

ORIENTIERUNGEN

Zeitschrift zur Kultur Asiens

31 (2019)

Herausgegeben von
Berthold Damshäuser,
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Li Xuetao,
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Dorothee Schaab-Hanke

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Begründet von Wolfgang KUBIN

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Wir bedanken uns bei der Beijing Foreign Studies University für die Förderung der Redaktion dieser Zeitschrift im Rahmen des „Multilingual Periodical Project“.

Der Druck der Zeitschrift wurde vom Institut für Orient- und Asienwissenschaften der Universität Bonn gefördert.

Bibliographische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek:

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation
in der Deutschen Nationalbibliographie;

Detaillierte bibliographische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

ISSN 0936-4099

© OSTASIEN Verlag 2020

www.ostasien-verlag.de

Anschrift der Redaktion:

OSTASIEN Verlag, Wohlbacher Straße 4, 96269 Großheirath, OT Gossenberg
Tel. 09569/188057, Fax: 03222-1360347, email: dschaab-hanke@t-online.de

Redaktion und Satz:

Martin HANKE und Dorothee SCHAAB-HANKE

Umschlaggestaltung: Martin HANKE

Herstellung: Rosch-Buch, Scheßlitz

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Connecting China with the Pacific World?*

Angela Schottenhammer**

Whereas Chinese merchants, diplomats, or even soldiers were engaged in East and Southeast Asian waters as well as in the eastern Indian Ocean space, they did not, as a rule, venture into the Pacific, beyond the Philippine Archipelago. At least officially, little to no interest was historically shown for the Asia-Pacific region. Was it simply a matter of disinterest? Or was it the obvious danger lying in a sheer immense body of water, the Pacific?

The East China Sea, the Yellow Sea, and the Bohai Sea have been sailed for centuries, since antiquity. Large parts of it are about a thousand fathoms in depth. The water is warmed by the languid north equatorial current which, starting from the islands of Micronesia, strikes the Philippines and branches into two streams. One enters the South China Sea and the other flows northward as the Kuroshio 黑潮, the “Black Current”. This current, flowing to the north-east, in the direction of the Aleut Islands, and further on to Alaska and then to the west coast of North America, in combination with strong westerly and north-westerly winds in winter, have, until modern steam craft technology was invented, posed a feared and significant danger to all ships sailing along and beyond the eastern coasts of Japan. In summer and autumn too, typhoons blowing from the south-west to the north-east constituted a major threat across the entire Asian and Pacific Ocean space. Another problem is that a branch current splits off near the north-east of Honshu 本州, and moves on to the Kurile Islands and Kamchatka, further confusing navigation.

We know that Song and Yuan sailors were already aware of the difficulties when sailing eastward related to the Kuroshio Current. The standard History of the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368), *Yuanshi* 元史, describes how fishing boats off the Penghu Islands encounter hurricanes (*jufeng* 颶風), and are swept into the open ocean by the *luoji* 落漈 current (“falling shore” or “falling trench”).¹ In his

* This research was supported by, and contributes to the ERC AdG project TRANSPACIFIC which has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme (Grant agreement No. 833143). It also contributes to the research project “Seafaring, Trade, and Knowledge Transfer: Maritime Politics and Commerce in Early Middle Period to Early Modern China”, sponsored by the Gerda Henkel Foundation (GHF).

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1 *Yuanshi* 210.4667: 近瑠求則謂之落漈，漈者，水趨下而不回也。凡西岸漁舟到澎湖已下，遇颶風發作，漂流落漈，回者百一。

time, Zhou Qufei 周去非 (1178) in his *Lingwai daida* 嶺外代答 (Answers [to Questions] from beyond the Mountain Passes) mentioned the ocean currents that drain “east into the boundless ocean and the Weilu (tale gate); this is not a world to go and return from.”² Interestingly, the dangerous current is also mentioned on the famous Selden map, as we will see below.

There can be little doubt that the currents, in combination with the uncertainty regarding what lies beyond, discouraged sailors from venturing into these Pacific seas. While there was discouragement in the area, routes east of Japan, especially along the eastern coasts of Kyūshū, the Ryūkyū Islands and the eastern Philippines were used, if not officially then, by merchants and “pirates”. With the advent of the Spanish on the Philippines at the latest, a regular maritime traffic commenced in this region. Still Chinese ships rarely moved beyond their limits and geographical texts continue to pay little attention to the Pacific. Roderich Ptak has suggested that this

[...] may indicate that Chinese merchants (and perhaps even government officials) weighed the costs and benefits of possible voyages through these parts of the world after carefully reconsidering what they had learned from their European partners in Macau, Manila, Nagasaki, and elsewhere.³

It is clear that as early as the fifteenth century and thereafter, especially in the seventeenth century under the Kangxi Emperor, the Chinese government actively sought to control its Pacific region. And with Kangxi’s integration of Taiwan into the mainland’s administrative system, with his fights against “pirates”, the situation in these waters changed.

China’s Interest in the Asia-Pacific Rim

Development of Commercial Contacts with the Philippines

Song-Yuan

Chinese traders started to establish sporadic bases in the Philippines probably as early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Archaeological excavations, as Kenneth Hall has emphasized, have brought to light

[...] urban settlements of over five hundred households in the Manila area dating to the pre-Spanish period, as well as at other urban sites on the Mindoro, Mindanao, and Cebu coasts. Each of these communities’ trade links with China are demonstrated by their association with significant deposits of Sung and Ming porcelain dating to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁴

2 *Lingwai daida* 2.10b: 愈東則尾閭之所泄，非復人世。

3 Ptak 2016, 64.

4 Hall 1985, 226-227.

Most probably, Yuan ceramics were also among these deposits. In 2016 archaeologists excavated a Yuan period warehouse in Taicang 太倉 on the Yangtze estuary that revealed a huge amount of mostly Yuan trade ceramics destined for exportation overseas.⁵

From the Song dynasty (960–1279), we possess evidence of sporadic relations between Chinese and people from the Philippine archipelago. Contacts were with natives of specific islands, not yet conceived of as a uniform archipelago. Around early Song times, the term *Mayi* 麻逸 appears. *Mayi* is one of various ways of representing a particular polity name/toponym, often rendered as *Mait*.⁶ A definite localization is, consequently, difficult. An entry in *Songsbi* 宋史 mentions *Mayi* in relation to the establishment of Maritime Trade Offices in Guangzhou, Hangzhou and Mingzhou.⁷ A similar entry is included in *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿.⁸ But *Mayi* has there no separate entry in the “*Fanyi*” section, whereas *Putuan* 蒲端 (probably *Butuan*),⁹ located in the Agusan Valley within the modern province of Agusan del Norte in the northeastern part of Mindanao, does.¹⁰ Ma Duanlin speaks of a country of *Mayi* that, in the 7th year of *Taiping Xingguo* (983), brought valuable merchandise to Guangzhou.¹¹

Yunlu manchao 雲麓漫抄 lists merchants from foreign countries who call at the Fujian Maritime Trade Office (*shibo si*). Among them are *Bosilan* 波斯蘭 (? , see below), *Mayi* 麻逸 (*Mait*), *Sanyu* 三嶼 (Palawan/Luzon), *Pulihuan* 蒲里喚 (= *Pulili*, i.e. *Polillo Island*, off the east coast of Luzon [?]), and *Baipu'er* 白蒲邇國 (= *Baipuyan Islands*, off the north coast of Luzon [?]). Merchants from these places are said to have brought cotton fabrics and cotton threads (吉貝布貝紗).¹² There is probably little doubt that these places refer to islands and locations located around the Philippine Archipelago. Among these places, in the case of *Bosilan* 波斯蘭, scholars offer various possibilities: Some locate it in *Bansala*,

5 *Da Yuan cang* (2016).

6 There seems to be an agreement that it lay in the modern Philippines Islands. Some suggest that it was the precursor of. *Maynila/Manila*, while others aver that it represented *Mindoro*.” Wade 2005, 3, fn. 5. As Roderich Ptak (1986, 205) states, “[w]hether *Ma-i-tung* (*Mo-i*, *Ma-i*, *Ma-yeh*, *Ma-yeh-weng*, etc.) stands for *Mindoro* in the Philippines as related through famous accounts of *Chao Ju-kua* and *Wang Ta-yüan*, or for *Billition Island* in the Indonesian Archipelago as suggested is a question that has interested many scholars.” He provides a long footnote with all relevant publications.

7 *Songsbi* 186.4558.

8 *Song huiyao jigao* 86.3364 (“*Zhiguan*”, 44.1a).

9 *Song huiyao jigao* 197.7761 (“*Fanyi*” 4.95a-96a).

10 This entry has been translated into English in Scott 1989, 27-28.

11 *Wenxian tongkao* 332.2606.

12 *Yunlu manchao* 5. 88-89.

Cambodia; others think it may be Soc Trang in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, and some consider it to be Basilan Island.

Zhao Rugua 趙汝括 (1170–1231) in his *Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志 also explains that the country of Mayi lies in the north of Borneo (Boni 渤尼/渤泥), local products consist of yellow wax, cotton, pearls, tortoise-shells, medicinal betel nuts (*yao binglang* 藥檳榔) and Yuda 于達 cloth, products that are exchanged by foreigners for ceramics (porcelains), trade gold, iron censers, lead, coloured glass beads, and iron needles.¹³ Sanyu 三嶼, the text continues, Baipuyan (off north coast of Luzon [?]), Pulilu 蒲里嚕 (Polillo Island, off east coast of Luzon [?])¹⁴, Lijindong 里金東 (Lingayan on the west coast of Luzon [?]), Liuxin 流新 (Luzon [?]), and Lihan 里漢 (?) belong to this country.¹⁵ But *Zhufan zhi* still has a separate entry on the island dependencies of Sanyu, that is, Jiamayan 加麻延 (Calamian), Balao-you 巴佬酉 (Palawan [?], Penon de Corón [?], that was famous for birds' nests), and Bajinong 巴吉弄 (Busuanga [?]),¹⁶ which clearly indicates that in the thirteenth century merchants from the Philippine Archipelago were still distinguished according to the islands or ports from which they came to China.

The hypothesis of early commercial relations with the Philippines is increasingly supported by archaeological evidence. The Ayala Museum and Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines organized an exhibition from September 5 to October 10, 2017, presenting Fujian wares excavated in the Philippine Islands.¹⁷ This exhibition displayed export wares from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, attesting to the assumption that during the Song, and especially the Yuan period, commercial relations between China and the Philippine islands gradually became more and more frequent and routine. Song ceramics have, for example, been found near Butuan on Mindanao.¹⁸ These finds do, of course, not tell us how and when exactly the Chinese ceramics had been shipped there. A direct route is possible, but also a triangular trade connection via Vietnam or other places in Southeast Asia.

A shipwreck dated to approximately the year 1000 with ninth-century earthenware and elephant tusks has been discovered in 1991 north of Luzon. Artefacts recovered suggest a trade with Sri Lanka.¹⁹ A Southern Song dynasty

13 Hirth and Rockhill 1911, 159–160.

14 The sea around the island is described as being full of dangerous rocks, sharper than swords and lances (*ibid.*, 160).

15 Hirth and Rockhill 1911, 160.

16 Hirth and Rockhill 1911, 161–163.

17 Ayala Museum 2017.

18 Ptak 2007, 168.

19 Bennett 2012, 2.

(approx. 1150) ship cargo of stoneware pots, Chinese ceramics, iron and lead ingots probably from China, has been discovered southwest of Palawan (Breaker Reef Wreck), a Chinese trader junk from ca. 1260, loaded with stoneware pots, in north Palawan, and another Chinese junk (Investigator Shoal Wreck, ca. 1280), salvaged off Kalayaan, Palawan, with a cargo of Chinese celadons and Qingbai ceramics as well as tea.²⁰ Some archaeological evidence stems from the regions of Pangasinan, the coast of Lingayen Gulf from Bolinao (Zambales) to Balaoan (La Union), and the delta of the Agno River. From China's Song period onwards, people in Pangasinan used porcelain jars for wine, and, according to an early Spanish account in the sixteenth century, even ordinary people were wearing Chinese silk and Chinese cotton garments.²¹

Speaking about Yuan maritime expansion, of course we also need to consider the issue of overseas Chinese, especially Muslim, communities. Archaeological and textual evidence strongly suggest that a majority of Chinese Muslims on the Philippines originally migrated from Fujian, Quanzhou in particular, and many came during Yuan times. The *Malay Annals of Sēmarang and Cērbon* equally refer to Quanzhou as the place of origin for Filipino Muslim communities.²² Close commercial relations must already have existed during the Mongol Yuan period. In addition, descendants of Muslim officials from Fujian, who had formerly been merchants, were vested with the authority to collect and transport taxes during Yuan rule, and these Muslims also maintained close commercial relations overseas.²³

Wang Dayuan 汪大淵 (1311–1350), in his *Daoyi zhilüe* 島夷誌略 (1349) in fact supplies the earliest extant description of the Sulu Islands, the Moluccas and the Banda Islands, the Klabat region of Sulawesi (if the name in question has been correctly identified), and the large island of Timor.²⁴ He states that males from Sanyu (Palawan [?] or Luzon [?]) frequently board overseas vessels and come to Quanzhou to trade (男子常附舶至泉州經紀).²⁵ This statement strongly supports the argument that already during Yuan times, Fujian's commercial links to the Philippines were significant. Later, when the Spanish arrived in Manila, the maritime trade route between Fujian and Luzon was converted

20 Ibid.

21 Tremml-Werner 2015, 97, with reference to Scott 1994, 248.

22 Chaffee 2018, 173.

23 See Mukai 2012.

24 Ptak 2016.

25 *Daoyi zhilüe*, 23.

[...] into the first link of a transoceanic commercial chain that achieved an average of several dozen junks a year, in which people, silver, pottery, silk and spices, knowledge and everyday supplies for the city of Manila and its defence travelled.²⁶

Ming-Qing

Many Chinese settled in the Philippines in the course of the Ming dynasty, and Manila with its harbour Cavite emerged as an important hub for international trade, connecting China and East Asia with the Indian Ocean world and the Asia-Pacific region. In Chinese sources, the Spanish were generally referred to as Ganxila 干係臘/幹係臘, Gansila 幹絲臘, Shibanya 是班呀 / 是班牙 or Folangji 佛郎機 (actually the general reference to the Portuguese). Describing the diversity of life in Manila on the Philippines, the Spanish Dominican missionary, Juan de Cobo [Gao Muxian 高母美, in Chinese] (ca. 1546–1592), noted in a letter written in July 1589 that

[a]mong all these peoples are the Chinese, whose numbers here are untold and who outnumber everyone else.²⁷

This was the situation in late Ming times when Chinese merchants, especially and above all from Fujian, regularly sailed to Manila for doing business there. They were called *sangleys*, an expression derived from the Chinese term *changlai* 常來, meaning “to come with frequency” (some historians also interpret it as *shanglai* 商來, meaning “to come to do business or to trade”), and

[...] they carried all kinds of damasks, silks, porcelains, sugar, oranges, pepper, flour, medicinal drugs, musk and other perfumes, mercury, painted trunks”, etc. (Miguel López de Legazpi (1502–1572), August 11, 1572).²⁸

As Igawa Kenji has shown, the Philippine Islands developed as an important crossroads in the (South) East Asian waters in the course of the sixteenth century, with clandestine trade, “piracy” and trade complementing each other. Especially when the Chinese government enforced their anti-piracy campaigns in the sixteenth century, more and more islands along the Chinese coastal regions and beyond disappeared as safe haven and a place for organising their networks. Consequently, the Philippines came to serve as a geographically-speaking well located,

26 Ollé 2019.

27 Crewe 2017, 18, with reference to Antonio de Remesal, *Historia de la provincia de S. Vicente de Chyapa y Guatemala de la orden de nuestro glorioso padre Sancto Domingo* (Madrid: 1629), 680–681.

