ARBITRATION UNDER ANNEX VII OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

v.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

SUPPLEMENTAL WRITTEN SUBMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES

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<u>EXHIBITS</u>

ACADEMIC ARTICLES, BOOK EXCERPTS AND REPORTS

Annex 535 Ulises Granados, "As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making, 1902-1937", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (2005)

Annex 536 Zou Keyuan, "The Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Agreement on Maritime Delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin", *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 36 (2005)

Annex 537 Ulises Granados, "The South China Sea and Its Coral Reefs During the Ming and Qing Dynasties: Levels of Geographical Knowledge and Political Control", *East Asia History*, Vol. 32/33 (Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007)

Annex 538 Angus Konstam, *Piracy: The Complete History* (2008)

Annex 539 Hyunhee Park, "A Buddhist Woodblock-printed Map in 13th Century China", *Crossroads: Studies on the History of Exchange Relations in the East Asian World*, Vol. 1/2 (2010)

Annex 540 Carlos Quirino, *Philippine Cartography: 1320-1899* (2010)

Annex 541 Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (2010)

Annex 292(bis) Robert Parthesius, *Dutch Ships in Tropical Waters: The Development of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) Shipping Network in Asia 1595-1660* (2010)

Annex 542 Robert J. Antony, "Giang Binh: Pirate Haven and Black Market on the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier, 1780-1802" in *Pirates, Ports, and Coasts in Asia: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (J. Kleinen & M. Osseweijer, eds., 2010)

Annex 522

A. V. M. Horton, "British Administration in Brunei 1906-1959", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (1986)

British Administration in Brunei 1906–1959

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I

THE tiny, oil-rich Sultanate of Brunei, situated on the north-west coast of Borneo, regained full independence at the end of 1983, when the United Kingdom surrendered responsibility for its defence and foreign policy. Internally, the predominantly Muslim, Malay State has been self-governing since 1959, albeit by an autocratic monarchy. In this article, however, I shall focus on the British 'Residency' in Brunei, which lasted from January 1906 until September 1959.

At the end of 1905, Brunei—reduced to two small, detached enclaves (area 2,226 square miles) within Sarawak—had reached the nadir of its fortunes. Indeed, but for the reluctant intervention of the British Government at this juncture, the Sultanate would have been swallowed up entirely by the famous Brooke Raj. The Kingdom of Brunei, however, has a proud history stretching back to the seventh century A.D., long before the foundation (probably in 1515) of the Muslim Sultanate;[1] and, in order to prevent the extinction of his ancient line, Sultan Hashim (reigned 1885–May 1906) 'requested' British assistance in the internal administration of his country. By the Anglo-Brunei Treaty of 1905–06[2] he consented to receive a British officer, to be styled 'Resident', whose 'advice' was to be 'taken and acted upon on all

[1] Point owed to Mr R. Nicholl, 'Brunei Rediscovered' (Typescript, most kindly supplied by its author, of a Paper read at the Eighth Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia, held at Kuala Lumpur, 25–29 August 1980).

[2] The Treaty was signed by Sultan Hashim and the *wazirs* on 3 December *1905* and by Sir John Anderson, representing the British Crown, on 2 January *1906*: hence the reference to one 1905–06 Treaty.

354   A. V. M. HORTON

questions in Brunei other than those affecting the Muhammadan religion, in order that a similar system may be established to that existing in other Malay States now under British Protection'.[3]

Successive Residents, seconded originally from the Malayan Civil Service (M.C.S.), controlled the administration of Brunei until 1959. Although they were responsible to a 'High Commissioner' in Singapore, the latter was eight hundred miles away and had far more pressing concerns than those of Brunei; hence, apart from the tight rein kept on expenditure, the Resident was left with almost a free hand. On the other hand, it is important to remember that Brunei was *not* a British *colony* as such: the Resident exercised his authority in the name of the Sultan, who was always accorded the highest respect; and the fact that persuasion was preferred to dictation produced subtle limitations on a Resident's freedom of action. By the 1950s, when a strong Sultan had emerged, the Ruler could block effectively anything which went against his wishes, and the Treaty clause requiring acceptance of advice was virtually a dead letter.

II

It is necessary to insert here a few details about Brunei. The larger, western wing consists of three riverine districts—(from west to east) Belait, Tutong and Brunei—whilst the Temburong alone forms the isolated Eastern wing. In 1911 the population numbered 21,718, of whom almost half were Malays living in the capital, Brunei Town—a 'River Village', consisting of houses built 'entirely over the water wherever mud flats make it possible to erect a dwelling'.[4] A further quarter were Kedayans, to be found mainly in the immediately surrounding district. Both Malays and Kedayans are Muslims. The outlying regions were inhabited by a variety of pagan tribes, some with a 'veneer' of Islam;[5] later there was a tendency to *'masuk Melayu'*, i.e. to become Muslim and hence 'Malay'. By 1960 the total population had quadrupled (83,877), principally because of immigration into Belait district after the discovery, in 1929, of an oilfield there. The capital, originally the only settlement of consequence, found itself rivalled

[3] *Brunei Annual Report 1946*: p. 82. The original draft Treaty included the words 'and custom' after 'the Muhammadan religion', but these were omitted from the signed version. See F.O. 12/128 p. 12.

[4] F.O. 572/39 M. S. H. McArthur: 'Report on Brunei in 1904', dated Singapore 5 December 1904, para. 23.

[5] C.O. 824/2 *Brunei Annual Report 1938*: p. 2.

increasingly by the new oilfield townships of Seria and Kuala Belait. Chinese settlers, who continue to dominate local business, accounted for one quarter of the inhabitants by 1960, compared with only 3% in 1911; but, to this day, almost all of them are denied Brunei citizenship.

III

Official Anglo-Brunei ties commenced in 1846–47 when Labuan Island (in Brunei Bay) was acquired as a Crown Colony to serve as a coaling station and as a base both for the suppression of piracy and for the expansion of British trade in the South China Sea. It soon became clear that Labuan would be a costly burden to the Imperial Government, which determined to avoid any further entanglement in Borneo. This proved impossible. During the second half of the nineteenth century two unofficial colonial enterprises—the Brooke Rajahs in Sarawak and the Chartered Company in British North Borneo (B.N.B.C.)—carved large and expanding states of their own out of Brunei's territory; and they looked to London for protection in an increasingly uncertain world. The British Government, for its part, feared that the disarray existing in the Sultanate might tempt a rival colonial power to obtain a foothold on the north-west coast of Borneo, thereby threatening British trade routes between India and China, and, to a lesser extent, between Hong Kong and Sydney. In 1888, therefore, each of the three territories—Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo—became British Protectorates, but were left largely in control of their internal administration.[6]

In fact, Brunei was regarded as a nuisance by the British Government, which had no wish to become further involved in its 'squalid'[7] affairs; on the contrary, London's aim was the incorporation of the Sultanate within Sarawak, the most healthy and viable State in 'British' Borneo. This solution was preferred to direct control because it was considered cheaper and would keep official British commitments to a minimum. The Protectorate Treaty was a desirable first step, nevertheless, in order to preclude possible interference in Brunei by a rival colonial power before the dissolution of the Sultanate had been achieved.[8] Sultan Hashim, naturally, was not informed of these intentions: Whitehall, in any case, believed he was willing to sell his country and that the only

[6] L. R. Wright, *The Origins of British Borneo* (Hong Kong, 1970). See also N. Tarling, *Sulu and Sabah* (Oxford University Press, K.L., 1978), pp. 63, 132, 226, 235 and 238.
[7] C.O. 144/79 (10323): minute by G. V. Fiddes (1858–1936), 15 April 1905.
[8] F.O. 12/78: minutes by Sir R. Herbert (p. 165) and by Lord Salisbury (p. 151).

point at issue would be the terms. Paradoxically, as we shall see, the 1888 Treaty contributed to the survival of the Sultanate.

