heizō's assets amounted to 300.000 *taels*, calculated to be 10,5 tons of gold. However, "some say that he has much more than that. In this city of Nagasaki alone he had provided many people with a loan on interest, amounting to 100.000 *taels*."[459] The *Tsūkō Ichiran* shows these assets in more detail:

> More than 8.700 *kanme* in *gen*-silver; 3.000 *ryō* in gold *kobangs* in 30 boxes; 1.000 pieces of yellow gold stored in 10 boxes; more than 10.000 *kanme* in cash (silver) (this was money borrowed from various people (note to the text)); one wakizashi, made by sword smith Masamune 正宗; one warehouse (plastered with earth to guard against fire). Inside this warehouse there were short swords; one piece of Agar wood with a length of more than 1 *jō* and 4 *shaku*; one piece of Agar wood with a length of 9 *shaku* and 7 seven with a length of 5 *sun*; 60 pieces of bad Agar wood with a length of 4 *shaku* and 5 *sun*; 18 large oblong chests with small pieces of wood inside; 5 pair of [Japanese] sandals made of Agar wood; 5 oblong chests with red chinaberry [wood]; 3 boxes with coral beads; 3 boxes with branching coral; 2 crystal balls with a lot of things inside; a tool to cut metal, decorated with three cotton roses; 17 teapots from Xihu 西湖; 5 pieces of Philippine jars; 75 very old Chinese bowls; more than 500 normal bowls; 5 (ebony) barrels of vino tinto; a Chinese hanging scroll painting with a diameter of 700 *no*; various kinds of Chinese furniture, containing various silk trinkets; a dish of Chinese brocade; an ink stone with one flat side, made of agate; 17 small and large folding screens; 5 oblong chests, carved a long time ago (but decorated with gold brocade and silver shelves); 200 short swords. Besides the above, his treasury was filled with more various trinkets, with an approximate value of 60.000 *ryō* in golden *koban*.[460]

At the same exchange rate as used for Itō Kozaemon (1:3.5), if we consider the numbers provided by Camphuys to be correct, Heizō's fortune would amount to 1.050.000 guilders. If we consider the numbers in the *Tsūkō Ichiran* to be correct, however, it would even be as high as 6.655.250 guilders, roughly two-and-a-half times greater than Kozaemon's fortune. In both cases, a sizable

459 Ibid., p. 111.

460 *TKIR*, 4:438 (English translation by J.J.A. Knoest).

sum.[461] Interestingly, while Yatomi Kurōemon had his head put on display above the prison gates for providing a cash loan on bottomry to the Chinese, Heizō, who beyond reasonable doubt could be charged with the same offence, managed to steer clear of this fate. The Dutch mentioned the rumor that whether or not Heizō's head would roll depended on his connections and his coin purse. Thus, in the end, these proved sufficient to save his life and that of his family. However, Heizō was stripped of his hereditary position as Nagasaki *daikan*, and banished to the island of Okinoshima 隠岐島 together with his family.[462]

Recently, Timothy Romans has argued these turns of events surrounding the Suetsugu family were closely linked to a potential East Asian crisis. According to Romans, the establishment of an autonomous commercial and diplomatic partnership between the Suetsugu and Zheng families almost pushed the *bakufu* into a direct war with the Qing in 1676, when rumors of a Tokugawa alliance with Chosŏn Korea, the Zheng empire and the three rebellious feudatories of Yunnan, Guangdong, and Fujian reached the Qing. The prevention of this war illustrates what Romans calls a new diplomatic international framework consisting of the Qing empire, Tokugawa Japan, and Chosŏn Korea. In order to prevent this war, the Tokugawa *bakufu* needed to sever ties with the Zheng by arresting and persecuting Suetsugu Heizō, thus eliminating local autonomous actors that had become a liability for the international framework being build.[463]

According to these rumors, a large Japanese invading force was ready to land on the Shandong 山東 peninsula. Once there, Korean musketeers would join the Japanese in a combined attack on Beijing. In response to these rumors the Qing had sent a division of Mongolian and Manchu troops to the Korean border with clear orders should the Koreans and Japanese initiate an attack. Neither the Chosŏn nor the Tokugawa, however, were inclined to get dragged into open war with the Qing. The Chosŏn were assuring the Qing that the discovered correspondence was a forgery. Similarly, although in the past the Tokugawa had covertly supported the Zheng with weapons and cash, they now

461 I would especially like to thank Dennis O. Flynn, for alerting me to my mistake in the numbers in my original published article.