28 AGI, Patronato, 24, to be downloaded from <http://www.upf.edu/asia/projectes/che/s16/lega1572.htm>.

[...] accessible choice for traders and pirates operating in the greater China Seas region. Clearly, Spain also needed the Philippines as a centre of their [own] activities in the western Pacific Ocean instead of the Moluccas.²⁹

According to *Mingshi*, Luzon was a country located in the Southern Seas (Nanhai), close to Zhangzhou 漳州. In 1405, 8th month, Emperor Yongle supposedly sent officials (*qianguan* 遣官) with an imperial letter with instructions to Luzon to appease and pacify (*fuyu* 撫諭) the country.³⁰ The event is also recorded in *Ming shilu* 明實錄 (10th month, 5th day, or 27 October 1405):

Envoys were sent to take Imperial proclamations for the soothing and instruction of the six countries of Fan-su-er, Mi-nang-ge-bu, Luzon, Ma-ye-weng, Nan-wu-li and Suo-luo.³¹

The second entry states:

A banquet was conferred upon Man-di-li-ha-lu, the uncle of the king of the country of Bo-ni, as well as upon Li You and other envoys and chieftains from Pangasinan and the country of Luzon in the Eastern Ocean...³²

In 1410 (Yongle 8) Luzon sent tribute together with Fengjiashilan 馮嘉施蘭, that is Pangasinan).³³ *Dongxiyang kao* 東西洋考, too, mentions a king of Luzon sending a special envoy to China at the beginning of the fifteenth century.³⁴ The envoy is said to have presented tribute to the Yongle emperor. Luzon is described as being situated so near to Zhangzhou in Fujian that many of the local Chinese used to go there for trade. Chinese were trading with the natives of some of the islands, especially those where gold was produced. In exchange the Chinese would offer textiles, weapons, and trifles of all kinds.³⁵ Most of the merchants were actually from either Zhangzhou or Guangzhou.

Although this falls under the initial period of the Zheng He expeditions, Zheng He is not mentioned at all. This can, therefore, not be taken as evidence that Zheng He visited the Philippines.³⁶ Any official could have been sent there. The text also continues that after the mission in 1410, nobody came again from this region for a long time. After the Yongle reign, there is only a little information about contacts with the Philippines. The next entry in *Ming shilu* only

29 Igawa 2010, 82.

30 *Mingshi* 323.8370.

31 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/yong-le/year-3-month-10-day-5.

32 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/yong-le/year-8-month-11-day-15.

33 *Mingshi* 323.8370.

34 *Dongxiyang kao* 5.89.

35 Chan 1978, 53.

36 Some scholars are obviously convinced that Zheng He also visited the Philippines. This is also discussed, for example, in Hsu 2005.

stems from 1576, more than 150 years later, and is related to the fights against the pirate Lin Feng 林鳳 (Limahon), who had fled to Luzon in 1571, after he was defeated off the Guangdong coast by Chinese naval forces.

In 1567, the 200-years private maritime trade proscription was lifted and the Fujian port of Yuegang 月港 (Haicheng 海澄, Amoy), located on the borderline between Quan and Zhang prefectures, was opened to foreign trade. It gradually emerged as the centre of trade with Southeast Asia. With the opening of maritime trade at Yuegang administrative structures were changed as well. A customs checkpoint was set up to oversee maritime traffic to and from Yuegang, and the Customs Taxation Office for Military Supplies replaced the former Coastal Defence Circuit (*haifang guan*) during the Longqing reign period (1567–1572).³⁷ Its importance was further enhanced when the naval base was moved from Wuyu 浯嶼 to the island of Amoy.³⁸ The Ming court, of course, sought to control this newly opened port.

A by-product of this supervision and the court's anti-piracy campaigns was that more and more islands along the Chinese coastal regions and beyond disappeared as safe haven and place for organizing illegal trading networks, so that the Philippine Archipelago moved into the centre of "illegal" activities. Against this background, a triangular trade between China, Luzon and Japan emerged, and Manila also developed as a principal port of call for both Chinese and Japanese ships. In this context, we have to understand the activities of Lin Feng. The Chinese general Liu Yaohui 劉堯誨 asked the local Luzon king to attack the pirates and burn their ships. Liu even sent a fleet to assist him.³⁹ The archipelago was, thus, no longer of interest to the Ming court, and only returned to the agenda in relation to the enforced anti-piracy campaigns of the government in the late sixteenth century.

The events are described in *Ming shilu*:

The Fujian Grand Coordinator Liu Yao-hui reported: "The Regional Commander Zhang Yuan-xun [張元勳] supervised troops in executing the Guang-dong bandit Zhu Liang-bao [朱/諸良寶]. The fugitive bandit Lin Feng then called together his band of 10,000 persons and they fled eastward. The Fu-jian Regional Commander Hu Shou-ren [胡守仁] pursued them, and summoned the fisherman Liu Yi-dao [劉以道] to instruct the Eastern *fan* to cooperate in eliminating them. Thereupon the bandits fled to a distance."⁴⁰

37 *Dongxiyang kao* 7.134; on page 153, it says "during the Wanli reign period", i.e. between 1573 and 1619. No concrete date is provided.

38 Ng 2015, 46, with reference to *Quanzhou fuzhi* (1763 ed.), 25.22a.

39 Igawa 2010, 80.

40 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-2-month-6-day-10.

Lin Feng could escape but he came back in late 1574 and raided Manila.⁴¹ The city was attacked with reportedly seventy ships and a crew of 3,000 pirates and several hundreds of Japanese soldiers to assist him. A Chinese fleet, under the command of Wang Wanggao 王望高 (Omoncón in Spanish records), assisted the Spanish armada under Juan de Salcedo (1549–1576) to defeat Lin Feng. Combined forces sailed to Quanzhou in July 1575.⁴² That troops were sent to Luzon in 1575 to pursue the pirate Lin Daoqian 林道乾⁴³ is also mentioned in *Mingshi*.⁴⁴ When the Chinese government thus enforced their anti-piracy campaigns, more and more islands along the Chinese coastal regions and beyond disappeared as safe haven and place of organizing their networks. Consequently, the Philippines came to serve as a geographically speaking well located,

[...] accessible choice for traders and pirates operating in the greater China Seas region. Clearly, Spain also needed the Philippines as a centre of their activities in the western Pacific Ocean instead of the Moluccas.⁴⁵

On September 27, 1576, Liu Yaohui memorialized:

The *yi* troops of Luzon defeated the bandit Lin Feng at sea, burnt ships and took heads. However, Feng burst through the cordon and fled. The Squad Leader Wang Wang-gao and others then took more heads. [...].⁴⁶

Talking about Luzon, *Mingshi* speaks primarily about the pirates, especially Lin Feng. But one other incident (1593) is also described in some detail, that is the story of how a certain Pan Hewu 潘和五 stabbed the Spanish governor of the Philippines, Don Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas (1519–1593; governor of the Phil-

41 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-2-month-10-day-20: “The Fu-jian pirate Lin Feng fled from Peng-hu to Wang Port in the Eastern *fan*. The Regional Commander Hu Shou-ren and the Assistant Regional Commander Hu Liang-peng pursued and attacked him, and sent instructions to the *fan* people, requiring that they launch a pincer attack. The bandits’ ships were reduced to ashes.”

42 Igawa 2010, 80, with reference to Retana 1910, 21, and Staunton 1856, vol. 2, 59.

43 See also Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-8-month-intercalary-4-day-14: “The pirate Lin Dao-qian had occupied islands in the ocean and was bringing calamities through sudden appearances and rapid disappearances. The generals and troops were unable to apprehend him and he used Patani and Siam as his lairs. Subsequently, he threatened Patani and engaged in violent attacks on Siam, and an interpreter noted that those countries wished to offer their services by capturing him. Liu Yao-hui, the supreme commander of Guang-dong/Guang-xi proposed that a reward for him be again established, as thereby he would certainly be captured. The ministry re-submitted the proposal as a request and the Emperor approved it.”

44 *Mingshi* 323.8370.

45 Igawa 2010, 82.

46 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-4-month-9-day-6.

ippines from December 3, 1593 to July 14, 1596; in Chinese 郎雷敝裏系勝).⁴⁷ Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas had by force seized Chinese, many of whom were peaceable merchants and artisans, from the Parian in Manila to assist him with an attack on the Moluccas. In addition, he had forced a number of Chinese traders and sailors who had just arrived in Manila to become his soldiers. Pan Hewu was reportedly the leader of this group of 250 Chinese. But they were defeated on the Moluccas and Hewu decided to revolt with his men. They killed Dasmariñas and took all the gold, valuables and military equipment of the Spanish, escaping to Annam. There, they were robbed by local people, but, being near to another ship, a certain Guo Weitai 郭惟太 and some thirty-two other people seized it and then returned. The son of Don Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, Luis Pérez Dasmariñas Páez de Sotomayor, learned about this incident from them. Leading his troops, he passed quickly on to Manila and sent a priest to China to report about the wrong done to his father. He requested that the war junks and all the valuables be returned and that those who had incurred his enmity be executed, thus offering retribution for his father. The governor, Xu Fuyuan 許孚遠, pardoned Weitai, Hewu remained in Annam and did not dare to return. The priest was sent back. In Manila, the Spanish expelled the Chinese to an outer part of the city. This was because Dasmariñas feared that the Chinese might join Japanese pirates and raiders. Xu Fuyuan thereupon sent an envoy to Manila to invite the Chinese to come back to China. The “barbarians” (*man*) then provided them with provisions for their return journey.

It is namely so that Chinese merchants are keen on profit, they do not care to risk their lives, so for a long time they again dwelt together in the city.⁴⁸

Ming shilu explains:

The son of the head chieftain of Luzon has complained that some of our evil people who had attached themselves to their tribe, had attacked and killed his father, before stealing valuables and fleeing. The Ministry of War re-submitted the memorial and proposed: ‘We should capture the offenders and punish them in accordance with the law. Further, we should entertain and send back the chieftain’s envoy both to strengthen their desire to look towards the Court, and also to use the occasion to spy on the situation of the Japanese *yi*.’ This was approved by Imperial command.⁴⁹

47 *Mingshi* 323.8370-8371. This passage is translated in Laufer 1908, 261-262. The events, as Laufer, explains are confirmed by Spanish authors.

48 *Mingshi* 323.8371. *Mingshi* then continues with discussing the mining tax and the profits that can be made in Luzon with gold and silver.

49 Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-22-month-10-day-3.

The developments within China can, consequently, not be separated from the advent of the Europeans in the East Asian waters, and their increasing trade activities. The Portuguese occupied Malacca in 1511 and officially established their trading centre in Macau in 1557. First the Spanish (1626 to 1641) and then the Dutch occupied Taiwan (they settled on Taiwan in 1624, built a fort, “Zeelandia” and were eventually expelled by Zheng Chenggong (1624–1662) = Koxinga in 1662). With the Spanish colonization of the Philippines in 1565 – Manila was founded in 1571 – maritime trade reached a new quantity and quality, as China, and Asia in general, became henceforth linked with Spanish America through the Spanish Manila Galleon trade (1565–1815). China was, thus, eventually linked with places in Mexico, Peru, and their hinterlands, a significant further step in the historical development of globalization that connected China with Europe across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, in addition to the Indian Ocean and Cape route connections that had developed earlier. In other words, China was linked up with both the Old World and the New World.

Ming China’s Need for Silver

It is an established fact that the late Ming dynasty was in urgent need of financial resources. Was there, consequently, no curiosity about all the silver that reached the Philippines via the Spanish trans-Pacific galleon trade? Although Chinese settlers in the Philippines were involved in practically all steps of the galleon trade after the Spanish occupation of the island, for example as shipbuilders, harbor personnel and even sailors on ships to Acapulco

[...] the majority of the jobs at Cavite shipyard, for example, were filled by Filipino and Chinese employees and they were paid only a minimal salary.⁵⁰

Obviously little knowledge about the origins of all the silver was circulating among Ming officials.

A closer reading of the sources, however, shows that scholars and local officials were engaged with the question of where all the gold, and particularly silver that they received on Luzon from the Spanish, came from. In order to take care of the consolidation of state finances, eunuchs were dispatched by the central government throughout the country to function as overseers of local mines (*kuangjian* 礦監) or as tax commissioners (*shuishhi* 稅使). Between 1562 and 1566, a pilot program, the *yitiao bianfa* 一條鞭法 (single-whip-tax reform) was put into practice. By the late sixteenth century, land tax, labour service and all

50 Fish 2011, 129.

the miscellaneous levies were converted into a single silver payment.⁵¹ Following the repeal of the maritime ban in 1567, the Ming government designated Yuegang 月港 in Fujian as the home port for Chinese merchants who received licenses to embark on overseas trading expeditions. Maritime trade soon experienced an hitherto unknown peak. One of the eunuchs dispatched to the coastal provinces to seek for more financial resources was Gao Cai 高案,⁵² a reportedly ruthless official, who was sent to Fujian. He energetically supported the initiative of a naval expedition to Luzon that was suggested by a military official, Yan Yinglong 閻應龍, because rumours had it that the island was full of gold and silver.

Mount Ji yi

Rumours also had it that a certain Mount Ji yi 機易山 (also 加溢, 交逸 or 佳逸), probably Cavite (?), the harbour of the Spanish on Luzon, would produce huge amounts of gold and silver.⁵³ The military official Yan Yinglong, and a local merchant called Zhang Yi 張巖 memorialized to the emperor that a certain

[...] Mt. Ji yi in Haicheng County, Fujian, produces gold and silver and by proceeding there by ship to wash for it, it will be possible to obtain 100,000 *liang* of gold and 300,000 *liang* of silver every year.⁵⁴

The Philippines had deposits of gold on the islands of Camarines and Mindanao and also Luzon itself operated gold mines in a more remote region, but silver – the metal definitely of much more importance to the Chinese – was not known to be found locally.⁵⁵

51 *Tianxia junguo libing shu*, 17b (原編七冊).

52 He was also involved in negotiations with the Dutch. In 1604, when the Dutch admiral Wijbrand van Waerwijck (Weimalang 韋麻郎 or Maweilang 麻韋郎, 1569–1615?) arrived on Taiwan with three ships, he dispatched the Fujianese merchant Li Jin 李錦 from Pattani on the Malay coast, to go to Fuzhou to negotiate with Gao Cai. After the reception of a certain sum of money, Gao should write a favourable report to the throne on behalf of the Dutch request to obtain a trading privilege on Taiwan. The new governor of Fujian, Xu Xueju 徐學聚 (*jinsbi* 1583), opposed to this arrangement, sent Shen Yourong 沈有容 (1557–1627) with a fleet of fifty ships to Taiwan to negotiate with the Dutch. Shen, eventually, persuaded the Dutch to leave without concluding any transactions with Gao Cai by promising to send Chinese merchants to trade at Pattani. See Goodrich and Fang 1976, vol. 2, 1193.