In 1890 Rajah Charles Brooke annexed Limbang district, which today separates the two wings of Brunei. Sultan Hashim appealed to the United Kingdom for protection; but London accepted the spurious Sarawak claims that, after a minor revolt in 1884, the Limbang people had thrown off 'oppressive' Brunei rule, refused to pay taxes to the Sultan, and had raised the Sarawak flag of their own volition. In fairness, it must be added that there *had* been a degree of misrule in Limbang and that, after they became acquainted with Brooke methods of administration, Limbang folk revealed little inclination to be restored to Brunei.

Even so, the loss of Limbang was a critical blow to the Sultanate, the 'final step towards the ruin of Brunei'.[9] For, in the local phrase, 'Brunei is Limbang, and Limbang Brunei'.[10] The Limbang is the true river of Brunei Town, the nominal Brunei 'River'—salt throughout its length— being an arm of the sea and having no *ulu* (upper reaches). As a result, the River Villagers depended on the Limbang for food, clothing and materials for housing and fishing. Sarawak soon began to tax these items so that Brunei Malays could no longer afford to 'import' them and had either to go without or remove to Limbang. Brunei patriotism was sufficiently powerful to render unattractive the latter alternative. In addition the four local sago factories had been forced out of business. All this produced considerable distress in Brunei Town. Furthermore, Sultan Hashim's own prestige had suffered: he had been a compromise candidate to the throne, he was at odds with his leading ministers (whom, by custom, he was unable to dismiss), and his inability to persuade the British Government to evict the Rajah from Limbang undermined further his already shaky position. For the next fifteen years he protested the loss of the district almost to the point of monomania: 'We are greatly afflicted with sorrow and disgrace', he complained to Queen Victoria; Limbang should be returned 'so that our city of Brunei may not be oppressed by Rajah Brooke and the country of Brunei and our Government not be destroyed by Rajah Brooke'.[11] The issue, one Foreign Office clerk minuted, was 'rather an awkward one' for 'if brought up in the House it will be very difficult to convince people that the Sultan has not been somewhat badly treated'.[12] Fortunately for the

[9] As note 4 (above), para. 83.   [10] *Ibid.*, para. 80.

[11] Composite taken from F.O. 12/83 p. 103: Sultan Hashim to Queen Victoria, telegram, 18 December 1890; and C.O. 144/69 (4396) Sultan Hashim to Queen Victoria (? early 1893).

[12] F.O. 12/95 pp. 21ff, minute by ? Sir G. Dallas.

Foreign Office, Brunei had no champion in the Commons. Sultan Hashim refused to accept the proffered cash compensation ('cession money'); and, eventually, Whitehall came to believe that he was concerned less with money than with the continued survival of his threatened country.[13]

There was, indeed, an intense patriotism and loyalty to the Crown amongst most Bruneians, who were immensely suspicious of foreigners. Sultan Hashim took great pride in his ancient lineage, particularly in a sixteenth-century predecessor who was supposed to have ruled all Borneo and to have made conquests further afield. This patriotism, however, was blended with ignorance of the outside world: it is unlikely that Sultan Hashim had ventured beyond even Labuan—in the Malay phrase he was 'katak di-bawah tempurong' ('a frog under a coconut shell'), and so were most of his people, apart from the few who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Be that as it may, fear of 'the blotting out of an ancient dynasty' was 'sufficiently strong' to mould Brunei's policy.[14]

In April 1904 a Straits Settlements' official, M. S. H. McArthur (1872–1934) was despatched to Brunei to report on the situation there. After discussing the evils of Brunei's rule, the disaffection prevailing in the outdistricts, and the State's approaching bankruptcy and probable dissolution, he suggested that it would be unjust for the country to be incorporated within Sarawak because of the overwhelming opposition to the Rajah, at least in the capital. A British Residency, on the other hand, would be 'less obnoxious' to leading Malays. Mr McArthur demonstrated also that Brunei was more valuable than had been supposed and might even become self-supporting within a reasonable space of time. The British Government, in accepting his conclusions, saw no reason why the success of British administration in Malaya should not be repeated in Borneo. For the longer term, it was hoped that both Sarawak and North Borneo would fall under the direct control of the Colonial Office and could be amalgamated to form a 'larger colony', towards which end a Residency in Brunei was seen as a first step. Sarawak, which had once been admired, was now considered unprogressive, its dependence on Iban military power deprecated, and the heirs to the Rajah's absolute rule were an unknown quantity. The B.N.B.C., on the other hand, was in financial straits and its administration was 'frankly commercial'[15] in character. Neither could be entrusted with the additional responsibility of ruling Brunei. Finally, there may have been an element of guilt on the part of H.M.G.: Sir John

[13] For example, C.O. 144/79 (10323); and F.O. 12/128 pp. 408 ff.
[14] As note 4 (above), para. 116.   [15] Ibid., para. 105.

Anderson, the High Commissioner, reported to the Colonial Office in 1905 that Brunei had 'certainly not derived any benefit in the past from its position under British protection' and 'unless the Protection guaranteed the Sultan is nominal only, and the advantages of the [1888] Treaty are entirely confined to His Majesty's Government, it appears to me morally impossible . . . to force it [absorption by Sarawak] upon the Sultan . . .'.[16] Hence it was decided to install a Resident, and to combine the running of Brunei with that of Labuan, which had been in the hands of the B.N.B.C. since 1890.[17] The new administration was to be 'of a simple character' only.[18]

IV

Mr McArthur himself became the first Resident (1906–08); but before he could get down to the main tasks in hand, the pretensions of the Rajah had to be rebuffed. Sir Charles Brooke G.C.M.G. (reigned 1868–1917) had understood that Brunei—'that blot on the map'[19]—was within his 'sphere' and should fall to him: this was his lifetime's ambition and he was furious that his 'Manifest Destiny' was to be thwarted. His vanity was hurt by the hint, implicit in the appointment of a Resident, that he was unfit to rule Brunei. Added to that were ideological disagreements: Sir Charles discouraged capitalist investment in Sarawak, he considered official education policies unsuitable, and he ensured that his officers achieved a close intimacy with the governed; Malayan Civil Servants, on the other hand, he declared to be not knowledgeable of Borneo, they would not govern in the people's interest, they would impose a 'complicated system' and the result would be bloodshed.[20] The Colonial Office rejected these allegations and inaccurate predictions; but Sir Charles allowed his 'soreness' to lead him to

[16] C.O. 144/79 (10323) Sir John Anderson (1858–1918) to Marquess of Lansdowne (1845–1927), no. 3 (confidential), 18 February 1905, para. 5.