462 *NSHKC*, 1: pp. 28-30.

463 Romans, "Mysterious Ships, Troublesome Loans, and Rumors of War", pp. 508-510.

felt the need to cut all ties with the Zheng in order not to get sucked into another Great Asian War. This meant also cutting ties with the Suetsugu family who for years had provided Zheng merchants in Nagasaki with loans and weapon shipments. Romans further argues that these shipments were not so much the problem as the *bakufu* had condoned these for the last three decades, but it was the pass with Heizō's seal issued to the Chinese that implicated the *bakufu* as a direct sponsor of the Zheng. Therefore, the Suetsugu had to be removed.[464]

Although scholars such as Romans, Hang, and others have not provided any 'hard evidence' that *the bakufu* was secretly involved in weapon transports and even Japanese troops to the Zheng – or else knowingly condoned it –, at the very least they do paint a very compelling picture proving 'reasonable doubt'. For example, Romans is basing his statement of the *bakufu* condoning loans and weapon transports on entries in the *Tōtsūji kaisho nichiroku*. However, I wonder if anyone in the *bakufu* besides the Nagasaki *bugyō* would have studied these without good cause, such as an incident, which raises the question how knowledgeable Edo really was about Nagasaki affairs before the establishment of a semi-permanent *metsuke* in Nagasaki? Whether or not high *bakufu* officials in Edo had full detailed knowledge of what was going on in Nagasaki, up until the 1680s, they had *purposely* or *unintentionally*, *unknowingly* or *knowingly* conferred a certain amount of discretionary authority to local agents. However, regional events and changes in the global networks required adaptation. Meaning, elements of the old system, such as very wealthy merchants who could engage in foreign relations either on their own or for a local daimyo, had to be removed and replaced with something more suitable for the new situation.

5.4 Network in Transition: From Zheng to Qing Operators

Nagasaki's Chinese Community and the Qing Network

In light of the order to Satsuma to have Ryukyu engage in diplomatic relations with the Qing according to the Qing's maxims, the increasing animosity with the new head of the Zheng organization in the late 1660s and early 1670s, as

464 Ibid., pp. 521, 526-528.

well as the gradual acceptance of Qing merchants in the port of Nagasaki, the *bakufu*, in all likelihood, officials within the *bakufu* must have been anticipating a possible Qing victory since the death of Zheng Chenggong in 1662.

After the Zheng organization was decisively defeated in 1683, the Qing officially permitted trade with Japan once again and Chinese merchants were beginning to flock to Nagasaki in ever greater numbers. It is often argued that this sudden rise in Chinese merchants frequenting Nagasaki prompted the shogunate to take action. For example, the *bakufu* implemented a trade ceiling to limit exports, but more importantly it no longer permitted sojourning Chinese to reside in the city. Instead, it ordered the construction of the *Tōjinyashiki* and the New Warehouses (*shinchi-kurasho* 新地蔵所), which would house over more than 2.500 people and their merchandise. Furthermore, around this time, an increasing number of Nagasaki inhabitants got new jobs and supportive roles related to the *Tōjinyashiki*. Chinese residents of these structures were no longer allowed to freely move around the city unsupervised. Although the Chinese temples continued to play a role in Nagasaki's domestic and sojourning Chinese communities, the construction of the *Tōjinyashiki*, and the supervision on communication, no doubt diminished the temples' influence in politics.[465]

In his recent and excellent study on the foreign trade between Tokugawa Japan and Qing China, Peng Hao has argued that there were two possible reasons for taking these measures. First, the high number of new sojourning Chinese went beyond the capacity of local administrators in Nagasaki to service or control. Second, Peng writes of an incident just after the fall of the Zheng. Several Qing officials from Fujian had come with one of the junks to Nagasaki. They claimed they were there to supervise the accounting of thirteen Fujian junks, as well as to regulate their crews and to ensure they would adhere to Japanese law. News of this was sent to Edo, and the authorities decided to permit this junk to trade, but also warned that in future Qing officials were prohibited to visit Japan.[466] In order to ensure a drop in the outflow of bullion and copper, the *bakufu* not only limited the approved trading volume, it also

465 For example, the Chinese temples in Nagasaki played an important ceremonial role as arriving Qing merchants would carry a statue of their Boddhisatva in procession to one of the temples, which would be a 'guest' there till it was time to depart. See: Yamawaki, *Nagasaki no Tōjin bōeki*, pp. 300-302.