53 See also *Minsbu* 39.977; “Jiuqing Jiyishan kaicai shu (qing ba Fujian kaicai)” 九卿機易山開採疏 (請罷福建開採), by Zhao Shiqing 趙世卿 (?–1615). *Huang Ming jingshi wenbian*, vol. 25, 411.338–341.

54 *Ming shilu* 112.7036–7039 (Shenzong, 374.9b–11a); tr. Wade, MSL, ~ / reign / wan-li / year-30-month-7-day-27.

55 Cao Jin 2018, 106.

Dongxiyang kao speaks of gold and silver as local products⁵⁶ and provides some further insights: “There is also this matter about the Ji yi Mountain”, a story brought up by a strange man called Zhang Yi 張巖:

In Lüsung there is a Ji yi Mountain, on which golden beans grow all by themselves. One could send people there to collect them and, in this way, gain enormous profits.⁵⁷

In 1603, a delegation including the Vice Magistrate of Haicheng, Wang Shihe 王時和 (fl. 16/17th cent.), and the local Company Commander Gan Yicheng 干一成 were dispatched in order to investigate the territory.⁵⁸ The Spanish in Manila were of course concerned when the Chinese “delegation” arrived, and were very astonished to hear about a tree that would grow gold beans (*jindou* 金豆), asking what kind of tree this should be? Zhang Yi just replied:

This place is full of gold, there is no need to ask where the beans come from. Yi wanted to use the order of the imperial court to attack and occupy the country, but he did not dare to speak this out clearly. The foreigners all laughed.⁵⁹

The whole undertaking, however, failed in the end. Zhang Yi was captured and only released after some negotiations, and the expedition eventually returned home, where he was eventually executed due to his false reports in early 1605:

The Fu-jian mining taxation Eunuch Director Gao Cai had, on receipt of Imperial orders, sent officers across the sea and they had ascertain that Ji-yi did not produce gold and silver. Thus he submitted impeachments against the evil official Zhang Yi and the Company Commander Yan Ying-long for submitting a false memorial. It was Imperially commanded that, as Zhang Yi had made wild claims, the Eunuch Gao Cai was, together with the grand coordinator and the regional inspector, to send officers to arrest him and send him to the capital, and that he be subject to investigation together with the Company Commander Yan Ying-long (December 1603).⁶⁰

[...] The Emperor said. “Zhang Yi and so on have deceived and lied to the Court. They have also initiated troubles abroad leading to the slaughter of 30,000 merchants. This has harmed majesty, and bequeathed calamity. Death will not expiate their crimes. Have them immediately executed, and their heads displayed throughout that province. The Luzon *fan* chieftain has killed officials and civilians without authority. Have the grand coordinator and regional inspector deliberate on appropriate arrangements and memorialize so that a decision can be made.”⁶¹

56 *Dongxiyang kao* 5.91.

57 *Dongxiyang kao*, 5.91.

58 *Dongxiyang kao*, 5.91; see also *Mingshi* 28.8371.

59 *Dongxiyang kao*, 92.

60 *Ming shilu* 113.7338 (Shenzong, 390.4b), in: Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-31-month-11-day-12.

61 *Ming shilu* 114.7547-7548 (Shenzong, 404.3a-b); tr. Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-32-month-12-day-13.

Interesting is also that the section on Luzon in *Mingshi* speaks about the taxation of mines and highlights the silver and gold output from Luzon:

Annually one can get 100,000 *liang* of gold and 300,000 *liang* of silver. [...]. All the bandits and pirates were getting very wealthy. Your servant has heard (臣聞) that the Maritime Trade Officer of Haicheng, Gao Cai, reportedly taxes 30,000 gold (*liang*?) annually, he definitely does not neglect any efforts to yield profit. And as far as the Jiye (Mountain) is concerned, it lies far away in overseas (越在海外), and there also is no place anywhere in the world full of gold and silver, people are appointed to manage its extraction. How is it possible that the words about the 100,000 (*liang*?) of gold and the 300,000 of silver are taken for true? But to falsely borrow dynastic orders recklessly exporting prohibited items without permission, seducing all the foreigners, carrying out illegal plans in an outrageous manner, this is more than annoying for public and private, and it brings calamity to the district of Haicheng!⁶²

This entry, in addition to a critique of the power of eunuchs, suggests that Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 (1672–1755) and the other editors of *Mingshi* were aware of the fact that the large quantities of silver did not come from the Philippines but from a country far away in overseas – even though they had obviously no idea and did not care about where exactly this country was located. The expression “your servant has heard” is frequently used in making a powerful argument to advise the ruler or to summarize a case in point.

Gao Cai had been dispatched as a Superintendent of Maritime Trade and should concurrently regulate the mining matters.⁶³ In 1599, the Wanli Emperor (r. 1573–1619) discussed the empire’s customs duties anew and appointed the three eunuchs: Liu Cheng 劉成, Gao Cai, and Li Feng 李鳳⁶⁴ to manage the Maritime Trade Offices in Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong respectively. They also received the authority and responsibility over the taxation of maritime trade.⁶⁵ Obviously, when the government urgently needed more financial resources for the suppression of piracy along its coasts, the commercial relations with Luzon were very welcome. *Dongxiyang kao* also informs us that shortly after the eunuch Zhao Xianyi’s 趙賢意 was appointed as supervisor of the Customs Taxation Office for Military Supplies (*duxiang guan* 督餉館),

[...] eunuchs unexpectedly seized the economic rights to the administration of maritime trade, and the offices of the administrators was thereupon abolished.⁶⁶

62 *Mingshi* 323.8371-8372.

63 *Dongxiyang kao* 8.155.

64 Li Feng reportedly privately shipped up to thirty huge boats with bribery and 300 big carriers. *Mingshi* 323.8373.

65 Li Jingming 1990, 78.

66 *Dongxi yangkao* 7.148.

Principally, various higher officials remained very suspicious of these reports. *Ming shilu* records a memorial of Censor-in-chief of the Left Wen Chun 溫純 (1593–1607), who warned the emperor not to believe in such fantastic stories:

Yan Ying-long and Zhang Yi have submitted a memorial on being able to bring in 100,000 [*liang*] of gold and 300,000 [*liang*] of silver, through maritime trading. Their words are truly like a comedy. However, even the Emperor, with his Heavenly wisdom and perspicacity, has considered the claims possible. We are alarmed and shaken and are unable to eat or sleep. We are afraid that at some time troops will have to be raised and calamities will occur, and that this will require incalculable millions of the Imperial funds. Also, it is not known if it will be possible to defeat them. If it is not possible to defeat them, the calamity will not only be a financial one [...].

So, he further suggested:

We humbly consider that although Mt. Ji-yi is overseas, it is not an area where bountiful gold and silver litter the ground, or a place where anyone can wish for and obtain these things. It is also considered that the tax-collecting eunuchs, the evil military officials and their followers constitute the power on which the various evil-doers depend. This may be effective in China, but will certainly not be so among the foreign *yi* peoples. From where then will come this 100,000 [*liang*] of gold and 300,000 [*liang*] of silver which has been reported on to the Emperor? Their aim is nothing more than to provide a pretext for the issue of an Imperial order by which the strict prohibitions on communication with the *fan* would be greatly relaxed. The greater the amounts of saltpetre, unworked iron ore, military weapons and ships that can be gotten past the prohibitions, the greater the profits. Then, with full cargoes and sails hoisted, the ships will be able to go anywhere. Thereby military secrets will leak, out and the various countries will be enticed to come. How can it be thought that the only calamities will be confusion of public and private trade through intimidation and deceit, and trouble just for the city of Hai-cheng!⁶⁷

We shall not discuss here the subsequent massacre of the Chinese in Manila that was committed by the Spanish in the aftermath of this incident.⁶⁸ Local officials, of course, discussed the reasons for the massacre and related it to the search of the Chinese for the silver and gold producing mountain in Luzon. Li Tingji 李廷機 (1542–1616), a native of Quanzhou, for example, in a letter that was probably written shortly after the massacre had happened, clearly states that it was the Chinese curiosity about the Ji-yi Mountain that caused the anger of the Spanish and consequently prompted the massacre. The local Chinese had been blamed for having informed China about all this gold and silver.⁶⁹ Otherwise, officials

67 *Ming shilu* 112.7036-7039 (Shenzong, 374.9b-11a); tr. Wade, MSL, ~/reign/wan-li/year-30-month-7-day-27.

68 For the massacre see, for example, Borao 1998; also Gil 2011, 149-163.

69 See Cao Jin 2018, 111-112, with reference to *Li Wenjie ji*, *juan* 14.

were, of course, aware of the great business opportunities that existed in Luzon for merchants from Fujian, and the great quantities of silver that could be procured through the Luzon trade connection; but, at least officially, no further attempts were undertaken to explore the origins of all the silver in the Spanish Philippines.

The fact that Luzon was a source of silver did of course not entirely disappear from the minds of scholars and local officials. Also, officials who did not believe in these fancy stories about gold or silver-bearing trees, could not deny that there definitely was a source of silver overseas. Where, after all, should all the silver that Chinese merchants regularly shipped to Fujian in exchange for Chinese products come from? As we will see below, further information was particularly provided by Jesuit missionaries, and probably also merchants.

As Cao Jin has noted, there are

[...] certain details indicating that knowledge of the Chinese could have been somewhat closer to the truth than can be assumed from their own sources.⁷⁰

In a Spanish translation of a letter to the Spanish governor, originally written in Chinese, which was said to have arrived four days ahead of the Chinese delegation to Luzon,

Cavite is called “one lonely mountain in the midst of the widespread sea” and it is stated that the people living close to this mountain “store [the precious metals] up to trade with the Sangleys (i.e. Chinese living on the Philippines) who come there to trade so that they may buy their property.” According to these passages, a stretch of sea needed to be crossed to reach the mountain, which was obviously done by Chinese in the Philippines who sold Chinese products to obtain precious metals.⁷¹

The “lonely mountain in the midst of the widespread sea” is not only portrayed on contemporary maps, as we will see below, but this description actually resembles the usage of portraying important countries and locations within maritime space during Song times. Being an “island in the sea”, during Song times obviously stood as a metaphor or symbol for the significance of a place (country, port, island) in China’s contemporary maritime trade system.⁷² This usage Cavite being an island in the sea would fit perfectly into this same concept.

70 See Cao Jin 2018, 109.

71 Cao Jin 2018, 108-109, with reference to Blair and Robertson, vol. 12 (1906), 88.

72 Schottenhammer 2017, 156.

China and the Manila Galleon Trade

The Spanish galleons brought mainly silver ingots, Spanish coins, and some American products like wines, sweet potatoes, chocolate and cacao or tobacco back across the Pacific to Manila, from where in particular silver was shipped further to China (especially Fujian) in exchange for Chinese goods, above all silks, porcelains, but also a great variety of other items ranging from handicraft goods like ivory figurines, writing desks to agricultural products like fruits or flour. Chinese junks brought their goods from Fujian ports (mainly Yuegang) to Manila, where the cargoes were reloaded in the galleons bound for Acapulco and the Spanish markets of the Americas. As a result of the flourishing trade with Luzon, concentrated at Zhangzhou, in the late sixteenth century, Quanzhou officials even suggested a demarcation to separate maritime trading spheres between Quanzhou and Zhangzhou – a plan that due to the strong opposition of Zhangzhou officials could eventually not be carried out.⁷³

Thriving commerce may be conceived just from quantities of silver that flowed into China from Spanish America via Manila alone. The lucrative silver import trade associated with Manila was, of course, also an important motivation to shift trading activities to the Philippine Archipelago, especially Luzon, where “the locals paid everything in silver and there was plenty.”⁷⁴ In 1659, the Casa de Contratación in Sevilla announced that Peru alone annually shipped a quantity of 500,000 pesos of silver via Acapulco to China in exchange for Chinese and Asian goods. An estimated 33 to 40 percent of the silver output of Mexico and Peru, which when combined accounted for approximately 85 percent of global production between 1500 and 1800, flowed to China. Spanish galleons sailing from Manila to Acapulco carried between 300 and 500 boxes containing bales of Chinese silks on average (approximately 30 to 52 metric tons, an amount that increased to up to 238 to 716 metric tons in the early eighteenth century, when Spain began to transport larger quantities of raw silk).⁷⁵ The quantities of silver imported into China in return varied, for example, with such limited factors as the revival of piracy, for example during the late sixteenth century, or with trade bans, such as the brief but impactful embargo of trade with China and Macao issued by Don Pedro de Quiroga y Moya in 1636, empowered by the Spanish crown to investigate and regulate the Manila galleon trade,

73 Ng 2015, 47.

74 *Chunming menyū lu* 42.41a-b.

75 Deng 1997a, 275.

and the subsequent Chinese insurrection, suppressed by the Spanish in 1639–40, that once and again weakened Chinese merchant activities in Manila.

After 1627 in particular, Chinese “illegal” or informal – from the Chinese government perspective – trading fleets shifted their focus of operations towards areas dominated by the Zheng 鄭 family. Members of the Zheng family had successfully built up a large and influential Ming loyalist maritime empire in Taiwan – led in succession by Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍, Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624–1662), and Zheng Jing 鄭經 – in the mid-seventeenth century.⁷⁶ When Zheng Zhilong managed to control the trade route to Manila (and to Dutch Taiwan), this coincided with his surrender to the Qing court in 1646, and the legal recognition of his maritime company by Chinese authorities of Fujian in exchange for the pacification of the Taiwan Straits, including control of various smuggling and pirate networks.⁷⁷

Zheng Chenggong, alias Coxinga,⁷⁸ took part between 1647 and 1662 in a triangular trade involving Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines; his fleet to Japan alone comprised fifty ships a year. In the late 1650s, he had begun quite successfully to raid cities in northern Zhejiang and the Zhoushan Islands with perhaps as many as 1,000 ships, and about 130,000 soldiers. The sea routes between Japan, Taiwan, Luzon and Batavia were controlled by merchant fleets operating from southern Fukianese ports like Quanzhou and Xiamen (Amoy). This change also affected old trading networks of Zhangzhou that were largely relocated south towards Guangzhou and Portuguese Macao due to pressure of the Dutch on Taiwan. The annual profit from his Japanese trade has been estimated at 550,000 *liang* of silver and the total profit from overseas trade each year at 2.3–2.7 million *liang* of silver.⁷⁹

Between 1644, the founding year of the Manchu Qing dynasty, and 1662, when Zheng Chenggong, who was considered a pirate or “sea bandit” (*haini* 海逆), expelled the Dutch from Taiwan, one can also observe a decrease in the quantity of and irregularity of Chinese ships sailing to Manila – Zheng Chenggong in 1662 even threatened to conquer Manila, before he passed away from Malaria in the summer of the same year – and a recovery in the momentum of

76 Relations of Zheng Zhilong, Zheng Chenggong and Zheng Jing with Manila and the Philippines are introduced in Ollé 2009.

77 Ollé 2009, 92–93.

78 This is a westernization of the Chinese expression “Guoxingye” 國姓爺, literally “Lord (permitted to carry) the surname of the imperial family”.

79 Deng 1997a, 255.

trade between Fujian, Taiwan and Manila when the Kangxi Emperor eventually defeated the Zheng clan in 1683, and reopened maritime trade in 1684.