[17] Constitutionally, Brunei and Labuan remained separate, although they shared certain officials in common: Brunei was a nominally-independent Malay State, whilst Labuan—one of the Straits Settlements—reverted to the Crown Colony status it had enjoyed between 1847 and 1890. After the Pacific War, Labuan was incorporated within North Borneo (now Sabah).

[18] As note 16 (above), para. 10.

[19] This was actually the phrase of Mr C. A. Bampfylde (1856–1918), one of the Rajah's most trusted advisers. See S. Baring-Gould and C. A. Bampfylde: *A History of Sarawak* (London, 1909), p. 326. Mr A. B. Ward comments similarly, *Rajah's Servant* (Cornell, 1966), p. 20. Sir Charles Brooke would not have dissented.

[20] C.O. 144/81 (3460) Sir Charles Brooke to Foreign Office, 23 January 1906.

conduct a campaign to undermine the Residency in the hope of forcing a reversal of the decision in his favour. This involved making complaints to the Colonial Office, getting questions asked in the Commons, stirring up trouble in Brunei, and attempting to obtain signatures to petitions. But he won only desultory support in the Sultanate, where the new order was acceptable to 'all but those whose powers of oppression and extortion [had] been clipped'.[21] As late as September 1907 the Rajah was seeking permission to take over in Brunei; unfortunately for him, the Colonial Office stood its ground.

On the other hand, Rajah Brooke continued to maintain a presence in the Sultanate: the Brunei Government's immediate priority was to regain full sovereignty over even the little territory it retained. Sir Charles, therefore, was reminded that the extensive areas of land he owned in Brunei were held in his private capacity and might not be treated as part of Sarawak. Hence he was required to dismantle his skeleton administration in the Muaras (at the mouth of the Brunei River); but he managed to retain all revenue rights there, apart from poll tax and shipping dues. He foiled, also, an attempt to impose a Brunei export duty on coal exported from Muara by threatening to close his mine, which was running at a loss. The revenue rights were eventually surrendered (at a price) to Brunei in 1924, the land rights (apart from a bungalow) only in 1931–32.

The early Residents had other minor successes. The most important bone of contention, of course, was Limbang: and in this case the efforts made on behalf of the Sultanate were wholly unsuccessful. Mr McArthur realized that the restoration of the entire province was probably out of the question: 'This reversal of roles, with the Rajah of Sarawak, instead of the powerless Sultan of Brunei, as victim, would doubtless rouse too great an outcry.'[22] Instead, he urged as a matter of vital importance the recovery of at least the left bank. Apart from being Brunei's former 'rice store and richest asset',[23] Limbang afforded the easiest means of communication from Brunei Town to the outdistricts; and Mr McArthur found that goods were being smuggled from *ulu* Tutong and Belait *via* Limbang without any duty being paid to a Government dependent on customs revenue for much of its income. In

[21] C.O. 144/81 (35280) Anderson to Earl of Elgin, no. 13 (Brunei), 27 August 1906, para. 5. (The Earl of Elgin, 1849–1917, was Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905–08.)

[22] C.O. 144/80 (10206) McArthur to Anderson, 13 February 1906, para. 13.

[23] C.O. 531/4 (20919) minute by W. H. Lee-Warner, 2 July 1912. (Mr Lee-Warner, b. 1880, O.B.E. 1928, d. ?, was Assistant-Resident in Brunei from 1910 until 1914, apart from the year 1912, when he was seconded to the Colonial office).

360   A. V. M. HORTON

view of the Rajah's recent 'bitter disappointment' the Colonial Office declined to take any action for the present. When Sir Charles died in 1917 the issue was revived, but it was felt that his successor would suffer a severe blow to his prestige if he were to surrender Limbang so early in his reign; and so nothing was done. The loss of Limbang, however, continued to rankle in Brunei, and in 1970 a public claim was staked to the district.

V

Meanwhile, the early Residents faced the duty of (as they saw it) cleansing the Augean Stables and providing Brunei with a 'proper' administration. Their guiding principle was 'the maximum of justice to the oppressed with the minimum of interference with the rights and susceptibilities of those in power'. The task confronting Mr McArthur and his successors was indeed 'daunting':

With no public expenditure and with a disreputable ruling class scrambling for cash advances from foreign governments or private speculators, seizing all they dare from their luckless subjects, and valuing their position solely as a means of self-indulgence and extravagance, to talk of a Government seems ridiculous. There are no salaried officers, . . . no forces, no police, no public institutions, no coinage, no roads, no public buildings—except a wooden mosque, and—most crying need of all—no gaol. There is a semblance of a judicature, but little justice . . .[24]

The first necessity was the establishment of an effective central authority whose writ ran throughout the country. The traditional Malay State was a collection of revenue-producing riverine districts, controlled by nobles, who happened to acknowledge, however reluctantly, a common Sultan. In Brunei there was 'no Government . . . only ownership'. The country was divided up into three sorts of tenure, each carrying with it taxation and administration rights for the owner: *kerajaan* (crown lands), *kuripan* (ministerial lands) and *tulin* (private lands).[25] Landlords owned not just the land but the people living on it as well: all Bruneians, apart from most Malays and Chinese, were serfs. A Sultan had little real power except over his own districts and people: he was unable by custom to interfere with the internal administration of other districts. No

[24] As note 4 (above), para. 55.
[25] For a more detailed analysis, see Professor D. E. Brown, *Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate* (Monograph of the Brunei Museum, 1970), pp. 79–85.

transfer of sovereignty, however, could take place without his consent; but his poverty was often such that he jumped at the chance to obtain the fee to which he was entitled on any such transfer.

Worse still, succession to the throne did not follow primogeniture but was 'a matter in which many persons believed they had a right to determine the outcome'.[26] This caused endless succession disputes and political instability: during the nineteenth century not all Sultans won full acceptance in the sense that all chiefs paid them obeisance, hence allowing them to be 'conferred with majesty' as *Yang Di Pertuan* (Crowned Sultan). Furthermore, a Ruler was supposed to consult his four *wazirs* (senior ministers)—of whom only two remained in office in 1906—in any matter affecting the State and two of their seals were necessary to validate any important State document. Endemic factionalism prevented such consensus and so hindered effective and responsible administration.

Another difficulty was that, as Sarawak and North Borneo encroached further and further, Brunei lost some of its richest areas and the *pengirans* (nobles) had correspondingly fewer people to tax; consequently in the remaining districts, taxation became porportionately heavier, which in turn provoked further revolts by the populace. This had been the problem in Limbang in 1884, and again in Tutong and Belait at the beginning of this century. Some tribesmen, weary of such extortion, appealed to Sarawak for assistance, or fled deep into the jungle in order to escape the attentions of Brunei tax collectors. The Kedayans, on the other hand, achieved sufficient cohesion to prevent excessive financial demands on them.

The Residency went a long way towards abolishing this chaos by taking all land, initially, into State ownership. The Sultan and *wazirs* accepted annual pensions in compensation for the loss of their *kerajaan* and *kuripan* rights. It took over five years, however, before *tulin* claims could be investigated and settled, because some were fraudulent. If genuine, the owner was issued with a title to his land and compensation for the surrender of rights of taxation. A land administration was then begun, receipts from sales or rents being paid into the newly-established public treasury. Serfdom automatically ceased; and, in place of the myriad tax demands invented by *pengirans*, the sole direct levy payable after 1906 was an annual poll tax of two Straits' dollars;[27] and some groups were exempt even from this.