466 Peng, *Trade Relations Between Qing China and Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 3, 42, 77-78.

limited the number of ships that were allowed to call on Japan. During the years 1685-1715, this caused a lot of confusion amongst Chinese merchants who were never sure if they were allowed to trade or not. Many of the those that could not trade resorted to smuggling in Nagasaki's surrounding waters to have a profitable trip (chapter 7 will treat this in more detail).

In order to take away (some of) the confusion, and to reduce the number of smuggling incidents, the *bakufu* introduced the *shinpai* 信牌 system, which required a Chinese merchant to obtain a trading pass from Nagasaki institutions in order to be allowed to trade in Nagasaki the following year. After usage, the pass had to be returned and requested anew. This pass included the year of arrival, port of departure, annual number of junks per departure port, the total amount of cargo, the name of the pass holder, the reason for acquiring the pass, a summary of the regulations, and the (Japanese) era date. Several Chinese merchants present in Nagasaki in 1715, agreed to this new system and were issued several *shinpai*. The Qing government, however, did not so easily accept this new system and seized several passes upon return of its merchants. Since the Japanese did not provide any new passes, this meant that less Chinese merchants were able to trade in the coming year(s). Many scholars have argued that in the dispute that ensued around the *shinpai*, the Qing government took issue with the Japanese era date on the pass, as this signaled that Japan thought itself the superior party in this relationship.[467]

Although this might certainly be true, according to Peng the matter was more complicated. The Qing had abandoned silver for its base currency and returned to copper. Around the turn of the century however, China's main domestic copper production in Yunnan was not yet evolved enough to sustain its coinage. Therefore, copper imports from Japan were a necessity. From 1716, these imports were organized in the following way. A set total annual amount of copper was imported and equally distributed to eight provinces (Jiangsu, Anhui 安徽, Jiangxi 江西, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Hunan 湖南, and Hubei 湖北). Each of these provinces sent an official to Suzhou 蘇州, the city where most Nagasaki going merchants were located. Therefore, Peng argues, the Qing government feared that if these finite *shinpai* were issued to private merchants, this would jeopardize obtaining the necessary copper imports for

467 Yamawaki, *Kinsei Nitchū bōeki-shi no kenkyū*, pp. 31-34; Peng, *Trade Relations Between Qing China and Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 43-44.

its currency minting.[468] Meanwhile, the dispute and the accompanying drop in Chinese merchants and trading volume caused a disruption in the Japanese markets as well. Prices went up, and exports remained in Nagasaki unsold, bringing their prices down. As a remedy, the *bakufu* had temporarily increased the trade ceiling and the number of Chinese junks allowed to call on Nagasaki, but the issue was finally resolved when the Japanese build in a workaround, making it possible for anyone to use the *shinpai*, despite the holder's name. This way the Japanese could limit the number of junks, their imports, and their own exports, while the Qing could control which merchants were allowed trade with Japan.[469] As had been the case with the Chinese merchants that visited Nagasaki under the protection of the Zheng organization, with these developments the Chinese merchants once again were connected to a powerful – and this time also central – institution, adding another level of difficulty to the rules of engagement and interaction in Nagasaki.

Violence as (Un)accepted Negotiation Tactic

Despite the initial dispute surrounding the *shinpai* being solved, this did not mean the end of all difficulties. Japan wanted to export less copper than it did, while China imported less copper than it needed. In her study on Japanese-Chinese relations in the early eighteenth century, Angela Schottenhammer shows that the *shinpai* came in three sizes, small medium and large. Each represented a smaller or larger time frame in which the holder of the license could purchase an extra 100 to 200 chests of copper above the quota.[470] The Dutch even claim that sometimes the Nagasaki *bugyō* allowed the Chinese to export old silver utensils, in spite of the silver ban.[471] Nevertheless, with the trade ceilings in place, repeatedly Chinese goods remained unsold. Moreover, in the 1720s and 1730s, the local authorities in Nagasaki increasingly lowered the prices for Chinese cargoes on private initiative while increasing the expenditures of their stay and the export of copper, causing many Chinese merchants to go bankrupt.[472] On the Chinese side, this was partly being solved