The situation during the Ming-Qing conquest, especially the fight between Manchu troops and Coxinga, has been described by Cheng Wei-chung.⁸⁰ In 1656, Coxinga, for example, declared an embargo on all Chinese shipping to Manila.⁸¹ After he had seized Taiwan from the Dutch in 1662, he demanded from the Spanish authorities in Manila to pay him tribute – a demand that resulted in another bloody massacre of Chinese in Manila.⁸² The conflict with Coxinga, who passed away in 1662, and his successors, in 1661, prompted Kangxi not only to prohibit private people to sail abroad but even to order an evacuation of the coastal population from the coasts to the hinterlands, in order to cut off Coxinga and his successors, the Zheng “rebels” on Taiwan, from their human and material resources on the mainland. This evacuation or relocation of the entire southeastern coastal strip, referred to as *qianjie ling* 遷界令 in Chinese, was not lifted before 1669 and of course seriously affected maritime trade.

In 1683, after defeating the Zheng and occupying Taiwan, Kangxi repealed the maritime embargo enacted to isolate the Zheng, and re-opened Chinese ports to foreign trade. He was also convinced that trade with foreigners would benefit China. The complete reorganization and restructuring of the institutions and personnel responsible for the administration of maritime trade in the Kangxi era attests to the changed attitude towards foreign trade.

A Note on Taxation

In 1571 (*longqing* 5), the Ming rulers had initiated a new dual taxation system (*gaiding zhangchou zhi li* 該定丈抽之例), the *xiangshui zhi* 餉稅制 or *zhangchou shouyin zhi* 丈抽收銀制, replacing the former *choufen zhi* 抽分制, commodity taxation in kind. Following the new system, taxes were first, imposed according to the size (width and tonnage) of the ships (*zhang* 丈; also *chuanshui* 船稅 or *boxiang* 船餉), and secondly, according to the cargo or the value of commodities

80 Cheng 2013, passim, esp. chapter eleven, e.g. 169-179.

81 Cheng 2013, 177. During a short truce between Manchu troops and Coxinga the same year, even false rumours spread around Midanao that Coxinga was preparing a large fleet to conquer the Philippines. A galleon that was expected from Acapulco that year ran aground on the northern tip of Luzon. The Spanish later tried to salvage the silver from the wreck (ibid., 175-176).

82 Cheng 2013, 225.

loaded (*chou* 抽). This kind of taxation was obviously maintained until the re-opening of maritime trade under the Kangxi Emperor.⁸³

Haicheng merchants in particular had requested more licenses for their trade with Luzon. In 1589, sixteen licenses were reserved for Luzon, a quantity that had risen to 137 issued at Haicheng by 1597. The number of ships arriving at Manila, whether licensed or not, rose significantly during this period: from annually nine between 1577–1578 to forty-eight in 1588 and to between fifteen and forty by the late 1590s.⁸⁴ In the early seventeenth century, 1611–1612, an estimated 91.5 percent of Manila's total customs revenue stemmed from Chinese merchants' ships calling at the port.⁸⁵ After 1589, Chinese junks returning from Manila carried almost exclusively the famous silver pieces-of-eight (reales de à ocho) as cargo. The silver exports from the Philippines to China rose accordingly, reaching a peak with 7,730,500 pesos in the years 1606 to 1610, as table 1 may show.

Table 1: Estimates of Silver Exports from the Philippines to China, 1586–1615⁸⁶

Year/period	Value of exports by Chinese junks (in pesos)
1586–1590	625,000
1591–1595	3,827,500
1596–1600	4,026,000
1601–1605	5,017,333
1606–1610	7,730,500
1611–1615	4,479,700

Because the Chinese merchants who traded with Luzon, as a rule, returned with mostly silver and only a few taxable commodities, the government decided to introduce a new tax especially imposed on ships trading with Luzon. It was called *jiazengxiang* 加增餉 and was meant to compensate for the lack of tax revenue otherwise. The tax was first fixed at 150 *liang* per ship in 1589. In 1590 it was reduced to 120 *liang*.⁸⁷ The authorities in Fujian did not tax exports but

83 *Yue haiguan zhi* 22.20: 康熙二十四年，監督宜爾格圖奏言。粵東向有東西二洋諸國來往交易，係市舶提舉司徵收貨稅。明隆慶五年，以夷人報貨奸欺，難於查驗，改定丈抽之例，按船大小以為額稅，西洋船定為九等。後因夷人屢請，量減抽三分，東洋船定為四等。國朝未禁海以前，洋船詣澳，照例丈抽。但往日多載珍奇，今系雜貨，今昔殊異，十船不及一船。請於議減之外，再減二分。東洋亦照例行。[Quotation also found in Liang Tingnan's *Haiguo sisshuo* and *Yuedao gongguo shuo*.]

84 Von Glahn 1996, 119.

85 Chaunu 1960, 266–267.

86 Source: Chaunu 1960, 200–205.

87 *Dongxi yangkao* 7.132; for details cf. also Chang 1983, 262–264.

only levied taxes on imports. But in Canton generally ten percent export taxes were imposed.⁸⁸

Some of the Fujian merchants were authorized by the Ming government to act as brokers or broker merchants (*yashang* 牙商), meaning that they were appointed to manage the purchase and sale of foreign commodities. These authorized merchants were called “shopkeepers” (*pushang* 鋪商). When travelling merchants came back to China from overseas, they were not simply permitted to unload and sell their cargo. Instead, the shopkeepers would go on board the ship and purchase (*jiemai* 接買) the overseas merchants’ commodities. They were issued certificates (*haopiao* 號票), and after customs duties had been paid, the supervising officials allowed them to unload their cargos.⁸⁹ As the shopkeepers actually purchased the cargo, Ng Chin-Keong has proposed considering them wholesalers rather than brokers.⁹⁰

China’s trade with the Philippines underwent some ups and downs in the late Ming period. This was caused not only by the revival of piracy but also the aggressive competitive policy of the Dutch, who, for example, attempted to seize Macao in 1622 and then occupied first the Pescadores and then, after being pushed away by the Ming navy, took refuge on and seized Taiwan. The activities of the Dutch even prompted the Ming government to initiate a brief maritime trade proscription in 1623–1624 and again from 1626 onward. The ban was lifted partly in 1631 and reinstated between 1633 and 1637. All this greatly weakened the Chinese commerce at Manila, but Chinese merchants were mostly quick to regain their trade.

A really drastic setback of Chinese trade in Manila occurred in the aftermath of the bloody suppression of the Chinese uprising in Manila (the Sanglej rebellion) by the Spanish in 1639 to 1640.⁹¹ Attempts in New Spain sought to restrict the trade with China and the enormous outflow of silver through the Pacific route. In 1636, the royal commissioner, Don Pedro Quiroga y Moya (d. 1637) ordered all the goods that had reached Acapulco that year to be seized. In the following years, this decisively altered the China trade with Manila and the traders who went to the Philippines – especially Xiamen and Macao. The silver that arrived that year in the Manila Galleon was clearly insufficient to pay the debts – the galleon trade to a large degree operated on a credit system basis – that

88 MingQing shiqi Aomen wenti dang’an wenxian huibian, vol. 5, 372, with reference to *Jinglin xuji*.

89 Fu 1956, 133; *Dongxi yangkao* 7.132.

90 Ng 2015, 168.

91 Barao 1998; McCarthy 1970; Gil 2011, 151–154; also Tremml-Werner 2012, 570–571.

the Spanish had contracted with the Chinese and Portuguese traders. The Spanish authorities in Manila even prohibited the exportation of silver what led to even more smuggling. At the same time, silver production in Potosí experienced a decline and eventually more silver was exported to China via Europe and India, carried by Portuguese and Dutch merchants.⁹² The drastic decrease in the silver supply contributed to the tensions in the Parian that were, like the one in 1603, forcefully and bloodily repressed by the Spanish authorities.⁹³

Portuguese merchants subsequently took over parts of the China-Manila trade from their base at Macao. In addition, lot of smuggling was going on, especially through the Dutch and Spanish settlements on Taiwan.⁹⁴ The Dutch, for example, employed Chinese smugglers to engage in the Manila trade but also plundered Chinese on their way back from Manila to Haicheng.⁹⁵ The number of Chinese junks calling at Manila between 1633 and 1639 oscillated between twenty-six (in 1634) and fifty (in 1637) – with the exception only of sixteen in 1638, when it dropped to seven after the insurrection in 1640.⁹⁶

Official Chinese trade with Manila recovered particularly during the Kangxi reign in the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1684, the Kangxi Emperor reopened trade:

Now, as China (lit. “everything within the seas”, *hainei* 海內) is united, and the world (*huanyu* 寰宇) is at peace, as Manchu and Han people form one uniform body (*Man Han xiangtong yiti* 滿漢相同一體), I order you to go abroad to trade, in order to display the good rule of the wealthy and numerous, and by imperial decree open the seas for trade.⁹⁷

Between 1683 and 1684, Customs Houses (*haiguan* 海關) were established in the four most important coastal regions, that is Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang and Jiangsu. In 1685, foreign traders also received permission to trade in Chinese ports.⁹⁸ The following table provides an overview of how the number of Chinese ships calling at Manila increased between 1684 and 1716.

92 Lin 2004, 85.

93 Ollé 2019, 342.

94 Souza 1986, 78-83; Richard von Glahn 1996, 125. Li Qingxin speaks of 1.5 million pesos worth of raw silks and silk fabrics being annually traded by Portuguese merchants via Guangdong and Macao to Manila between 1619 and 1631. See Li and Wang 2006, 219.

95 Cheng 2013, 35-38, 40-42, 60-66,

96 Chaunu 1960, 156-160.

97 Li and Yang 2008, 22 (quoting the *Huangchao wenxian tongkao*).

98 *Ming Qing shiliao*, *Wubian*, vol. 1, 102.

Table 2: Number of Chinese Ships Calling at Manila between 1684 and 1716⁹⁹

Year	Number of ships	Year	Number of ships	Year	Number of ships	Year	Number of ships
1684	5	1693	18	1701	9	1709	43
1685	17	1694	12	1702	15	1710	25
1686	27	1695	19	1703	21	1711	14
1687	15	1696	17	1704	–	1712	–
1688	7	1697	17	1705	17	1713	15
1690	14	1698	24	1706	27	1714	17
1691	13	1699	20	1707	15	1715	14
1692	14	1700	17	1708	32	1716	10

After 1685, the Ministry of Revenue (*Hubu* 戶部) – instead of the Ministry of Rites that had dominated the *Shibo si* system – received the authority to levy taxes. The system of taxation during the Qing was complex, and many additional and surplus charges were levied. We know that in 1686 (*kangxi* 25, 2nd month, 10th day), the regular taxation of foreign ships at the Customs Houses in Guangdong was ordered to be reduced to 20 per cent.¹⁰⁰ In 1694, the Manchus imposed the substantial tax of 2,000 *liang* of silver on each ocean-going ship, 60 times the annual average household consumption expenditure in the rich Yangzi Delta.¹⁰¹ This implies that maritime merchants must have made great profits, as Gang Deng suggests – after all maritime trade continued to flourish. In addition, in the early Qing, annual license fees of 50 to 1,000 *liang* were levied as a permission to participate in import-export trade. Later in the mid-eighteenth century (data from 1752–1754) the average import tax for overseas vessels seemed to have been fixed between 470 and 610 *liang* of silver.¹⁰² During the Qianlong era also a “surplus quota” (*yingyu* 盈餘) was introduced, defined by the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736–1795) as a standard of taxation. Accordingly, a distinction between “regular tax quota” (*zheng'e* 正額) and “surplus quota” had to be made. The regular quota was supposed to be determined by the number of ships involved and changed over time. As a rule, the regular quota was sent to the provincial treasury and went to the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu*). The “surplus quota” was directly forwarded to the Imperial Household Department (*neiwufu*

99 Source: Chaunu 1960, 169–180, reproduced in Li and Liao 1995, 402.

100 Fu 1966, 86.

101 Deng 1997b, 111.

102 Deng 1997b, 111–112.

內務府), that means, into the private purse of the emperor.¹⁰³ In addition, there existed extra taxes and extralegal demands, which were imposed by the superintendents, their clerks and subordinate officials and went into their pockets.¹⁰⁴

In terms of trade relations with the New Spanish colonies it is important to note that by the eighteenth century, the share of Spanish silver sent to Manila and then exported to China declined due to the rise of country trade with India – a trade that had started in 1644 and assumed a consumption of almost half of the Spanish silver shipments to Manila by 1762.¹⁰⁵ China was consequently connected to the Pacific and to the New Spanish colonies in America also via the detour of Atlantic and Indian Ocean trade.

Official Concerns about Europeans during Early and High Qing

The Philippine Archipelago remained a region of concern in terms of security considerations during the early Qing. The Kangxi emperor in particular was worried about European presence in the East Asian waters including the Spanish on the Philippines. Antoine Gaubil (1689–1759) recorded in his memories from a court meeting with Kangxi soon after the emperor's death:

The Portuguese [*i.e.* the Spanish] of Luzon have many Chinese, and they could easily become very powerful in the countries neighbouring China and Japan. Their king in Europe is extremely rich and possesses great states far from Europe. He is of the same family as the king of France, a powerful and bellicose nation which is esteemed and respected on land and sea throughout the world.¹⁰⁶

The Russians, Dutch, and the Portuguese, like the other Europeans, are able to accomplish whatever they undertake, no matter how difficult. They are intrepid, clever, and know how to turn a profit. As long as I reign, there is nothing to worry about from them for China ... But if our government were to become weak, if we were to weaken our vigilance over the Chinese in the southern provinces, and over the large number of boats that leave every year for Luzon, Batavia, Japan, and other countries, or if divisions were to erupt among us Manchus...what would become of our Empire? With the Russians to the north, the Portuguese from Luzon to the east, the Dutch to the south, (they) would do with China whatever they want.¹⁰⁷

103 *Da Qing lichao shilu* (Qianlong), 712.1b.

104 *Wenxian congbian*, vol. 11, 8b.

105 Lin 2004, 85.

106 Gaubil 1970, 710 (letter to P. Berthier 1752). This correspondence is also quoted in Hostetler 2001, 39–41.

107 Gaubil 1970, 711.

An edict of 1716 also reflects official concerns about maritime security, stating that

[...] after hundreds of years, we are afraid that [China] will suffer from overseas countries, for example, from the European countries.¹⁰⁸

Intellectual elites, too, uttered their fears and felt deceived:

When these savage people [the Jesuits] say falsely that they come from a great distance of 90,000 li, it is because they want us to believe that they have no ulterior motives, so as to prevent us from worrying about their aggressive purposes. In fact, they are full of designs and resourceful schemes, whenever they arrive at a country, they would destroy it. Altogether they have destroyed over thirty countries by direct conquest. It is difficult to examine the traces of their distant conquests, but we need just to refer to their latest conquests of such regions as the Philippines ... whose kings they killed and whose people they robbed. It required only a few of them to subdue an entire country. Are these facts not obvious proofs of their aggressive nature?¹⁰⁹

This text is also quoted by Laura Hostettler who suggests

[...] that the conflation of all Europeans into a more general category was not entirely misguided. Future events did bear out some of these fears.¹¹⁰

But relations were not only characterized by suspicions from the Chinese side. The Kangxi Emperor was generally speaking very open and curious and maintained good relationships with various Jesuit missionaries. Others, however, he expelled from China. Famous is his “Edict of Toleration” (*rongjiao ling* 容教令) from 1692, recognizing the Roman Catholic Church and legalizing Christianity among Chinese citizens, although relations between the emperor and Christian Jesuits later deteriorated, and the Yongzheng 雍正 Emperor (r. 1722–1735) even decided to forbid the proselytization of Christianity in 1724.