Generally speaking, a harmonious relationship existed between

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[27] After 1906 one Straits' dollar was worth 2s 4d (11.66p).

Sultan and Resident. As far as I am aware, this land question produced the only occasion when a Sultan was reminded officially of the Treaty requirement that the Resident's advice must be accepted. Sultan Muhammad Jemalul Alam, a youth dominated by the two *wazirs* who were acting as Regents during his minority, obstructed the implementation of the Land Code and, at one point, was threatened with deposition by Sir John Anderson. Later, after the old generation of *wazirs* had passed from the scene, Sultan Muhammad Jemal emerged as an intelligent and progressive monarch, receptive to new ideas, such as the need for schools and vaccination campaigns. In 1920 he was knighted; and the early death of this 'dignified and enlightened Ruler' only four years later was much regretted.

A cardinal feature of British policy, indeed, was the enhancement of the monarchy's prestige and authority, at the expense of the *wazirs*.[28] This proved difficult because the *wazirs* assumed the role of Regents during two long minorities (1906–18 and 1924–31). Residents, however, were able to prevent any recurrence of the former political instability caused by factionalism and, by the 1950s, the monarchy had emerged as the most powerful political force in the Sultanate. In accordance with the Will of Sultan Hashim,[29] succession now followed the rule of primogeniture *de facto* (although the formality of election persisted). The *wazirs*, while retaining their seats on the State Council, had a largely formal role and played little or no part in the running of the country after 1906. The State Council, a pre-Residency institution, enacted all legislation and had to approve the financial estimates, but in essence it was a rubber stamp for the Resident, certainly before the Pacific War. Its dozen or so members, apart from the Resident, were appointed by the Sultan, and consisted mainly of his relations and people raised up by him.

Having abolished the territorial power of the nobles, the British appointed a 'Malay Magistrate' in each of the four administrative districts. Responsible solely to the Resident, their main duties were the trial of minor cases and the collection of poll tax and customs duties. As time passed their duties became more varied, and, in 1932, their style was changed to 'District Officer'.

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[28] C.O. 531/11 (50598) G. E. Cator to High Commissioner, no. 2 (confidential), 30 April 1917, paragraph 6. (Sir G. E. Cator, 1884–1973, was British Resident in Brunei 1916–21, and later, 1933, Resident in Perak).

[29] C.O. 144/80 (26871) Will of Sultan Hashim, 20 *Safar* 1324 A.H. (14 April 1906).

VI

The establishment of effective central control made possible another major task of the first Residents: viz., the raising of a revenue for the State. Hitherto there had been no national treasury, the Sultan and *pengirans* using their income for private purposes only: most of it was spent on the upkeep of retainers, the source of a Malay chief's power.

During the years 1906–11 loans totalling $500,000 (Straits) were arranged from the Federated Malay States. Of this amount $174,377 were eventually spent on the redemption of 'cession monies'. During the nineteenth century, nobles—in order to alleviate their poverty—had surrendered their districts one by one to the encroaching Sarawak and North Borneo in return for annual payments, called 'cession money'. The Brunei Government after 1906 bought up as many of these rights as possible, with the result that the receipts benefited the State Exchequer, rather than going into private hands.

Secondly, $72,009 of loan expenditure were used to redeem 'monopolies'. In some cases the monopoly of trading in certain articles had been granted; in others, the sole right of charging customs duties. Sultan Hashim, desperately short of ready cash, had recklessly alienated to money-lenders, mainly Chinese, virtually all his sources of income, usually for the most inadequate consideration and for as many as twenty (or more) years ahead. This was why Mr McArthur could say that Brunei was more valuable than the Rajah had been admitting: the revenue actually being collected was a mere fraction of that to which the Government was entitled. After 1906, these monopolies were redeemed compulsorily and cheaply, the 'farmer' being paid his purchase money, less an amount proportionate to the number of years the monopoly had already been held. The abolition of the monopoly system had the additional advantage of reducing retail prices in the capital.

Most of the remainder of the F.M.S. loan was devoted to setting the new administration on its feet; $60,250 were returned unused, so that in 1914 the Brunei National Debt stood at $439,750, the servicing of which was a heavy burden.

Before the discovery of the Seria oilfield, the economy produced nothing which could generate a substantial income for the Government. The majority of people were subsistence fishermen or *padi*-farmers. Total exports, consisting mainly of coal, cutch, sago and rubber, were worth only $867,190 as late as 1924 (admittedly a lean year, immedia-

364   A. V. M. HORTON

tely preceding a 'boom' in rubber exports).[30] Customs duties accounted for easily the largest single item of Government revenue, followed by receipts from the *chandu* monopoly and cession money. Less significant yields were obtained from licence fees, land rents, interest payments and the sale of postage stamps. In the circumstances the financial achievement was not inconsiderable: annual State income, a mere $43,539 in 1908, reached a pre-oil peak of $440,870 in 1927, by which time a start had been made on the repayment of the National Debt. Loans, at fair rates of interest, were also made to the Sultan, in order to help him to redeem mortgaged property and to escape from the clutches of extortionate local moneylenders.

VII

The legal sphere was another area attracting attention. Mr McArthur supervised the enactment of a Penal Code, the creation of a system of courts, and the introduction of Police. The Resident's Court was the highest in the land, but the Supreme Court of the Straits Settlements was entitled to exercise original jurisdiction in capital cases and to hear appeals. Appellants, if they so desired, could take their petitions to the Privy Council in London. The enforcement of law and order coupled with access to impartial justice were major benefits provided by the Residential System.

Religious cases, on the other hand, remained the province of the *Kathi* (Islamic judge). Muhammadan law was defined rather more narrowly than some leading Malays preferred: in 1906 they presented a petition to the High Commissioner, but it was rejected.

The Police consisted initially of a Straits Settlements' detachment, seconded from Labuan. Especially after the murder of a Resident by a drunk Sikh policeman in 1916, they were gradually replaced by Malays until, on 1 January 1921, a separate Brunei Police Force, 39 strong,

30 Year	Rubber Exports (1)	Total Exports (2)	(1) as percentage of (2)
		($ Straits)	
1924	387,793	867,190	44.72
1925	1,318,218	1,859,736	70.88
1926	1,032,055	1,651,048	62.51
1927	892,627	1,443,703	61.83
1931	161,204	501,494	32.14

Source: Compiled by author from Annual Reports. (C.O. 824/1–2).

came into existence. In fact, there was astonishingly little crime in the Sultanate—and no lawyers—so that the burden of police and court work remained negligible.

VIII

Another important scheme of the Residents was a continuing attempt to persuade the River Villagers to abandon their damp, overcrowded and allegedly unhealthy houses over the water and to settle instead on *terra firma*, where a New Capital grew up around the Government offices and Chinese shophouses. Apart from health considerations, Residents wished to encourage domestic *padi* production, in order to reduce dependence on rice imports. But their efforts, still continuing in the 1950s, produced little result, because most Malays preferred to remain where they were.

IX

On 5 April 1929, oil was struck at Seria; but none was exported until 1932, in the hope that market conditions would become more favourable.[31] In the following 28 years,[32] the oilfield provided the administration with $340,000,000 in oil royalties alone, transforming Brunei from a debt-ridden backwater into one of the richest countries in the world (in terms of *per capita* G.N.P.).