468 Peng, *Trade Relations Between Qing China and Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 55-56.
469 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
470 Schottenhammer, "Japan – the Tiny Dwarf?", pp. 333, 340-341, 364-369.
471 NA, NFJ, inv. 112, "Dagregister 1700-1701", p. 84.
472 Schottenhammer, "Japan – the Tiny Dwarf?", pp. 364-366, 368-369.

by developing copper production in Yunnan and engaging in smuggling activities in Japan. *Bakufu* officials, whether in Edo or Nagasaki, attempted to remedy smuggling by attempting to use Japanese law, both with and without Chinese consent, to try and convict Chinese merchants involved in such activities. Yet, other than financial penalties, or banishment from Japan, no Chinese was physically harmed by Japanese judges after the 1720s. Peng thinks it likely that the shogunate was concerned that severe punishments could cause a backlash with Chinese traders and Qing officials, at worst halting the trade altogether. Despite the fact that this restrained attitude might be interpreted as a sign of weakness and damage the prestige of the shogunate, it worked very well to keep the trade stable.[473] Besides smuggling, Chinese merchants tried to engage in negotiations with the local authorities, petitioning for the opportunity to sell their surplus wares outside of the trade ceiling. In case the Nagasaki government did not honor their requests, one of the negotiation tactics they deployed was rioting, sometimes in combination with arson.

Throughout the eighteenth century the *Deshima Diaries* make mention of riots and violent behavior on the Chinese island at least twelve times in 1703, 1704, 1708, 1709, 1712, 1713, 1715, 1716, 1721, 1729, 1732, and 1784. With the majority of all buildings made of wood, fire in Tokugawa Japan was a frequent and serious danger to a city. The great Meireki 明暦 fires of 1657 for example had leveled the city of Edo, and in 1663 the great fire of Kanbun 寛文 almost completely destroyed Nagasaki, with the exception of Kanaya no machi 金屋町, Ima no machi 今町, and Dejima no machi 出島町.[474] It will come as no surprise that arson was considered a grave crime and therefore a heavy 'negotiation' tactic. The *Deshima Diaries* display as many as fourteen fires on the Chinese island during the years 1703, 1705, 1707, 1709, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1725, 1736, 1737, 1784, 1785, 1786, and 1799. For at least four cases the Dutch claim that these incidents related to arson, but whether this holds true for the others remains unknown.

One such incident took place in December 1703. According to the *Tōtsūji kaisho nichiroku*, in the night of the last day of the 11th month of the year Genroku 16 (December 8, 1703), half way of the fifth hour (approximately 21:30) a fire

473 Peng, *Trade Relations Between Qing China and Tokugawa Japan*, p. 83.

474 Matsukata, "Fires and Recoveries Witnessed by the Dutch in Edo and Nagasaki", pp. 173-174, 180.

broke out in a small cooking establishment, utilized by the Chinese crew from the Siamese junk number 69. The fire spread rapidly to the main buildings occupied by the Chinese from Siamese junks numbers 69, 70 and 71. The fire consumed eleven buildings before the Nagasaki *bugyō*, the *machidoshiyori* and their helpers prevented the fire from spreading. They stayed on the island the whole night in order to keep the Chinese in check, since a total of 768 people were behaving disorderly. Junk number 71 had lost all its rice in the fire and the next day fifteen prominent Chinese asked a junior interpreter for permission to hand in a request for 100 bags of rice, which was granted. While all the Japanese personnel on duty on the night of the fire were giving their statements, the Chinese from Siam were submitting a petition to be allowed to sell their surplus wares, given the fact that they suffered severe losses in the fire. Considering their misfortune and the trouble this would cause for the king of Siam, this request was granted. A list of their remaining cargo was drawn up and signed. The Nagasaki *bugyō*'s office issued a proclamation stating that this time the foreigners were forgiven for their crime of creating a fire, but a warning was also issued that in case this happened in future, the crew of the whole ship to which the perpetrator(s) belonged would be banished from Japan.[475]

The Dutch also make mention of this incident in their diaries. They state that in the days before the fire there was much consternation about smuggling activities of the Chinese. Even though the *bugyō* had allowed smuggling inside the city, the waters outside Nagasaki were still off limits.[476] However, large numbers of Japanese were brought in who disregarded this rule. Many captured Japanese "had slit their bellies" and because of this some Chinese junks were prohibited to trade. During the night of December 8, there was a commotion and it turned out the Chinese island was ablaze. The next day one of the "Japanese servants" informed the chief that the fire had originated from a small straw house where a Chinese from China was cooking for his countrymen when the dishes caught flame. The fire quickly spread to the houses and the junks. The Chinese from Siam were hit hardest and lost three big lodgings and the rigging of their junks. In the days to come they made a ruckus on the island and demanded compensation for the damage they

475 *TTJKSNR*, 3: pp. 369-371.