Commercial interests became increasingly important and, in general, the Kangxi Emperor in particular adopted a very merchant-friendly policy that valued the importance of overseas trade, and sought to fill the state coffers by promoting private trade.¹¹¹ He also sponsored maritime trade and officially proclaimed that China should “expand to the seas” (*zhanhai* 展海). Japan, in particular, was of interest for both commercial and strategic reasons, but also the Europeans with their commercial interests pounced on relatively open ears in China. The eighteenth century finally witnessed a significant increase in Chi-

108 Fu 1966, 106, with reference to *Da Qing lichao shilu* (Kangxi), 160.26–27 (Nov. 24, 1693).

109 Su Jiyu 蘇及寓, “Xiedu shiju” 邪毒實據 (in *Shengchao poxieji* 3.32–36), cited in Zhang 1934, 162–163.

110 Hostettler 2001, 54.

111 See, for example, Zhao 2016, 85, *passim*.

nese trade with Europeans, who demanded above all tea, but also porcelains and silks, in a foreign trade focused on the ports of Guangzhou and Macau (Macao) 澳門. Nevertheless, he continued to have an attentive and thoughtful eye on what was going on in the maritime realm. His concerns not only pertained to foreigners, but also Chinese who had migrated to Southeast Asia, or who had continued to be involved in smuggling activities.

When Kangxi heard that a shipyard in Suzhou constructed up to 1,000 overseas vessels annually that were subsequently used in maritime trade, and that only five or six out of ten would eventually return to China, whereas the others were sold abroad in exchange for silver, he decided to act. In his eyes, these merchants, driven by the sheer lust for profit, would not only steal these Chinese products¹¹², but also provide renegades and pirates with solid Chinese ships. China would, consequently, risk losing its monopoly and control over maritime shipping in the nearby waters and be subjected to a possible threat from abroad. In late 1716, Kangxi therefore announced a prohibition on Chinese ships sailing to Southeast Asia (*jīnzhǐ Nanyang yuán'ān* 禁止南洋原案), the place he considered to be the root of the renegades, a proscription that became effective in 1717.¹¹³ Trade with Japan, the Ryūkyūs and Annam – Annam providing China with great quantities of rice – was continued. In addition, foreign ships were still allowed to call at Chinese ports. Concerns included the situation on the Philippine island of Luzon, where many Han Chinese had settled over time, and which, in Kangxi's eyes, had become a harbour for bandits and rebels since Ming times. The proscription was meant to be a security measure, and was targeted especially against Fujian merchants, many of whom had become very wealthy and socially influential through the silver exchange with Manila.¹¹⁴ With the experience with and suppression of Zheng Chenggong and his commercial overseas "empire" still fresh in mind, also with rumours of anti-Manchu people and powers abroad, little wonder that Kangxi was concerned about possible efforts of influential merchants to undermine the state. Measures like this did, consequently, not result principally from an anti-foreign-commerce attitude, but have to be understood as being directed against the politics of national security.

Kangxi's decision was made on the basis of a thorough observation of Western and Chinese merchants, and of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia.

112 The special large timbers required for construction of masts and keels were all genuine Chinese products unavailable abroad.

113 *Ming Qing shiliao*, vol. 8, 74; *Wenxian congbian*, vol. 17, 8.

114 Wang 2017.

Sources also show that Kangxi became increasingly concerned about the distrust between Han Chinese and the Manchu ruling elite, as well as the ever-growing Han Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia. This is also reflected in the personnel structure of officials responsible for the administration of maritime trade. Officials had to rotate every two years in order not to gain too much influence, officially 1 Manchu and 1 Han official were responsible simultaneously, while the actual authority lay mostly in the hands of Manchu officials. Yet, maritime trade with Southeast Asia, including the Philippine Archipelago, had already become so important, and commercial networks had already so deeply penetrated local society that the prohibition caused various economic problems for the coastal economies¹¹⁵ and was eventually lifted by Kangxi's successor, the Yongzheng Emperor (r. 1723–1735), in 1727. A number of local officials pointed particularly at the prosperous trade with Southeast Asia.

Qing Navy

In 1659, at the beginning of Manchu rule in China, the Shunzhi 順治 Emperor (r. 1644–1662) ordered a detachment of Manchu troops to move permanently to Hangzhou. During the coastal wars against the Zheng clan (see above), they were temporarily moved to Fuzhou, but returned to Hangzhou in 1683. In 1728, 1,600 Manchu troops were stationed at the naval base at Zhapu 乍浦, the port of Hangzhou. The Qing court assigned special personnel to complete the building of warships, and the navy was ordered “to repair weapons such as artillery, and practice offensive military strategies”. The Yongzheng Emperor sought in particular to strengthen the navy and China's self-defence capacity.¹¹⁶ Starting in 1725, the coastal provinces step by step established shipyards and began to build warships, but their technology was not very advanced. Most ships built were simply copies of civilian ships, and not much energy was invested in them to improve the situation. The new navy was successful in fighting pirates – for example, through efficient sailing tactics, and swift dispatch of appropriately-mixed forces of war vessels – but it was not designed for larger naval battles. On the other hand, the warships turned out to be totally vulnerable when confronted with modern Western steam-powered vessels.¹¹⁷ Initially, naval maneuvers,

115 See also Zhao 2016, 154.

116 See Guo 2002, 103–104; Schottenhammer 2013.

117 Lee 2017.

including swimming exercises, were organized on a regular basis, but less attention was paid to such training in the later Qianlong period.¹¹⁸

An island that was forcefully integrated into Chinese territories during Qing times was Taiwan. Its integration was anything but disputed among the Qing ruling elite. Many argued that the mainainance of the island would eventually become an economic burden for state coffers. The discussion continued even after Taiwan's conquest in 1683. Taiwan was considered

[...] a remote outer island that never has been a part of Chinese territory (*zi gu bu ru ban-tu* 自古不入版圖), but [only] has strategic importance to shield Min and Yue 粵 (modern Fujian and Guangdong) from [the] outside.¹¹⁹

Taiwan was, generally speaking, either regarded as an important strategic point (*jinyao* 緊要)¹²⁰ in terms of frontier defence, or as a rice producing area¹²¹, belonging to the “maritime frontier” (*haijiang* 海疆).¹²²

Repeatedly, we find references to people who crossed the Taiwan Straits secretly (*toudu* 偷渡). In terms of such references, Taiwan is described as “lonely, hanging outside the seas” (*gu xuan haiwai* 孤懸海外),¹²³ a “lonely island hanging outside the seas with the evil of cruel foreign people” (*gu xuan haiwai you xiong fan zhi huan* 孤懸海外有兇番之患), and with robbers,¹²⁴ as a “far away place outside the deep ocean” (*yuan zai zhongyang zhi wai* 遠在重洋之外).¹²⁵ The local inhabitants are repeatedly referred to as cruel, ruthless, and stubborn. They are described as “foreign peoples that came from several places outside” (*fanmin zachu er wailai zhi min* 番民雜處而外來之民).¹²⁶ Qianlong saw Taiwan as an area in maritime space that was full of bandits, and had therefore been “pacified” to prevent the mainland having to face such dangers. These attitudes demonstrate that the major argument for an integration of Taiwan into the Qing empire was security. Economic reasons ranked second, if at all.

In addition, the Manchus were simply not experienced in naval warfare, and smaller garrisons could not provide the offensive power necessary to conquer the

118 Calanca 2011, 233-255.

119 Soffel 2011, 129-130.

120 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 43.20b.

121 See for example several entries in *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 176-5, *passim*.

122 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 72.17a-b, 22a.

123 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 176-5, 27b.

124 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 13B, 61a.

125 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 13A, 22b; also 72.1b (*yuan ge haiyang difang* 遠隔海洋地方).

126 *Shizong Xianhuangdi zhupi yuzhi* 72.3b.

island. It was still occupied by the powerful Zheng clan. Finally, the naval officer Shi Lang 施琅 (1621–1696), who had actually served the Zheng family before he defected to the Qing in 1646, led Qing forces in the decisive battle in 1683 that officially made Taiwan a part of Fujian Province.¹²⁷ He invaded the island with some 300 warships and 20,000 sailors, and he had bought cannon from the Dutch to better equip his ships for the confrontation.¹²⁸

High local officials, such as the contemporary governor-general of Zhejiang, Li Wei 李衛 (1687?–1738), regularly informed the emperor about what was going on abroad. He often cautioned him, for example, against Japanese claims of power in the macro-region and even sent spies into Japan to obtain more information on the political and economic situation there.¹²⁹ At least until the early Qianlong reign, local and central authorities maintained a very vigilant eye on maritime commerce, piracy, and coastal defence. Principally national security considerations dominated. In terms of defense, the strategies of the famous Ming naval officer Qi Jiguang 戚繼光 (1528–1588), as expounded in his *Lianbing shiji* 練兵實紀 (Record of Military Training) and *Jixiao xinshu* 紀效新書 (New Treatise on Military Efficiency), remained influential also during Qing times.¹³⁰ The Qing navy remained basically coastal, designed especially for anti-pirates campaigns. Except for Taiwan, it was never intended to attack or invade another country.

Commercial Relations with Spanish America

The Spanish Viceroy of Peru, the Marquis of Cañete, once commented in a letter to Philip II that

Chinese silk and other textiles are so cheap that local chiefs and even commoners are using them for clothing instead of cloth of local manufacture.¹³¹

This statement provides us not only with insights into the competitive prices of Chinese products, but also indirectly addresses the negative consequences of these new, cheap textiles for local production.

127 See especially Carioti 1995; Carioti 1996; Wills 1979, 223–228; Wakeman 1983; see also Ollé 2009.

128 See also Wong 2017.

129 Schottenhammer 2008a.

130 On Qi Jiguang, see Sim 2017; also Calanca 2011, 234–253 *passim*.

131 Krahe 2014, 55, with reference to Kuwayama 2009. See also letter quoted in Borah Woodrow 1954, 122: “Chinese merchandise is so cheap and Spanish goods so dear that I believe it impossible to choke off the trade to such an extent that no Chinese wares will be consumed in the realm, since a man can clothe his wife in Chinese silks for two hundred reales, whereas he could not provide her clothing of Spanish silks with two hundred pesos.”

The variety of Chinese commodities, especially silks, that was shipped to Manila in the early seventeenth century, and of which many were later loaded on board of the trans-Pacific galleons, is described in detail by the Spanish historian António de Morga (Sánchez Garay, 1559–1636), first lieutenant-governor of the Philippines (1595–1598), and later senior judge (*oidor*) of its Audiencia (1598–1603), in his *Sucesos de las Filipinas* (Incidents from the Philippine Islands, published in Mexico in 1609).¹³² This account constitutes one of the first non-clerical works on Philippine history, and is considered one of the most important works on the early history of Spanish colonization of the Philippines.¹³³

A considerable number of somas and junks (which are large vessels) generally come from Great China to Manila, laden with merchandise. Every year thirty or even forty ships ... They belong to the provinces of Canton, Chincheo, and Ucheo [Fujian], and sail from those provinces. They make their voyage to the city of Manila in fifteen or twenty days, sell their merchandise, and return in good season, before the *vendavals* [*i.e.* storms, typhoons] set in – the end of May and a few days of June – in order not to endanger their voyage.¹³⁴

Among the products, he lists especially all kinds of silk and cloth but also food, metal and hand-made objects, furniture, precious stones, spices, *etc.* There is no doubt that silks, porcelains, furniture and other manufactured goods formed the bulk of the Manila galleon cargoes. But what about spices, medicinal drugs, aromatics and scented woods?

There is also no doubt that spices, and the profits to be earned with their trade, constituted the major motivation for many Europeans to expand into Asian waters. Definitely, cinnamon, pepper, cloves, nutmegs, and other spices, such as camphor, as well as perfumes were shipped across the Pacific, and especially in the early years of the trans-Pacific galleon trade many ideas and hopes about the initiation of a profitable spice trade circulated. Captain Juan de la Isla in 1568 wrote that six large galleons of up to 300 tons could be sent to Southeast Asian islands, four of them serving the route between the American west coast and the Philippines, while the other two could be sent to the Spice Islands to collect cinnamon, pepper and other drugs and products of those islands. Also ginger from China could be provided and annually sent to New Spain and Peru.¹³⁵ Various projects were forged to provide goods to Spain and its colonies via trans-Pacific and Indi-

132 De Morga 1609; Stanley 1868; Blair and Robertson, vols. 15–16 (1904).

133 António de Morga also led the Spanish in one naval battle against Dutch corsairs in the Philippines, in 1600.

134 Blair and Robertson, vols. 15–16 (1904).

135 Álvarez 2013, 28 with reference to “Representación de Juan de la Isla sobre ciertas cosas necesarias para la navegación y comercio de Nueva España a Filipinas”, Manila 1 de enero de 1568, AGI, Patronato, 24, r. 4.

an Ocean routes, especially after the reunion of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns in 1580. The *factor real* of the Philippines, Juan Bautista Román, reflected about the provision of cloves and nutmegs from the Banda Islands, and suggested in 1584 that one could easily control this trade with 300 soldiers and a mobile armada plying these waters. Cloves, nutmegs, and Borneo camphor could be shipped to the Mexican port of Huatulco, and then further as to the Spanish port of La Coruña.¹³⁶ All these dreams did finally not come true, especially due to Dutch competition. But the entire undertaking turned out to be quite unprofitable to the Spanish Crown, while at the same time a profitable trade emerged, largely due to fraudulent practices, such as illegal exchanges with Macao, or the transshipment of goods without the registration of payments. The spice trade during the short époque of Spanish Moluccan trade – before the islands fell into the hands of the Dutch in 1666 – was mainly carried out by private Portuguese merchants and their trading networks across the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic, but also across the Pacific. José L. Gasch-Tomás has argued that “spices such as pepper and cinnamon (and other perishable goods, such as benzoin) are very scant”, and obviously were carried from the Philippines only on exceptional occasions.¹³⁷ This statement definitely refers to the official Spanish galleon trade.

That spices and aromatics and medicinal drugs did matter can be confirmed by other sources. But they did not constitute the bulk of trade, they can perhaps be considered “marginalia” in the trans-Pacific trade if compared to the networks crossing the Indian Ocean and Atlantic, but they still formed part and parcel of the Pacific trade, too.¹³⁸ One of the first galleons that left Manila with destination Acapulco in 1573, the *Espíritu Santo y Santiago*, carried cinnamon, distantly followed by silks, gold, cotton blankets, wax, ceramics and cheap trinkets (*bujerías*).¹³⁹ A list of the goods that Gonzalo Ronquillo sent to Peru (“Relación de las mercaderías que llevaba el navío que embio don Goncales Ronquillo de las Filipinas al Peru”) includes various kinds of ceramics and pottery.¹⁴⁰ Listed, among other items, also are iron (numerous boxes), 3 bundles (*fardos*) and 5 boxes of pepper (*pimienta*), 3 bundles of spices, 5 bundles, and 2 boxes of cinnamon.