It appears unlikely that the Residency was established because it was thought there might be oil in Brunei: as late as 1917, for example, a Resident was urging that Belait be exchanged for the return of two other districts bordering Temburong. Fortunately for Brunei, the High Commissioner rejected this advice, but he did so on grounds other than that Belait might contain a rich oilfield.[33]

During the years 1907–22 several oil companies prospected in Brunei, but they lacked capital and drive. By 1923 the newly-formed British

[31] C.O. 717/92 (File 92395/1932) B.M.P.C. to Crown Agents, 8 September, 1932.

[32] Not including the years of Japanese Occupation (1942–45) and British Military Administration (1945–46).

[33] C.O. 531/11 (10824) Sir Arthur Young to Mr W. Long, Secret, 29 December 1917, para. 16. Sir Arthur commented that if Belait were exchanged for Trusan and Lawas, the people 'would feel that they had been inconsiderately treated if they were handed over as part of a business transaction, and it would tend to disquiet the inhabitants of other districts of Brunei'.

Malayan Petroleum Company (B.M.P.C.)—owned by the Royal Dutch/Shell group—was the only one left in the field, at a time when both the Brunei Government and the Colonial Office had become defeatist about the prospects for oil discovery; and so, in order to encourage the B.M.P.C. to continue exploration, the royalty negotiated for any crude oil produced was only two shillings a ton, with an option to take 10% in kind.

Brunei quickly became the third largest oil producer in the British Commonwealth. It was also the most crucial: for, as one British official observed in 1935, 'the whole of the aviation spirit used overseas by the Royal Air Force, and the bulk of the spirit they use in the United Kingdom is drawn from Brunei'.[34] It seems, therefore, that Seria oil made a not insignificant contribution to the survival of the United Kingdom during the anxious summer of 1940.[35]

The B.M.P.C. soon acquired a major role in the Sultanate. The Belait district had been so undeveloped that, before drilling could commence, the company itself had to build wharves for the unloading of supplies, roads to carry drillers and equipment to sites of exploration, and quarters for imported labourers and staff. In addition, the B.M.P.C. provided excellent health and recreational facilities. As a result, Government became totally overshadowed in Belait district: 'the company never tried to set itself up as a rival or to challenge the functions of Government', one official remembered. 'It was just a very big fish in a small pool! One couldn't get away from it!'.[36] Furthermore, since communications between Belait and Brunei Town were so tenuous, a distinct polarization developed between the industrial oilfield, inhabited mainly by immigrants, and the subsistence economy of the rather more easy-going, Malay-populated district at the other end of the State.

[34] C.O. 717/110 (51535/1935) minute by (Sir) G. E. J. Gent (1895–1948), 19 March 1935.

[35] I regret that I have been unable to obtain definite information on this point. Incredible as it may appear, neither the R.A.F. Museum at Hendon, nor the Ministry of Defence (Air Historical Branch) have any figures detailing the sources whence the Royal Air Force derived its fuel in 1940–41. It may be assumed, however, that wartime consumption was far higher than it had been in 1935 and that the proportion obtained from Brunei declined accordingly. Further, after Brunei itself fell to the Japanese at the end of 1941 (thereby cutting off oil exports to the United Kingdom), the R.A.F. continued to operate; clearly, therefore, Seria oil cannot have been of such overwhelming importance by that time as it had been in 1935. Finally, *Datuk* R. N. Turner, S.P.D.K., C.M.G. (Assistant-Resident, Brunei 1940–41) commented that he was not aware that the R.A.F. 'was so dependent on Brunei for its needs' as suggested by G. E. J. Gent in 1935 (letter to the author, 14 August, 1983).

[36] *Ibid.*

X

The Residential System was not particularly oppressive.[37] As late as 1941 there were only seven British officials stationed in Brunei: the Resident, Assistant-Resident, Chief Police Officer and State Engineer (posts dating back to 1906),[38] plus Heads of the Medical (1929), Forestry (1933) and Agriculture (1937) Departments. The Treasurer was Chinese, whilst Malays supervised other Departments. Originally, some European officials, including the Resident, had been shared with Labuan and, if technical advice were required, an expert would be despatched from Malaya. Residents were always unarmed and accessible to anyone with a grievance. Brunei had no armed forces; riots were unknown. The Police Force as late as 1938 numbered 85, whilst Brunei's two gaols at the end of 1935 contained *nine* inmates (only five at the end of 1936);[39] and prisoners regarded themselves as public servants rather than convicted felons since they were employed extra-murally performing useful odd jobs. There was not even a rudimentary Special Branch until the 1950s, and that was established after the 1949 Chinese Revolution principally because of fears with regard to the rapidly increasing Chinese minority in the Sultanate. Trade unionism was of no account until 1960 and there appears to have been only one strike which could justify the name—and that occurred in the exceptional circumstances (food shortages, high cost of living) obtaining in mid-1946. In short, the British held their position in Brunei through the tacit consent of the governed.

A very different situation prevailed under the Japanese. On 16 December 1941 the Kawaguchi Detachment landed at Kuala Belait and within six days the undefended Sultanate had fallen into their hands. Fortunately there had been time to implement the oilfield destruction scheme, thereby denying the wells and installations to the enemy. All Europeans were rounded up and imprisoned in the Batu

[37] This is not to deny that atrocities were committed by the British in Borneo at other times; nor that the power of the Royal Navy was always in the background.

[38] The post of Assistant-Resident was abolished during the years 1914–31. For most of the pre-WWI era, this officer was the only European Government servant permanently resident in the Sultanate. At the beginning of 1913 he was joined by a British 'Superintendent of Customs and Monopolies' (E. G. Goldfinch), styled 'Treasurer' 1915–19.

[39] During 1935 a total of 30 people were imprisoned at one time or another (cf. 25 in 1936 and 41 in 1937). The worst year appears to have been 1954, when 179 people were imprisoned (but cf. 44 in 1952 and 43 in 1955; 1953 n.a.).

Lintang (Kuching) death camp, where approximately one-third perished. This was nothing, however, to the fate of 2,400 Allied prisoners, mostly Australians, held in Sandakan, of whom *six* survived to tell the tale.

Whereas British administration in Brunei may not be characterized as harsh, the Japanese came in as masters and ruled by terror, enforcing their will through the *Kempeitai*. As G. S. Carter has observed, the 'laws of decency and justice to which they (Borneans) had been accustomed in the past, were supplanted by the persuasion of the rifle butt, the firing squad and the *samurai* sword'.[40] Many inhabitants, especially the Chinese, fled for their lives into the jungle. As the tide of war turned, the invaders became increasingly brutal and irrational in order to hide their loss of face. Many leading Malays were arrested and tortured as 'British spies'; and, indeed, there were notable acts of heroism which were recognized after the war was over. The declared Japanese policy ('Asia for the Asians') meant, in reality, 'Asia for the Japanese'. In brief, almost four years of Japanese occupation produced little beyond untold misery, fear, starvation and endemic disease.