476 NA, NFJ, inv. 115, "Dagregister 1703-1704", pp. 52-54.

suffered, which they claimed was in no way their fault. If this was refused then "they would seek compensation on their own, or they would take action and cause a 'minor accident' with their remaining countrymen."[477] For the Nagasaki *bugyō* this could only mean that they were planning to set another fire, which according to the *Deshima Diaries*, indeed occurred not many days later, but was soon extinguished.[478]

Remarkably, there is no mention of this second fire in the *Tōtsūji kaisho nichiroku*. These two accounts have many similarities, but also a few striking differences. First of all, according to the Japanese account the Chinese from Siam were responsible for the fire, while according to the information the Dutch received a Chinese from mainland China was at fault. Second, were the Japanese records state that the donation of rice, and the permission to trade beyond the limits of the trade ceiling were due to what can be perceived as benevolent behavior of the Nagasaki *bugyō*, the Dutch records state that they got these concessions because of their rowdy conduct and their threats to set fire to the island again. Another example that supports the idea of rioting and arson as Japanese accepted negotiation tactics can be found in the Japanese trade with Chosŏn Korea.

The position of Chinese merchants in Nagasaki was similar to the one of Japanese merchants trading in Korea. These Japanese merchants, sometimes hundreds at a time, were housed in a walled compound called the Japan House (*K. Waegwan* 倭館) at the port city of Pusan. All complaints and requests had to be directed at a guild of Korean interpreters, which functioned as an intermediary body between the Japanese commander (*daikan*) of the Japan House and the Tongnae 東萊 magistrate who was charged with overseeing the city of Pusan and Korean-Japanese contact. Just as was the case with the Chinese in Nagasaki, the Japanese in Pusan not only met with trade regulations but also with specific geographical restrictions of movement. For example, to enter and leave the Japan House one had to be in the possession of a special pass. Japanese without a pass were deemed 'disorderly.'

James Lewis has argued that by gathering a crowd and marching on Tongnae to make their grievances known directly to the Tongnae magistrate, the Japanese were disrupting the chain of command, causing an embarrassment

477 Ibid., pp. 59-63.
478 Ibid., pp. 64-65.

for the Korean authorities. Exposure to strong winds, unfavorable anchorage, cramped living conditions, and food and fuel shortages were all cause for complaint amongst the Japanese. Between 1611 and 1675, eight times they engaged in negotiations with the Korean authorities about moving their lodgings. Rioting seemed to steer the negotiations towards a favorable outcome for the Japanese. On occasion, they moved to take hostages among the local Korean officials, but always made sure not to harm them. In addition to these riots they managed, either by accident or by arson (as in Nagasaki, sources are not always conclusive on that topic), to burn down the Japan House at least six times. When by 1678 the new and improved Japan House was re-located further away from the city, the embarrassment of such acts grew in importance. The situation for the Tongnae magistrate was a difficult one, since he had to maintain Korean authority on the one hand and on the other hand to prevent escalation to the extent that the Japanese would leave this organized trade and resort back to piracy. Therefore, it does not surprise that after the 1690s Japanese organized disorderly behavior, rioting, and arson had become tested negotiation tactics. Amenomori Hōshū 雨森芳洲 (1668-1755), Confucian advisor to the Tsushima daimyo, had suggested to his lord that it might be better for the Japanese merchants at Pusan to forgo violence and "suggested another alternative [...] that was to break protocol at one of the official banquets or tea reception and confront the Magistrate personally with some complaint."[479] The mention of breaking protocol is interesting here. It points in fact to the whole idea behind 'disorderly behavior' as the temporary deviation from a formal sphere that was also prevalent outside Japan.