136 Sánchez Pons 2013, 113-114. Originally, even the establishment of a “Spice House” (casa de las especias) in La Coruña had been considered.

137 Gasch-Tomás 2018, 67.

138 See also Suárez 2019, 192.

139 Álvarez 2013, 30.

140 “Relación de las mercaderías que lleva la nao nombrado Nuestra Señora de la Cinta que es de su Majestad procedente de las Islas Filipinas y va a los Reyes del Pirú. [El] capitán del la [nao] Don Gonzalo Ronquillo de Ballesteros, Maestro de St. Ana y piloto pedro Rios, surgió ... (8 de diciembre 1581)”, AGI, Patronato 24, R 55. 1581, listed and translated in Krahe 2014, Appendix 3, 251-252.

Interestingly, de Morga's list does not mention porcelain and ceramics (it is only mentioned among the items Chinese merchants supplied to the Spanish for their personal use in Manila), although we know from the archaeological evidence and other sources that ceramics were an important part of the Manila galleon cargoes.¹⁴¹ This fact is strange, but agrees with an observation we have made repeatedly during a project investigating commercial interaction in the East Asian world in the early modern period.¹⁴² Up to the present day, we have not yet found a satisfying answer to the question of why ceramics are hardly ever mentioned in Chinese written sources, although we know from archaeological evidence their importance as a trade commodity in the East Asian waters.¹⁴³ But the absence of porcelain in de Morga's list may also have to do with a qualitative change in the composition of export commodities from manufactured to primary goods around that time, as Gang Deng has emphasized:

Antonio de Morga named over fifty import categories from China to Manila; porcelain was for the first time not listed.¹⁴⁴

Other documents and findings from shipwrecks can further complement our picture. Most of the wrecks to date we possess from the Kangxi reign period carried ceramics. Chinese ceramics in museums and private collections, but also entries in wills, taxation, cargo, or other judicial documents in Mexico and Peru testify to the prosperous importation of Chinese and Japanese ceramics. Excavations around the Zocalo area in Mexico City, in Lima, and at other sites have brought to light further evidence of Chinese ceramics.

Mexican museums are notably rich in their Chinese ceramic holdings gathered from cathedrals, official possessions of the Spanish crown, and established families. In contrast, Chinese ceramics in Peru are almost exclusively in private collections, many of which are held by families with long established ancestries.¹⁴⁵

Recently, archaeologists have investigated ivory sculptures excavated from the *Santa Margarita*, a galleon which wrecked off the northern Mariana Islands.

Carved by Chinese and Filipino sculptors in the Philippines, the ivories reveal much about the making and trading of colonial art, still little understood.¹⁴⁶

141 See also Brook 1998, 206.

142 *Hyōka kiji* 1.8a. *Hyōka kiji* 漂客紀事 is one of the rare written sources I have been able to find which also mention ceramics, five to six hundred completely preserved pieces, as part of the cargo.

143 Schottenhammer 2010, 128.

144 Deng 1997b, 119.

145 Kuwayama 1997, 6.

146 Trusted 2013, 447.

Some of the ivories may have been made in China, particularly in Zhangzhou, or in some other places in Fujian Province in Southeast China.¹⁴⁷ Some ivory pieces were probably reexported from China to the Philippines, and carved there. The raw ivory was first imported from Africa, and possibly South India. The *Zhangzhou fuzhi* 漳州府志 (Local Gazetteer of Zhangzhou, 1628) states that elephant ivory could no longer be found in the prefecture, and was

[...] wholly traded by those who come to the port markets. Zhangzhou people carve the ivory into Immortals and that sort of thing, supplying them [i.e. the carvings, A.S.] for the purposes of providing pleasure. The ears, eyes, the four limbs of the body and the torso are very realistic. The ivory carvings made by craftsmen from Haicheng are particularly nice, also their level of craftsmanship is very high. [...] Ivory chopsticks, ivory cups, ivory belt plaques and ivory fans are also to be had [...].¹⁴⁸

A Chinese writer and merchant, Gao Lian 高濂 (fl. 16th cent.), noted in his *Zunsheng bajian* 遵生八箋 (“Eight treatises on following the principles of life”; completed in 1591):

In Fujian, ivory is carved into human forms, the workmanship of which is fine and artful; however, one cannot put them anywhere, or give them as a decent present.¹⁴⁹

The last part of the sentence may be interpreted to the sense that most carvings were made for export purposes, and their religious Christian appearance, likewise the images and sculptures of immortals, and their luxury designs as in the form of chopsticks or cups, could not be used for sale on the domestic market.¹⁵⁰ The ivory sculptures discovered on the Santa Margarita have, thus, shown us an aspect of trans-Pacific trade that was hardly known before – being on their way to New Spain, the sculptures were clearly designed for the Latin American market.

As for the *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción*, it sank on September 20, 1638, on the southernmost point of Saipan, in the Northern Mariana Islands, also on its way back from the Philippines to Acapulco. It was loaded with a rich cargo of Chinese silks/rugs, porcelains, ivory, cotton from India, ivory from Cambodia, camphor from Borneo, cinnamon and pepper and cloves from the Spice Islands, and precious jewels from Burma, Ceylon, and Siam. The excavation yielded

147 Trusted 2013, 448.

148 *Zhangzhou fuzhi*, quoted in Anon. 2017: 漳州人曾以进口的象牙雕成仙人像等，以作赏玩。这些仙人像的耳、眼、四肢、躯干都十分逼真。海澄工匠所刻的象牙雕品相特别好，工艺水平也比较高，为漳州贝雕的形成发展崛起起到了很大作用[...]。See also Clunas 1996, 19.

149 *Zunsheng bajian* 5.62: 閩中牙刻人物工致纖巧，奈無置放處，不入清賞。See also Trusted 2013, 448, with reference to Clunas 1996, 18-19; inadvertently, the text writes Gao Lin instead of Gao Lian.

150 See also Trusted 2013, 448.

more than 1,300 pieces of 22.5-karat gold jewellery – chains, crucifixes, beads, buckles, filigree buttons, rings and broches set with precious stones.

The wreck excavation could prove that European-style jewellery was being made in the Philippines. Some 156 intact storage jars were discovered. Investigations revealed that they had come from kilns in South China, Cochin China (Vietnam), and Siam (Thailand), and one was of Spanish design.¹⁵¹ The archaeology of the *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción*, consequently, also provides us with intriguing new insights into the trans-Pacific trade connection and the commodities involved.

Each time a galleon arrived at Acapulco, a market, *la feria*, was organized. This attracted all kinds of people such as Indian peddlers, Mexican and Peruvian merchants, soldiers, the king's officials and friars, as well as a few Chinese and some Filipinos. From Acapulco, the goods were transported into the hinterlands, into Mexico City and various other places, including Peru. The Peruvian port at that time was Callao and the Ciudad de los Reyes, that is Lima, the capital of the Viceroyalty of Peru. Generally speaking, much of what was not sold ("*rezagos*") directly in Acapulco was redirected towards Peru. Peruvian ships, mainly loaded with silver, mercury, cacao from Guayaquil, and Peruvian wines, sailed to ports along the Mexican and Guatemalan coasts, returning with Asian goods and left-over cargo from the galleon ships. Besides Callao and Guayaquil, Paita was also frequently a port of call.

For the social and ruling elites, such high-quality Chinese fabrics, porcelains or other luxury items were, of course, a prestige and status symbol. Complying with the prohibition legislation meant for political authorities and officials to renounce such luxuries and social prestige items. It was no wonder that so many did not comply with the law. Dionisio Alcedo y Herrera (1690–1777), president of the Audiencia de Quito from December 30 1728 to December 30, 1736, accused José de Araujo y Río, his successor, of having illegally imported Chinese and European clothes of more than 200,000 pesos in value from Acapulco through the port of Paita on the *San Fermín*.¹⁵² José Llorente, fiscal attorney of the Real Audiencia of Panama in 1714, had to pay a fine of 2,000 pesos for having accepted the commercialization and consumption of Chinese clothes that had been transported from Peru.¹⁵³

151 The information has been available on <http://ns.gov.gu/galleon/> (acc. Sept. 24, 2018); cf. also Bennett 2016 (Images of jewellery items that were "found on the Nuestra Señora de la Concepción putgoing from Manila lost 1638 in Saipan"); Chadour 1990.

152 AGI, Ramo Quito, legajo 133, exp. 28, no pagination, quoted in Bonialian 2014, 133.

153 AGI, Ramo Panamá, legajo 232, exp. 11, f. 119-123, quoted in Bonialian 2014, 133.

As a part of the clandestine trading networks, Guatemala and Panama, for example, served as intermediate storage locations for Asian goods. In 1709, for example, the Consulate of Lima reported that various French vessels had arrived at ports of Sotavento with Chinese cargo, and also Spanish galleons returning from the Philippines were full with Chinese cargo, especially clothes. Other manuscripts confirm that a famous local smuggler, José de Frías, undertook two voyages annually to Acapulco or Zihuatanejo from Callao/Lima to deposit large quantities of Chinese clothes.

The case of the Peruvian ship *Santo Cristo de León* in 1716, that belonged to a well-known captain and shipowner of Lima, Matías Talledo, may serve as another example. It carried a huge cargo of contraband items, and the captain had to undergo interrogation when this was discovered. However, so many people profited from illicit trade that in the end the governor of Panama permitted captain Tallado to return to Callao with Asian and European goods, without sending his ship for inspection, although this incident cost the merchants involved 9,000 pesos.¹⁵⁴

After 1730, smaller ports of Ecuador increased in importance in these networks.¹⁵⁵ In the eighteenth century, Matías de Córdoba, a captain from Lima, was one of the principal actors in the shipment of Asian goods to Peru.¹⁵⁶ Between February and October 1725 1,414 pieces of Chinese clothes (“piezas de ropa de China”) in total were confiscated in Latin America.¹⁵⁷ The benefits from bribes and chantage that the contraband trade yielded for local authorities were simply much more tangible than the compensations offered by the Crown to detect such illegal activities.

Chinese commodities, not only fabrics and ceramics, but also other artisanal items, were so popular in Spanish America that by the eighteenth century more and more cheap imitations appeared on the local market in Lima from where they were further distributed into other parts of Latin America south of Mexico. Against this background, a report of a certain Domingo Marcoleta, the legal agent (*apoderado*) of Buenos Aires, interestingly even speaks of the “trade fair of Peking” in Lima. He complained that there were so many imitations (*copias*) of Chinese commodities that “it seems as if the trade fair of Peking had started in Lima” (*que*

154 Bonialian 2012, 315.

155 Bonialian 2012, 320.

156 *Ibid.*

157 Bonialian 2012, 321, with reference to *Acervo Histórico de El Colegio de México, Colección Muro*; extract of the *Archivo Histórico del Ministerio de Hacienda de Perú*, Mayor de contaduría, 1725, no. 504 (“Cargo de comisos”), f. 102v.

parece haverfe abierto la Feria de Pequín en Lima'.¹⁵⁸ Manuscripts pertaining to the European, especially French trade, in Canton and Macao, on the other hand, attest to the activities of French merchants especially in the late eighteenth century.

Extending Perceptions towards the Pacific: Evidence from Maps and Geographical Texts

As we have seen above, Wang Dayuan's *Daoyi zhilue* provides the earliest extant description of the Sulu Islands, the Moluccas and the Banda Islands. The arrangement of the first four sections is such that readers are led from Fujian, via Penghu and Liuqiu to the northern Philippines. The information suggests that ships sailed from Penghu via southern Taiwan to the northern Philippines. They did not necessarily follow a straight line that led directly to the west side of Luzon. Rather, as Roderich Ptak suggests, ships seem to have moved along a smooth arc bent towards the east, possibly with ramifications leading in different directions beyond the Balintang and Babuyan Channels or within the Babuyan group itself.¹⁵⁹ Detailing connections to the "countries beyond the seas", Wang Dayuan lists second Liuqiu (probably referring in this case to both northern Taiwan and, major parts of the Ryūkyūs).¹⁶⁰ This suggests that he considered northern Taiwan, including the Ryūkyū Islands, as a kind of border or frontier zone.¹⁶¹ This is strongly attested to in the recent archaeological evidence. A high percentage of Yuan period blue-and-white ceramics shards, for example, stem from Ryūkyū sites, which also have a great variety of other foreign pottery.¹⁶²

Generally speaking, descriptions of Luzon during the Ming dynasty are quite short, if Luzon is mentioned at all. *Shuyu zhouzi lu* 殊域周咨錄, for example, a text that is otherwise very important for the study of foreign relations, has no entry on Luzon. Historical-geographical texts that do include a chapter on Luzon are: *Fangyu shenglüe* 方輿勝略, *Yisheng* 裔乘, *Huang Ming xiangxu lu* 皇明象胥錄, *Dongxiyang kao*, *Huang Ming siyi kao* 皇明四夷考, *Xianbin lu* 咸賓錄, and *Siyi guangji* 四夷廣記. Luzon is described as a place in the ocean,¹⁶³ as a small country,¹⁶⁴ or as being rich in gold.¹⁶⁵

158 Marcoleta 1750, 6 (acc. Sept. 25, 2018); also Bonalian 2014, 128.

159 Ptak 2016, 54.

160 As local products gold dust, yellow beans, millet, sulphur, yellow wax, deer, deerskin, leopards are mentioned, as trading commodities local pearls, tortoiseshells, golden pearls, coarse bowls, and Chuzhou, that is, Longquan ceramics.

161 *Daoyi zhilue*, 17. On the Ryūkyūs, see also Akamine 2017 and Pearson 2013.

162 Pearson 2013.

163 *Huang Ming siyi kao*, 126.

164 *Xianbin lu*, 160.

Historically, we observe two major overseas trading routes from Fujian: one following the coasts of southern China, passing the east coast of Hainan and then heading across the coasts of Vietnam and Champa to the Malay Archipelago and the Malacca Straits, or coming from southern China going further south into the Philippine Archipelago and from there passing the east coast of Borneo in the direction of eastern Java, and further into the Sulu zone.

The regular sea route from Quanzhou to Luzon would, as a rule, extend along the following or similar directions: Quanzhou 泉州 – Penghu 澎湖 – Sanyu 三嶼 (指密雁港) – Biaoshan 表山 – Liyin dashan 里銀大山 – Jiuyu 雞嶼 – Lüsong 呂宋. The small islet of Jiuyu 雞嶼, modern Corregidor, is located at the entrance of the Manila Bay; it was also called Guiyu 圭嶼 or Jiayushan 雞嶼山 (possibly also Gengyiyu 庚逸嶼) in Chinese texts. *Shunfeng xiangsong* 順風相送 records under the entry “From Mt. Taiwu to Lüsong” (太武往呂宋條):

[Liyin dashan] at the compass direction *jibing wugeng*, take the direction of Capon Island, with *dawwu wugeng* sail directly to the harbour of Lüsong, around Jiuyu, it is possible to pass with ships, there are no hidden reefs and rocks but water with currents. Ships can excellently enter the harbour from the northeast side of the mountain.¹⁶⁶

The Selden map,¹⁶⁷ which has been investigated in detail by Robert Batchelor, is of particular interest to us in this context. The part portraying the Philippines includes fifteen place names located on the islands, most of them on Luzon.¹⁶⁸ The eastern border of the map interestingly follows the Kuroshio Current, and it includes textual references to both the current and the trans-Pacific route of the Spanish. Two notes on the map, one located slightly northeast of Ryūkyū, stating “Yemin [wild alabaster] passage, eastward current” (*yemin men shuiliu dong* 野碇門水流東), and one between Luzon and Taiwan, stating what sailors would encounter there: “At this passage, the water is flowing east extremely tight” (*ci men*

165 *Fangyu shenglüe* 5.24a; *Huang Ming siyi kao*, 126; *Xianbin lu*, 160.