Those who take the sword, however, tend to perish by the sword: on 10 June 1945 a co-ordinated landing effected by the Ninth Australian Division at Labuan and Muara signalled the beginning of Operation 'Oboe Six' designed to recapture Brunei's oil and rubber resources in preparation for Operation 'Zipper' (the liberation of Malaya) and the invasion of Japan, the latter scheduled for November 1945. The surviving Japanese forces retreated into the interior, where they were eliminated by an indigenous guerrilla force which had been organized and trained by Allied officers in the months preceding the Australian landing. The loyalty of the Borneans is attested by the fact that the Japanese on the coast had not the slightest intimation of its existence. The surrender of the Japanese commander was accepted in September 1945.[41] Sultan Ahmad Tajudin, on the first anniversary of the Australian entry into his capital, referred to the 'liberation' of his territory from the 'evil oppression' of the Japanese; the *pengirans*, it was said, were 'delighted at the return of British protection and influence'.[42]

[40] Major G. S. Carter, D.S.O., *A Tragedy of Borneo* (Kuala Belait, 1958) p. 7. (Major Carter, a New Zealander, was one of the officers who parachuted into the interior of Borneo to organize the indigenous guerrilla force.)

[41] See W.O. 203/2689 and W.O. 203/2690.

[42] C.O. 537/1613 item 214A Sultan to H.M. the King, telegram, 6 July 1946; and *Ibid.*, item 227 Governor-General to C.O. no. 94 (telegram), 18 July 1946.

Until July 1946 Brunei came under the British Military Administration (British Borneo),[43] whose main functions were (a) to distribute relief supplies to the starving, unclothed, disease-ridden populace; and (b) to establish the rudiments of an administration in preparation for the restoration of civilian rule. The handover was delayed because of uncertainty with regard to the future constitutional set-up in Borneo. Sarawak and North Borneo now became colonies, the Rajah retiring and the Chartered Company going into liquidation. The situation in Brunei was largely unchanged except that, after 1948, the Governor of Sarawak, instead of the Governor of the now-defunct Straits Settlements, became *ex-officio* High Commissioner for Brunei. In addition, the Residents and Department Heads tended also to be drawn from Sarawak rather than Malaya, as formerly. This Sarawak connection was a grievous mistake because, for obvious historical reasons, there was 'a total distrust of all things Sarawakian' in Brunei, and it produced some strain between Sultan and Resident.[44]

The Colonial Office had also laid down three long-term objectives for the post-war era: (a) self-government; (b) closer inter-territorial unity; and (c) the creation of a greater sense of common citizenship between the various races in 'British' Borneo.[45] The two latter ideals made little progress in strongly Muslim-Malay Brunei, which jealously guarded its new oil wealth; with regard to the first, better educational facilities resulted in Malays occupying more senior posts in the administration. But, in the 1950s, they were swamped by a flood of expatriates.

XI

The first task of the restored civilian administration was the reconstruction of the war-devastated country. Following Allied bombing, intensified after October 1944, all the townships in Brunei except *Kampong Ayer* (River Village) had been flattened. Rebuilding was delayed by shortages of everything: materials, labour, artisans, and professional staff (especially town planners). There was intense competition, moreover, between the Government and the B.M.P.C. for what scarce resources were available: the company, for example, could afford to pay

[43] W.O. 203/2400 (Final Report of the British Military Administration, by Brigadier C. F. C. Macaskie).

[44] Various sources.

[45] CAB 98/41 War Cabinet (Attlee) Committee on Malaya and Borneo: memorandum by Mr O. Stanley (C.O.): 'Draft Directive on Policy in Borneo' dated 18 January 1944; see also C.O. 825/43 (File 55104/15), items 22 and 28.

higher wages, which left the Government bereft of labour. The economy, particularly food production, had to be set back on its feet, and services (water, electricity, health and education) restored and expanded.

The oilfield had been set to the torch by the retreating Japanese, and it took some months before the spectacular fires could be controlled. Rehabilitation of the oil wells was accorded highest priority, because of the Commonwealth's urgent need for non-(US) dollar oil. Production quickly equalled pre-War levels (685,257 tons annually in 1938) and then rocketed to new heights, scaling an annual level of five million tons during the mid-1950s. This expansion, along with the introduction of company income tax (1950) and an enhanced rate of royalty, caused an 'almost fantastic'[46] increase in annual Government revenue, from $4.3 million in 1947 to $98 million six years later. In 1953 'Reconstruction' was declared at an end and the State Council voted $100 million for a five-year Development Plan, designed to introduce a Welfare State.

Before the War, Government had been run on a shoestring because there was little money and budgets were expected to balance (and they did, usually). At that time there were no welfare loans available from the Colonial Office. Even during the 1930s a cautious financial and social policy was pursued because the true extent of the oilfield had not yet been realized and the administration feared to assume burdens which might prove difficult to shoulder if the oil wells were quickly exhausted.[47] First priority was accorded to paying off the National Debt, which had been achieved by 1936. As a result only modest progress had been made towards the provision of social services before the arrival of the Japanese.

In 1906 there had been no school or hospital in the country. By 1941 there were 24 Malay primary schools with 1,746 pupils and several private establishments run by the Christian Missions or the Chinese community. In the medical field, an intermittent service was provided initially from Labuan, but there was no Government hospital or doctor in Brunei until 1929. Vaccination campaigns, however, prevented any repetition of the disastrous cholera (1902) and smallpox (1904) epidemics, the latter alone proving fatal for perhaps 9–10% of River Villagers.[48] Travelling dispensaries brought medical care to remote

[46] C.O. 943/1 file 18: minute by Sir Gerald Whiteley, 27 October 1949.

[47] E.g. C.O. 717/129 (51535/1938) memorandum by Mr J. G. Black, 31 January 1938.

[48] See A. V. M. Horton, 'The Brunei Smallpox Epidemic of 1904' in *Sarawak Museum Journal* (forthcoming).

villages, whilst permanent health centres were found in the larger townships. The incidence of malaria had been reduced to a minimum in the main settlements, though it remained prevalent elsewhere; other diseases, such as tuberculosis, were more difficult to eliminate. The most pressing problem of all was infant mortality: at one stage almost every other infant failed to survive beyond the first year; but with improved midwifery and maternal care, the rate had been improved to one in ten by 1959. Finally, it should be borne in mid that there was little demand or enthusiasm on the part of Bruneians for Government educational or medical services: a major difficulty—or so it was claimed—was to overcome traditional resistance to such new-fangled foreign ideas.

The largest single area of Government expenditure before 1941 was public works. Effort was concentrated on public buildings and a few primitive roads and bridle paths, the latter liable to be washed away by tropical rains. The construction of a wireless telegraph station in 1920–21 was regarded as a 'major' project. Electricity and piped water also became available by the 1930s; and permanent brick buildings began to be built in 1932, because this was thought cheaper over the longer term.

During the Japanese era most of the gains already made in social services were lost; and the immediate post-war years resulted in little more than the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*. The 1953–58 Development Plan, however, was comprehensive in its scope, including the rapid expansion of medical and educational facilities, improved communications (roads, telephones, an airport and a National Radio Station), the introduction of non-contributory pensions for the elderly and disabled, the expansion of water and electricity supplies, and assistance for the craftsman, small holder and *ulu*-dweller. The implementation of the Plan was hampered by all the shortages which had hindered Reconstruction after 1946: in short, 'the money was there, but nothing else'.[49] Some of the schemes have had disappointing long-term results: for example, the craft industries (brass and silver) and smallholder rubber planting have virtually died out. On the whole, however, the Plan was fulfilled 'astonishingly well, astonishingly on time and astonishingly within estimate'.[50] Its lasting monument is the magnificent multi-million dollar Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque, which towers in all its glory over the River Village.