5.5 Conclusion

Geopolitical progresses in seventeenth century East Asia highly influenced the composition, organization, and operation of global networks and institutions in Nagasaki. While the Ming-supported Zheng organization dominated the sea-lanes connecting China to the rest of Asia, the new Manchu empire descended on Chosŏn Korea and Ming China. Especially the latter frequently

479 Lewis, "Late Chosŏn-era Korean Interaction with Japanese at Pusan" pp. 1275-1288; Lewis, *Frontier Contact*, pp. 177-191.

requested military aid from the surrounding polities, and the Tokugawa *bakufu* had to decide how to respond to these potentially dangerous developments. Scholars have claimed that initially Iemitsu might have been inclined to send a substantial military force to China, either to support the Ming or overthrow it, but ultimately foreign and domestic considerations prompted him to take a passive stance. All request for aid were officially denied. Scholars such as Ishihara, Komiya, Carioti, Romans and Hang, however, have argued that behind the scenes Ming-loyalists and Zheng agents in the Chinese community of Nagasaki – with the help of local officials, who either shared in their Ming sympathies, or simply saw a good business opportunity to strengthen their own position – had prepared aid in the form of ammunition, weapons, loans, and several other materials for war. Moreover, there is still some debate whether this aid even included actual Japanese troops. Their main argument here is that the *bakufu* had knowledge of these affairs and willingly condoned them until it no longer served its needs. Even though these scholars have not provided any 'hard evidence', their arguments are compelling enough to establish 'reasonable doubt'.

The two biggest and most famous smuggling cases of the seventeenth century give us an insight into how individuals in Nagasaki managed to realize this aid. The first case, involving the illegal trade in weapons with Chosŏn Korea in 1667, demonstrated the tactics employed by those outside the official trade networks who formed a self-organized network similar to their legal counterparts in the early modern era. The enterprise was backed by multiple investors who shared risks, provided funding to equip one or more ships and hired a crew. Supercargoes were appointed to protect the cargo and to secure trade interests overseas. The network also employed interpreters and contact persons to enable smooth communication in Korea. Geographical location seems to have played a significant role in arranging this network. The second case, which evolved around Suetsugu Heizō in 1676, revealed how institutionalized and self-organized networks intertwined on a smaller scale. Some of the key players in this operation were Nagasaki officials who can be classified as 'free agents', belonging to both official and unofficial networks. By employing Chinese merchants as factors, they engaged in cross-cultural commission agency, as described by Trivellato. These Chinese merchants could change their identities when

the situation required them to do so. Heizō's name and pass enabled these Chinese to challenge the institutionalized Zheng network they were a part of, while being part of the Zheng network also aided them in their difficulties with Nagasaki officials. Moreover, the involvement of Kyushu lords in the investigation and sentencing in these two cases, as shown by Noell Wilson, raises further questions about the scope of actual power and authority of the Nagasaki *bugyō*.

For the Heizō case, Timothy Romans has argued that developments in the Ming-Qing conflict began to show that potentially Japan could be dragged into a new Great East Asian War. To remedy this, the *bakufu* had to cut all ties with the Zheng organization and by association also with the Suetsugu. I argue that the Itō Kozaemon case could have been instigated on the same principles. First, between 1662 and 1674 the relationship between the Zheng and the *bakufu* had begun to sour significantly. Second, Satsuma and Ryukyu begun to acknowledge the Qing in the East Asian international political framework, while from 1664 onwards the *bakufu* started to increasingly allow Qing merchants to call on Nagasaki. Third, in this light, Itō Kozaemon and his network could have been removed as a show case signaling to the Qing that the *bakufu* did not support its enemies. Even more so since rumors of Japan's involvement began surfacing in Korean shipwreck reports in 1667. If the *bakufu* was aware of these practices and secretly still supported the Zheng and the Ming, as is often claimed, it would explain why it took another ten years for Heizō to be removed as well. However, as stated above, hard evidence for this is lacking.

Nevertheless, it has become clear that up until the 1680s, the *bakufu* had either *purposely* or *unintentionally*, *unknowingly* or *knowingly* conferred a certain amount of discretionary authority to local Nagasaki agents. The demise of the Zheng organization provided an opportunity to change this as the *bakufu* sought to exert more influence and control over processes in Nagasaki, but at the same time the Qing government had similar intentions. Thus, as was the case under the Zheng, the Chinese merchants who frequented Nagasaki were once again connected to a powerful – and this time also central – institution. This added another level of difficulty to the rules of engagement, and introduced other ways by which to challenge *bakufu* authority in Nagasaki. One of these ways was violence and arson as a means to have the host publicly

lose face in order to strengthen one's negotiation position. It appears that from the late seventeenth century onwards, the age of wealthy merchants who could privately engage in foreign relations through Nagasaki was officially over.