166 *Shunfeng xiangsong*, 88-89: [里銀大山] 已丙五更取頭巾礁，單午五更取呂宋港口，雞嶼內外俱可過船，無沉礁，有流水。其船可從東北山邊入港為妙。 See also *Dongxiyang kao* 9.182-183.

167 A high quality scan of the map can be seen at the website on the map provided by the Bodleian Library (*Selden Map* (17th century, 1620), [<http://seldenmap.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/map>]).

168 These are from north to south: Dagang 大港 (Aparri), Shekunmei 射昆美 (Malolokit), Yuetaomen 月投門 (Pagudpud), Nanwang 南旺 (Lavage), Tainiukeng 台牛坑 (Vigan), Xianggang 香港 (Burgos), Daimao 玳瑁 (Lingayen), Toujin jiao 頭巾礁 (Caponess or Turban Reef), Fuding'an 扶鼎安 (Bataan), Lüsong wangcheng 呂宋王城 (Manila – Royal capital of Luzon), Jiawenmen 甲万門 (Mindoro Strait, Apo Reef), Futang 福堂 (Oton), Shuwu 束務 (Cebu), Majunjiaolao 馬軍礁老 (Maguindanao – Cotobato City), and Sulu 蘇祿. The identification is taken from Robert Batchelor's google maps page showing all place names on the Selden map. See Batchelor 2014, 20-21.

liushui dong shen jin 此門流水東甚緊). A legend on the eastern side of Luzon refers to the presence of the Spanish there. As Robert Batchelor has already emphasized, this “suggests the mapmaker had a strong interest in trading relations to the east, and that the silver trade that passed through Manila was important to him or his patrons”. In an empty space east of Luzon we read the characters: *Huaren-fan zaichi gang wanglai Lusong* 化人番在此港往來呂宋 (Spanish foreigners go back and forth from this harbour to Luzon [Manila]), which clearly refers to the trans-Pacific silver route. “Two routes to Manila are indicated from both Guangzhou and Quanzhou and, off Luzon, the reefs and rocky shoals in the shipping lanes leading into Manila Bay are particularly detailed”, with the turban reef or Capon Island (*toujin jiao* 頭巾礁), named in the north and the “Thousand-shell gate” or, probably, the Maricaban Strait (*jiawan men* 甲万門) in the south.¹⁶⁹

Robert Batchelor showed that even two relatively new ports depicted on Taiwan, which had become important resupply points for merchant ships moving up towards Japan from Manila and Vietnam in the first decades of the seventeenth century, are also depicted in the Selden Map.¹⁷⁰ He concludes,

All of this contributes to a potential recentring of trade near Fujian, but it also suggests a decentering of trade away from the Ming itself that the military gestures of the *Wu beizhi* and the administrative ones of Zhang Xie do not effectively comprehend.¹⁷¹

In 1602, the Italian Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) marked Potosí on his world map for China’s Wanli Emperor (r. 1572–1620), *Kunyu wanguo quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖 (*Map of the Myriad Countries of the World*). Accordingly, South America (Nan yamolijia 南亞墨利加)

[...] is today divided into five countries: The first one is Bolu [Peru], which is named after the Bolu river. The second is Jin jiaxila [Golden Castile], which got its name from the great amount of gold and silver it produces.¹⁷²

Another location on the map that is directly related to local silver deposits is Potosí. The rich silver deposits in the Cerro Rico soon made Potosí a famous city. It was

[...] known in India, China, and Southeast Asia. Built on mining, Potosí was a long-cycle boomtown. By the early seventeenth century it lurched toward decadence. [...]. From its inception Potosí was violent, and even in decline it kept its reputation for mayhem. Vice thrived. By 1600, Potosí had more brothels, taverns, and gambling dens per capita than any

169 Batchelor 2013, 50.

170 The ports labelled on the map are Beigang 北港 (“northern port” or Tayouan Bay) and Jiali lin 加里林 (“Jiali forest” or Soulang near the future Fort Zeelandia), in addition to the adjacent Pengdao 彭島 (for Penghu or the Pescadores [?]).

171 Batchelor 2013, 11.

172 Kunyu_Wanguo_Quantu_by_Matteo_Ricci_Plate_4-6.

other city in the Spanish realm. Desperate for stimulants, the silver city guzzled wine and maize beer, sipped yerba mate and hot chocolate, chewed coca, and smoked tobacco.¹⁷³

The word “Potosí” was displacing “Peru” [...] as the synonym for great wealth.¹⁷⁴

Matteo Ricci marked Potosí as “Beiduxi Mountain” 北度西山; a bit south of that it says Yinshan 銀山 (Silver Mountain) and explains: “These mountains have rich silver ore”. Cuzco appears on Ricci’s map as the “Country of Cuzco” 故私哥國, the Amazonas region as Yamazuan guo 亞馬鑽國. The text on Peru also includes the following words:

Peru produces an aromatic called “balsam”, the tree produces an oil, when the tree is cut with a knife, the oil leaks out, applied on dead corpses, these do not decompose. The place where the tree has been cut recovers completely after twelve hours. The country of Judea also has this tree.¹⁷⁵

The “balsam tree” is, interestingly even mentioned on an anonymous 1743 Chinese map. A circle is shown in the maritime space southeast of China, and includes the text

White mountain peak(s) [i.e. probably the Andes mountains?]. In Peru, there is a balsam tree that produces an oil; when the tree is cut with a knife, the oil leaks out, applied on dead corpses, these do not decompose.¹⁷⁶

On the one hand, this information attests to the attention some map drawers devoted to this “Peruvian balsam”. On the other hand, this entry clearly shows that the use of the balsam for mummifying corpses was obviously considered more important and interesting than its use for medicinal purposes.¹⁷⁷ This map also shows a Beiduxi 北度西 Mountain (that is, Potosí), said to contain many silver mines, and states that the silver is used for exchange.¹⁷⁸ The mountain is drawn as a three-peak-mountain in the middle of the water east of the Wenzhou 溫州 on the Southeast Chinese coast, as if the map drawer wanted to symbolically emphasize the importance of this silver mountain for China.¹⁷⁹ Here, again, we meet the

173 Lane 2018, 2.

174 Lane 2018, 28.

175 Kunyu_Wanguo_Quantu_by_Matteo_Ricci_Plate_4-6: 孛露，產香名巴爾婆摩，樹上生油，以刀割之，油出，塗尸不敗。其刀所，割處周十二時即如故，如德亞國亦有之。

176 Section of an untitled map dated 1743, based on Matteo Ricci’s *Kunyu wanguo quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖: 孛露國有巴爾婆[=撒]摩樹上油以刀取之塗尸不敗。Southwest of this island another yet smaller island is portrayed saying “Ganshu” 乾庶 country (Concho). There are mountains that produce lots of silver treasures.

177 For a detailed discussion, see Schottenhammer 2020.

178 See Smith 1998; Destombes 1983.

179 This would accord with an observation I made earlier in relation to “Nanfan” and the im-

concept of portraying an island in the sea as a kind of symbol for an economically speaking important place located somewhere in maritime space. Southwest of this entry on Peru still another, smaller, island is drawn, called Ganshu 乾庶 country (Concho). “There are mountains that produce lots of silver treasures.”.

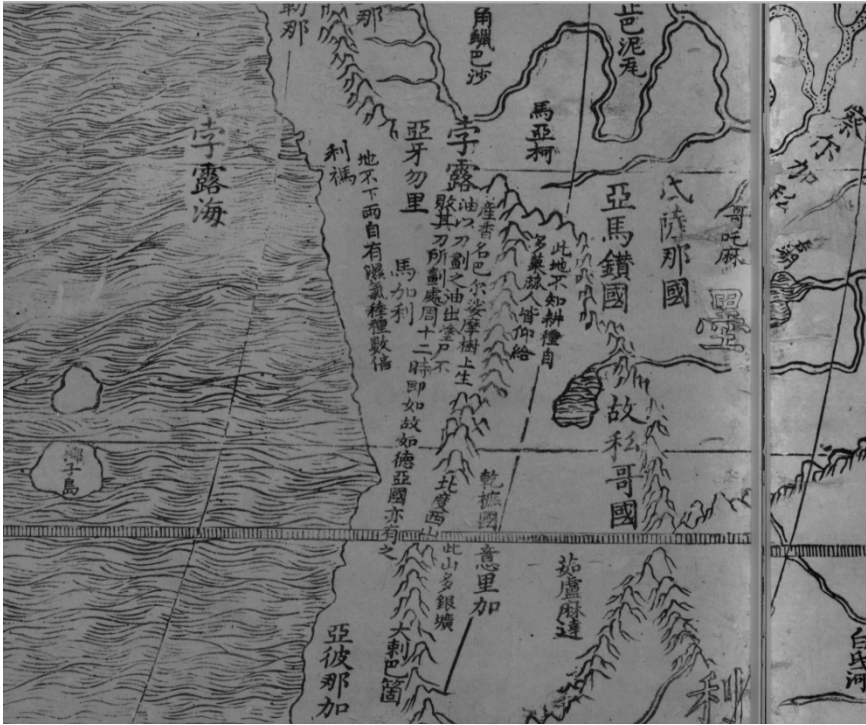


Fig. 1 “Peru section” of Matteo Ricci’s *Kunyu wanguo quantu*¹⁸⁰

The large early eighteenth-century encyclopaedia *Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成 (Comprehensive Collection of Books and Pictures of the Past and Present, first published in 1726) also mentions balsam in an entry on Peru 白露, in the sec-

portance of the Arab trade for Song period Quanzhou: “The illustrated position of many of these islands does absolutely not represent their *real* geographical position, they consequently carried more of a symbolic meaning. I would argue that this is probably less a sign of ignorance, but rather of the fact that these “islands in the sea” were of major importance for China’s and especially Quanzhou’s contemporary commercial relations. Can “Nanfan” thus be interpreted as a metaphor for the importance of the Arabs in contemporary Southeast Asian and Indian Ocean maritime trade? Possibly, being an “island in the sea,” during Song times stands as a metaphor or symbol for the significance of a place (country, port, island) in China’s contemporary maritime trade system”, see Schottenhammer 2017, 155-156.

tion “Borders” 邊裔典.¹⁸¹ Two other geographical works, *Da Ming yitong zhi* 大明一統志 (Records of the Unity of the Great Ming; 1461),¹⁸² compiled under the directorship of Li Xian 李賢 (1408–1467) and Peng Shi 彭時 (1416–1475), and *Da Qing yitong zhi* 大清一統志 (Records of the Unity of the Great Qing; 1790), an imperial geography and description of the Qing empire, both mention St. Thomas, Peruvian and Brazilian balsam oil (聖多默巴爾撒木油, 壁露巴爾撒木油, 伯肋西理巴爾撒木油) as a product of the Europeans (lit. Western oceans).¹⁸³



Fig. 2 Section of an untitled map dated 1743, based on Matteo Ricci's *Kunyu wanguo quantu*.¹⁸⁴

181 *Gujin tushu jicheng* 108.4940–4941.

182 *Da Ming yitong zhi* (quoted according to the electronic version).

183 *Da Qing yitong zhi* 423.14996, 14997 (quoted according to the electronic version).

184 Source: © Courtesy of the British Library. British Library Board, ch5 5 a China. Also Richard J. Smith has been fascinated by this map, which he describes (2013, 82) as a “striking example” of popular varieties of *Tianxia quantu* 天下全圖 maps, and he used it as cover of his book *Chinese Maps* (1996).

Zhifang waiji 職方外紀 (1623) by Giulio Aleni (1582–1649) mentions Peru (Bolu 孛露), and Lima 利瑪, and speaks of the “extremely rich gold and silver” ore (*gu jinyin zuiduo* 故金銀最多).¹⁸⁵ Under the entry “Jinjiaxila” 金加西蠟, referring to “Castilia Del’oro”, that is, the new Spanish colonies in Latin America, silver and gold reserves are mentioned that “rank first under Heaven” (*tianxia cheng shou* 天下稱首), and “at the foot of the mountain there is a city, called ‘Silver City’” (Yincheng 銀城).¹⁸⁶ This is definitely a reference to Potosí, which is rendered on his map as Boduoxi shan 波多西山, but not described in the text.¹⁸⁷

Zhifang waiji is, as far as we know, also one of the first Chinese language sources that describes not only routes in the Indian Ocean and Asia but also the trans-Pacific route:

Coming from the East, from Spain and the Mediterranean Sea, the ships cross the Straits of Gibraltar towards the territory of America. We can distinguish two routes: either across the Magellan Straits into the Pacific Ocean, or passing through the territory of New Spain; the ships anchor, (people take) the land route to the Sea of Peru. Then, they pass the Moluccas, Luzon and other islands until they reach the Great Ming Sea and arrive in Guangzhou.¹⁸⁸

In his *Zhifang waiji*, Aleni explains that originally there were no horses in America 亞摩利加, it were only the Spanish who brought them there. Canada 加拿達 and the Magellan Straits 墨瓦蠟泥海峽 are referred to, as well as Christopher Columbus 閣龍 (1451–1506) or Amerigo Vespucci 亞墨利哥 (1451–1512). He speaks of “strange sheep”, Lamas respectively Alpacas (*yiyang* 異羊) and of Emus (*ema* 厄馬).¹⁸⁹ The Alpacas are probably Lamas (*luoma* 駱馬) and are very unbending by nature. Sometimes they lie down, and even if you flog them almost to death, they do not rise; but if you console them with good words, then they suddenly rise and go, but you nevertheless have to instruct them. They eat very little, and sometimes do not eat for three or four days. Their liver produces something like an egg, which can be used to cure several diseases. Countries adjacent to the sea all appreciate it.¹⁹⁰ This egg-resembling item is a reference to local bezoar stones that were commonly used in medicinal treatment, especially as anti-venom. Bezoar stones from alpacas from the Andes had been used by the

185 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 122–123; De Troia 2009.

186 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 129–130.

187 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 26. The name is put vertically approximately on the location of modern Bolivia.

188 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 158: 從東而來自以西把尼亞地中海過巴爾德峽往亞墨利加之界；有道或從墨五蠟尼加峽出太平海，或從新以西把尼亞界泊舟從陸路出孛露海過馬路古呂宋等島至大明海以達廣州。

189 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 119–124.