A major aim of the Development Plan was to reduce dependence on the oil industry in preparation for the day when oil wells would be

[49] Mr E. R. Bevington, C.M.G., C.Eng: recording made for the author, 24 July 1983. (Mr Bevington, b. 1914, was Development Commissioner in Brunei, 1954–58.)
[50] *Ibid.*

A. V. M. HORTON

exhausted. It was essential that the new wealth should not be wasted on handouts, but should be used to diversify the economy, so that wealth-creating industries would exist in the country when the oil ran out. Here again, the results were disappointing: light industry was not attracted to Brunei. Fortunately, however, in 1963 a new oil reservoir was discovered offshore; and, following the oil price rises of the 1970s, Brunei has become so wealthy that the problem is unlikely to arise for many years to come.

XII

In 1956 the first major political party appeared on the scene and rapidly won overwhelming public support. The *Partai Rakyat Brunei* (Brunei People's Party) sought independence and the reunification of *Kalimantan Utara* ('British' Borneo) under the Sultan. Factors involved in the rise of nationalism included the destruction of British prestige by the Japanese; the increased literacy of Brunei people and the rise of a small intelligentsia who realized that they could govern the country just as well as any expatriate Briton; the example of India, Indonesia and Malaya which had thrown off imperialist domination; the increasing contrast between the wealthy Government and oil company on the one hand and the continued poverty of many ordinary people on the other; and, not least, the emergence of a charismatic nationalist leader, *Saudara* Ahmad Azahari, a 'spell-binder of a public speaker', who embodied the aspirations of many Bruneians.[51]

Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin (Sultan 1950–67) appeared to prefer a far more gradual approach to constitutional reform than was being pressed on him both by British advisers and by the *Partai Rakyat*; on this issue he was not to be forced against his will, and there was little the Resident or High Commissioner could do about it. Sir Omar wished to consolidate each step before moving on to the next; with the result that virtually no steps were taken at all, apart from the establishment of 'District Advisory Councils', which later sent representatives to an enlarged State Council. At the same time the perceived subordination of Brunei's interests to those of Sarawak caused some tension between the Sultan and the High Commissioner. Hence, when power was transferred by the

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[51] Mr Bevington recollected that it had been the Government's policy to lend Sheikh Azahari money for his business ventures—to 'get him involved in something worth-while'—in the hope that 'he would become more interested in money-making than politics'. If so, the ploy failed.

British in 1959, it was transferred overwhelmingly to the Sultan, not to the people;[52] and the link with Sarawak was abolished, the Sultanate receiving its own resident High Commissioner, responsible directly to the British Government. Sultan Omar Ali, meanwhile, had been promoting his own brand of somewhat intolerant Muslim Malay nationalism: he sought closer ties with his cousins in Malaya, rather than with his predominantly non-Muslim neighbours in Borneo as the British Government hoped at this time. In retrospect, taking into account the post-colonial history of many countries, Sultan Omar Ali's cautious approach to constitutional reform may have been wiser than his British advisers appreciated at the time.

XIII

In conclusion, the British Residency in Brunei first and foremost ensured the continued existence of the Sultanate as a separate State; indeed, this was the principal reason why a British presence there was tolerated at all. Initially, further Brooke encroachment was prevented and the exactions of the *pengirans* abolished. The country was given stability, a sound financial administration, a new system of justice, and, not least, a totally incorrupt public service. In the latter respect, Sir Omar Ali and his Malay ministers set an impeccable example. The capital and technical expertise of the B.M.P.C. made possible the discovery and exploitation of the Seria oilfield, which provided the revenues necessary to finance the introduction of a Welfare State in the 1950s. Failures included the continued poverty of many Bruneians, the failure to obtain the return of Limbang, the failure to defend the country in 1941, the failure to diversify the economy and the failure to implant British traditions of constitutional monarchy and democracy. Generally, however, these failures concern things which cannot be achieved overnight. On the positive side, a country which had been bankrupt with virtually no income at all in 1906, was left in 1959 with an annual revenue approaching $130,000,000 and reserves to the tune of $600,000,000. Many people lived in houses provided with running water and electricity; and the use of modern gadgetry was spreading.

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[52] The Constitution, promulgated on 29 September 1959, established an Executive Council and made provision for a partially-elected Legislative Council. Elections were eventually held in August 1962, one year behind schedule, the People's Party winning all the seats. After the uprising which took place in December that year the party was outlawed.

The rising generation was largely literate (75% of the 10–14 age group in 1960) and far healthier than their grandparents had been at the same age. Malaria, along with other killer diseases apart from tuberculosis, had been virtually eliminated. Hence an outside observer (Tunku Abdul Rahman) was able to describe Brunei in 1958 as the '*Shangri-la* of the East'.[53] Finally, scarcely three years after Brunei resumed responsibility for its internal affairs, the People's Party rose up in revolt; and, after British forces despatched from Singapore had restored the situation, any intention to move towards a democratic system of government was abandoned.

[53] *Borneo Bulletin*, 4 October 1958.

Annex 523

George Bryan Souza, "Maritime Trade and Politics in China and the South China Sea" (1987), in *Portuguese, Dutch and Chinese in Maritime Asia, c. 1585-1800: Merchants, Commodities and Commerce* (2014)

George Bryan Souza

Portuguese, Dutch and Chinese in Maritime Asia, c.1585–1800

Merchants, Commodities and Commerce

ASHGATE
VARIORUM

I

Maritime Trade and Politics in China and the South China Sea

China's interest in maritime trade to India and the Indian Ocean antedates early modern history. During the fifteenth century, intrepid Ming mariners and ships sailed into the Indian Ocean. Chinese produce was sold in Indian ports and shipped into the Red Sea, Persian Gulf or along the east African coast. By the end of the fifteenth century, Ming China's official interest in these commercial and political links with India and the Indian Ocean collapsed. Maritime trade between China and India was sustained by junk traders sailing to Malacca and the other ports in the South China Sea. At Malacca, the Chinese encountered and traded with Gujarati and other Indian and Arabian merchants who frequented that port.

The Chinese, Indian, Arabian, Malay and non-Malay indigenous merchants who traded at Malacca probably did not realize that they met on the periphery of a geographical region in which one commercial group, the Chinese, was to perceive itself dominant. Those merchants did not concern themselves over the commercial and religious penetration by Islamic traders and missionaries throughout the Indonesian archipelago which was to significantly alter the cultural and political development of some of the indigenous state systems. Neither were those merchants particularly preoccupied by the competitive commercial activities of the Malay and non-Malay indigenous merchants which were so severely hampered by the attitudes of the local rulers towards trade and indigenous merchants.

The Indian Ocean and the South China Sea are recent terms created by geographers to delineate the physical boundaries between three regions, the Indian subcontinent, southeast Asia and China. Asian and European merchants of the early modern period would not recognize the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea as those terms are currently used. To those merchants, the area known today as the Indian Ocean was a series of seas, bays, islands, and coastal markets that stretched from and connected the east coast of Africa to the west coast of Malaya and Sumatra. The actual boundary of the Indian Ocean includes portions of the Indonesian

I

318

archipelago;[1] there is disagreement whether and to what extent this current term should be applied since it is argued that the Indonesian archipelago belonged to the South China Sea in the early modern period. To those merchants, the area known today as the South China Sea was also a series of seas, bays, islands, and coastal markets that stretched from and connected the south coast of China, including Taiwan, the Philippines, the Indonesian archipelago, to the west coast of Malaya and Sumatra.