190 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 123.

locals in pre-Spanish times and were also adopted by the Spanish in Peru.¹⁹¹ He also speaks about the Quipu script, or “knot-records”, a method of the Incas and other ancient Andean cultures to record and communicate information, by making knots in cords. Using a wide variety of colours, strings, and sometimes several hundred knots that are all tied in various ways at various heights, *quipu* could record dates, statistics, accounts, and even represent abstract information:

Generally speaking, it is not their tradition to have written documents or books; but they knot together cords for recording information, on the basis of five colours, form and appearance that are for them like characters and serve the same purpose as history books.¹⁹²

Interesting is also an entry in the *Wuli xiaoshi* 物理小識 (Notes on the Principles of Things, printed 1666) by Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611–1671). Fang Yizhi was a scholar with a broad interest, including astronomy, geography, mathematics, music, phonetics, philology, medicine, history, and others. Most of his information in *Wuli xiaoshi* on Peru stems from the Peru-chapter in the *Zhifang waiji*, which suggests that this work was circulating among scholars interested in knowledge brought to China by Jesuits and other Europeans. He speaks of a “method to preserve corpses” (留屍法) and a “balsam of Peru”, a balsam tree that produces a resin to balsam corpses so that they do not decompose even after 1,000 years (字露國有一拔爾撒摩樹脂塗尸千年不朽).¹⁹³ This is a clear indication that Fang Yizhi knew about the embalming of dead corpses in ancient Peru. In chapter 9 he adds that this balsam is intensely fragrant and that all wounds and injuries are healed (lit. “muscles and flesh are reunited”) within one day and one night; applied on smallpox, there will not be any scars on the skin, applied to dead corpses, they will not decompose in 1,000 years.¹⁹⁴

Other entries directly refer to *Zhifang waiji*, for example a note stating that the Indians of the Peruvian Andes mountains have fountains like grease, which the local people extract to burn or use as oil paint. All oil fire made with the grease extracted from these wells burns even better when sprinkled with water, and is extinguished when dabbed with earth dust.¹⁹⁵ Fang Yizhi aimed to comprehend the seminal forces of natural change and presents his opus as a collection of observations, findings, and other sources. He was open-minded and gen-

191 Newson 2017, 165.

192 *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi*, 124: 其俗大抵無文字書籍，結繩為識。或以五色狀物形以當字，即史書亦然。

193 *Wuli xiaoshi* 3.155.

194 *Wuli xiaoshi*, 9.362: 中通曰穆公云字露有樹生脂膏極香烈名拔爾撒摩諸傷損一日夕肌肉復合塗痘字不癩以塗屍千年不朽壤。

195 *Wuli xiaoshi*, 2.111: 外紀纂斯大山字露有泉如脂膏人取燃燈或作油漆用凡井油火以水澆之愈熾以地灰撲之則滅。

erally accepted European explanations of natural phenomena, except when they resulted in religious explanations.¹⁹⁶

A map entitled *Qiankun wanguo quantu gujin renwu shiji* 乾坤萬國全圖古今人物事跡 (*Complete map of the myriads of countries of the world and the history of peoples*; originally dated to 1593, probably between 1603 and 1605), by Liang Zhou 梁輅, speaks of “Jinjaxila” as a place rich in silver treasures. Further south, we see a three-peaks mountain in the sea called “Coconut Mountain Range” (Yelin feng 椰林峰) and still further southeast, between the large and the small eastern ocean, we encounter Amazon Country (Yamazuan guo 亞馬鑽國).¹⁹⁷

The 1644 *Da Ming jiubian wanguo renji lucheng quantu* 大明九邊萬國人跡路程全圖 (*Complete Map of the Nine Border Towns of the Great Ming and of the Human Presence and Travel Routes of the Ten Thousand Countries*; reprint 1663), by Cao Junyi 曹君義, conversely, places South America where geographically speaking the Philippines should be located.¹⁹⁸ It does not include a silver mountain (Potosi), but mentions Peru (Bolu 孛露). Southeast of the two characters for Peru three mountain ranges are portrayed, probably the Andes, and the characters “Heitu” 黑土 might refer to some metal deposits, or even be interpreted as a reference to the Cerro Rico? In the upper right corner of the map, east of Korea, absolutely separated from the rest of the South American continent, we find a mountainous “island” named “Xiao Yixibaniya dao” 小以西把尼亞島, which should be “Little New Spain”

Summarizing the existing geographical information and the depiction of foreign space, it is definitely important to emphasize that foreigners and foreign space were not always marginalized in Chinese world maps. Scholars like Cao Junyi 曹君義, Yan Yong 嚴勇, Chen Lunjiong 陳倫炯, Ma Junliang 馬俊良, and Zhuang Tingfu 莊廷黻, as Richard J. Smith notes,

[...] made concerted and largely successful efforts to depict foreign territories accurately; and the Manchus, for their own political reasons, produced excellent maps of the Qing empire with Jesuit assistance. In fact, it seems clear that reliable cartographic information existed for those scholars who wanted it, despite Manchu efforts to keep certain types of knowledge to themselves, and notwithstanding the understandable confusion produced by so many different renderings of barbarian space.

But during Qing times,

196 Elman 2005, 111.

197 British Library, C0317-08.TIF.

198 Database of Historical Maps in the Yokohama City University Collection, http://www-user.yokohama-cu.ac.jp/~yuc-rare/pages/WC-0_122.html (accessed on December 6, 2018).

(t)he overwhelming majority of Chinese *mappae mundi* – including works produced after the Jesuit interlude – depict ‘the world’ as if the foreigners inhabiting it existed precariously on the fringes of the Chinese empire. Whole continents appeared either as tiny off-shore islands, or as inconsequential appendages to China’s land mass – terrestrial afterthoughts, so to speak.¹⁹⁹

In 1751, only briefly before the Chinese empire reached its largest extension ever in 1759, the Qianlong Emperor ordered the compilation of a work entitled *Huang Qing zhigong tu* 皇清職貢圖 [Maps of tribute payers of the Imperial Qing dynasty]. In the preface to this work, he expounds:

After our dynasty had unified the Empire, all non-Chinese peoples (*miaoyi* 苗夷) in the regions of the universe (*quyu* 區宇) have paid tribute and pronounced their cordial bonds (with us) beyond our (borders). They approached us, in order to come under our transforming influence (*shucheng xianghua* 輸誠向化).²⁰⁰

The notion of “*quyu*” refers not only to China, but also to the non-Chinese peoples in the universe beyond, who were ideologically incorporated as it were. The *Huang Qing zhigong tu* comprises 550 illustrations of a man and a woman from each country or people described, with brief annotations concerning the history, exchanges with China down to the present, as well as illustrations of regional clothing. The templates for this nicely illustrated volume were provided by local officials who formerly had contacts with people from these countries. It also includes a couple from Luzon (*Lüsong guo yiren Lüsong guo yifu* 呂宋國夷人呂宋國夷婦).²⁰¹

Looking at the appearance and clothing of this man and woman, it immediately springs to mind that they must have been Europeans. As Lu Cheng-Heng 盧正恒 has shown, in 1757, a ship from Pangasinan, part of the Spanish colonial empire in the Philippine archipelago, suddenly appeared off the Chinese coast close to Wenzhou 溫州. It was on its way to Manila, but was driven off from its original course due to strong winds. The local maritime officials conducted it into the harbour, and began an official investigation of the ship. On board were Spanish colonial officers, among them the mayor (*alcalde mayor*) Juan Manuel de Arza y Urrutia (Chin. 龍番攪落那羅) and his siblings.²⁰² This incident is record-

199 Smith 1998, 92-96.

200 *Huang Qing zhi gong tu*, preface, 1a.

201 From <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55010295.q.rk> 職貢圖?rk (acc. July 2, 2020), a coloured image can be downloaded.

202 Lu 2019.

ed in various Chinese sources.²⁰³ One of the local officials who took care of the wrecked survivors was Shi Tingzhuan 施廷專 (b. 1690), a successor of Shi Lang, the naval officer who assisted the Manchus in making Taiwan officially a part of Fujian Province.²⁰⁴ In 1727, Shi Tingzhuan had been dispatched as a military officer, and was then supreme commander of naval forces (*shuishi zongdu* 水師總督).²⁰⁵ A local businessmen who was engaged in trade with Luzon, a certain Zhou Quanxi 周全喜, initially served as interpreter.²⁰⁶ As the incident happened in the 6th month, in the middle of the hot and taiphoon season, Shi Tingzhuan requested from the emperor that the foreigners be permitted to leave their ship, and stay in an official guesthouse.²⁰⁷ He was later dismissed because he accepted gifts from the foreigners, a thank-you for friendly treatment at Wenzhou.²⁰⁸

At any rate, the description of the man and the woman from Luzon, written in both Chinese and Manchu, as being of tall stature and with long noses, dressed in clothes with accessoires usual among foreigners of the Western Ocean, clearly represents Spanish residents from Luzon. We know that the governor-general (*zongdu* 總督) of Min 閩 and Zhe 浙, Korjishan 喀爾吉善 (?–1757), and the governor (*xunfu* 巡撫) of Fujian, Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀 (1669–1771), were responsible for collecting and sending examples of paintings portraying foreigners to the court in Beijing for the compilation of the *Huang Qing zhigong tu*. Against this background, it is possible that the couple included in *Huang Qing zhigong tu* was painted after the encounter with the above-mentioned Spanish foreigners from Pangasinan, Luzon.²⁰⁹ Above all, the whole story demonstrates that local officials, for purely practical, administrative reasons interacted with foreigners, and asked them for detailed information about their places of origins, their circumstances of travel, *etc.* And merchants anyhow had to do with foreigners on a regular basis.

203 *Qingdai Zhongguo yu Dongnanya geguo guanxi dang'an shiliao huibian*, 180–181. The incident and related problems are discussed in various Grand Council memorials (*lufu zouzhe* 錄副奏摺), *op.cit.*, 13–22.

204 See especially Carioti 1995; Carioti 1996; Wills 1979; Wakeman 1983; see also Ollé 2009.

205 As Lu Cheng-Heng notes, this contradicts John E. Wills' observation that the Qing emperors did not trust Shi Lang's successors. See Wills 2004, 198.

206 *Qingdai Zhongguo yu Dongnanya geguo guanxi dang'an shiliao huibian*, 180. He was later replaced by an interpreter from Xiamen, named Lai Lu 賴祿.

207 According to Qing regulations it was otherwise strictly forbidden that foreigners left their ships while a detailed inspection of people and commodities on board was performed.

208 The whole story is in detail described in Lu 2019.

209 Lu 2019, 144–145.

Conclusion

The traditional image of early modern China is one of a country that, except for the early fifteenth century when Zheng He was sent into the Indian Ocean, was more or less secluded from the outside world during the Ming, and looking inside, it was not at all interested in the maritime world during Qing times. Especially the famous embassy of the Earl of Macartney (1737–1806) in 1793, and the rejection by the Qianlong Emperor of plans to open China for British trade, has continued to be taken as evidence, and as *the* archetype of China's Sino-centrism, and reluctance to see and understand what was happening beyond its borders. Indeed we can observe a tendency towards a more universal and abstract nation-state during Kangxi's time that was, however, replaced again by a particularistic Sino-centric world view during the Qianlong era.²¹⁰ While a Sino-centric attitude certainly experienced an upswing, we should not forget that the confrontation was also one of contradictory interests: a Chinese empire that was not interested and actually did not need, as Qianlong expounded, foreign products, and a young capitalist nation that was looking for markets to sell its products, and have their businessmen make profits, and in this way increase national wealth. An autarkic society using foreign trade as one means to make profit, but not seeing profit-making as a state purpose (China), was placed opposite against an imperialist, capitalist nation that intended to open foreign markets for her purposes (Britain).

While Qing China pursued a very aggressive expansion policy along her continental borders, a policy that eventually even successfully effected the extinction of the Zungars in Central Asia, Qing China's maritime policy was comparably defensive. Military "pacification" was not really considered overseas, apparently because any potential threat from countries overseas, except for piracy (also in the case of Taiwan) was considered negligible in contrast to the threat from continental neighbours. China's self-assessment as the undisputed Middle Kingdom in the Asian world, especially after the successful defeat of the Zungars, most probably contributed a great deal to the emergence of this attitude, and an increasing negligence of maritime space by the Qing ruling and social elites.

But above all we have to realize that *realpolitik* and ideological representation are, and were, two different pairs of shoes. Much more interaction, interconnectivity and reception of the worlds beyond China occurred – not just among people as private individuals, among merchants and travellers, but also at local

administrative levels – than the official, state-approved narrative transmitted and desired to make known. Although China was officially increasingly “turning inward”, vivid interaction across the borders continued.

It is obvious that, from its beginnings, interest in the Philippines and in the islands of the larger Philippine Archipelago was predominantly commercial in character, and relations were mostly carried out by private merchants. Official concerns about Luzon obviously first emerged during the Yongle reign. Yongle wanted to “appease and pacify” the island. We should definitely see this policy as a part of the *pax Ming* that was forcefully established in many countries and regions across Southeast Asia. At the same time, the Philippine archipelago seems to have been of relatively less interest in comparison to, for example, the strategically very important Malacca Straits. After all, except for the one mission sent by Yongle in 1405, no further attempts were made during his reign to pacify the islands, or establish any kind of official relations.

The area only returned to the official agenda with increasing piracy in the second half of the sixteenth century. The explicit aim in this case was to clear the waters there of illegal bandits and pirates. Security calculations consequently predominated. And these remained important until far into the eighteenth century. The Kangxi Emperor in particular paid great attention to the macro region. Simultaneously, private trade and commerce with Luzon and the Spanish community peaked after the late sixteenth century. The huge amounts of silver that were annually shipped back from Luzon to China of course also attracted official interest and curiosity. But, except for the episode in search of Mount Jiayi, no official attempts were made, for example, to occupy the island, or otherwise gain access to the monetary sources of all the wealth. Private trade relations, nonetheless, flourished, and Spanish authorities in New Spain and Manila estimated that approximately 5 million (silver) pesos (i.e. 127,800 kg) made their way to China in exchange for a broad variety of Chinese products in the early seventeenth century.²¹¹ From the Chinese perspective, despite any need for monetary metals – silver from the Luzon trade or, as I have shown elsewhere, silver and, later, copper from Japan – no far-reaching, not to speak of aggressive, policies were pursued by the Chinese to direct foreign moneys into their own state coffers.²¹² In other words, in complete contrast to the actions of the British Empire some decades later with the initiation of the Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860), the Chinese government saw no necessity to intervene, nor

211 Von Glahn 1996, 123.

212 Schottenhammer 2008a.

intended to intervene against foreign powers, not even against the background of a lack in monetary metals. Security calculations remained predominant.

Also knowledge and technologies flowed into China from New Spain, reaching the peak of this flow probably during the Kangxi period. Through the Philippine trade, China was eventually linked up with the new Spanish provinces in the New World, both via the Pacific, and the Atlantic and Indian Ocean. A “Pacific Silk Road” came into existence.

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Wolfgang Kubin, der die *ORIENTIERUNGEN* im Jahr 1989 ins Leben gerufen und über 25 Jahre zusammen mit Berthold Damschäuser herausgegeben hat, hat sich von Anfang an zum Ziel gesetzt, einen Beitrag zum Verständnis der unterschiedlichen, teilweise auch gegensätzlichen Entwicklungen innerhalb der asiatischen Kulturen zu leisten. Diese Leitlinie in ihrer ganzen geographischen Vielfalt verfolgen auch die jetzigen Herausgeber, wobei ihnen kulturwissenschaftliche Aufsätze und reflektierende Übersetzungen zum vormodernen Asien ebenso willkommen sind wie zur unmittelbaren Gegenwart.