To understand the range and scale of the activities of those Asian and European merchants who participated in China's maritime trade, it is useful to mentally draw a series of more or less concentric arcs on a map of the world. With south China as the focal point on this map, the first arc is along the western border of the South China Sea and swings all the way northeast to Japan. The second is drawn to the eastern border of the Indian Ocean, along the east coast of Africa, and the third in the north and south Atlantic to include western Europe. Within the first arc, over the entire period, Chinese junks dominated maritime trade. The Chinese were joined by Japanese, European and other Asian competitors, including Siamese 'tribute' traders. In the second, Asian and European country traders (those shipowners and merchants involved in inter-Asian maritime trade) were active and the European companies were also present. In the third arc, the European companies competed exclusively between themselves in supplying Asian commodities by sea to Europe.

With the Portuguese conquest of Malacca in 1511, Ming China and the Portuguese were involved in a fundamental confrontation between differing perceptions of the ordering of state relations and the role of maritime trade. According to Tome Pires, the Portuguese were aware of Malacca's tributary vassal relationship with China but did not anticipate a Ming military response to their conquest or an adverse reaction towards their overtures to trade.[2]

China's world order was disturbed by the Portuguese conquest of Malacca. China's world order was a set of ideas and practices towards foreign relations developed and perpetuated by the rulers of China based on the concepts of Sinocentrism, an assumption of Chinese superiority and the utilization of an intricate series of tributary relationships to justify their claims of a predominant position in the world.[3] When deliberating upon what course of action to follow towards the Portuguese, Ming officials, supported by such strong historical and conceptual attitudes, established

[1] cf. Pearson, M. N., 'The Indian Ocean and the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century', paper presented at the Second International Seminar on Indo-Portuguese History, Lisbon, 20-24 October 1980.

[2] cf. Cortesão, A. (ed.) *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, 2 vols (London. 1944, reprint 1967). pp. 118, 123-8.

[3] cf. Fairbank, J. K.,'A Preliminary Framework', in J. K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 3.

the extent of the threat posed by these new barbarians to China and decided upon the manner in which the Portuguese were to be controlled by considering the current importance of Malacca and trade to China.

Ming official involvement in maritime enterprise had diminished dramatically and the Portuguese were correctly perceived as possessing a limited military threat to the security of China. Consequently, but only for a short period, Ming officials at Canton followed a policy towards the Portuguese which may be construed as a form of appeasement supported by feelings of Chinese superiority.[4] After the death of the emperor, Ching-te and the ill-conceived martial actions by the Portuguese at Canton in 1520, Ming officials reformulated their policy towards the Portuguese, ordered their exclusion and implemented a ban on all dealings by Chinese with them.

Conditions on the south China coast by the third and into the sixth decade of the sixteenth century permitted a rise in lawlessness, corruption and those forms of marginal social behaviour so common to maritime regions, smuggling and piracy. Although banned, the Portuguese sustained themselves on the Fukien and Chekiang coasts by participating in piracy and smuggling. Conditions conducive to such activities changed as a result of Ming naval and military efforts to control these coastal areas and the Portuguese sought an unobtrusive site further south on the Kwangtung coast to establish annual markets and trade. By the mid 1550's, Ming officials were persuaded or corrupted to permit the Portuguese to live and trade at sites near or in the Pearl River estuary first at Shang-ch'uan, then Lampacau, finally Macao.

Canton and Macao

China's maritime trade was centred at the principal ports of south China: Ningpo in Cheikiang, Amoy (a term used for the ports of Chang-chou and Ch'uan-chou) in Fukien, and Canton in Kwangtung. Shanghai, the major port in Kiangnan province, was to emerge and grow in importance in China's maritime trade only late in the eighteenth century. Although the markets in these ports received some commodities from great distances outside the provinces in which they were located, their participation and activity in maritime trade was linked to the characteristics of expansion or contraction in their regional or provincial economies.

The maritime trading success of the Chinese merchants from these different cities was determined by a number of important factors. One such factor was the maritime tradition of the mariners of south China, especially of Fukien; another, and perhaps as important, was the

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[4] For an extended discussion of *chi-mi* policies, elements of which were present in the Ming official attitude towards the Portuguese before the imperial ban, cf. Lien-Shang Yang, 'Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order in Fairbank', *Chinese World Order*, pp.31-3.

I

320

comparative differences in the ease of access to profitable trading Commodities and to overseas markets from south China's ports. Fukien, in the late sixteenth century, produced large quantities of silk and sugar that were in demand overseas; its merchants were well organized and prepared to compete with other maritime traders at home and abroad. Fukien's advantage in maritime trade was, perhaps enhanced by its ports being closer to Japan, which was China's primary export market over the sixteenth and into the eighteenth century and, in general, there was less bureaucratic interference at Amoy than at Canton.

After establishing themselves on the Kwangtung coast, Portuguese trade from Macao to Japan, the Philippines and India experienced phenomenal growth in both volume and value in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The growth in Portuguese trade from China was aided by Chinese imperial edicts and official attitudes that restricted maritime trade between the Middle Kingdom and Japan. Japanese and New World silver imported by the Portuguese into China arrived at Macao and, on account of that port's position as an adjunct of Canton's market, was disseminated from Canton, almost without exception, throughout the entire Ming economy.

There was a dynamic, evolutionary relationship between the Portuguese at Macao and the Ming, and later Ch'ing, officials and merchants at Canton. The improvement in Portuguese relations with Ming China paralleled the growth and development of Portuguese colonial and commercial institutions at Macao and their commercial successes in trade with Japan, the Philippines and India. In 1595, partly in response to pressure from Ming officials for more stability and accountability in the contracting of silk purchases from Cantonese merchants and partly because of the interest shown by several of the more prominent and wealthy Portuguese merchants' groups, the Portuguese *Senado da Camara* (municipal council) at Macao assumed the sole responsibility for the negotiation of silk contracts on behalf of and between individual Portuguese merchants and their Cantonese counterparts.[5]

By the third decade of the seventeenth century, when Antônio Bocarro compiled and wrote his history of the Portuguese Empire in Asia, *O Livro ao Estado da India Oriental*, the pattern of Macao's economic relationship with Canton had evolved certain characteristics. Portuguese access to Canton's market and China's trading commodities was regulated usually to two, but, upon exceptional circumstances to three, annual fairs. These fairs occurred several months prior to the departure of Portuguese shipping in different monsoon seasons from Macao for India and Japan. A small number of rich and influential Portuguese merchants were empowered by

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[5] cf. Da Cunha Rivara, J. H. (ed.), *Archivo Portuguez-Oriental*, 6 vols. in 9 (Nova Goa, 1857-76), 3, pt. 1, pp.481-2 and pt. 2, pp.545-6, 763-4 and 926-7.

the *Senado da Camara* to attend the fair. They contracted with the Chinese and supervized the loading of all Portuguese purchases, raw silk, silk piece goods, gold and all other items.

After obtaining permission to trade which involved paying the ground rent for their presence at Macao to Chinese dynastic officials, the Portuguese initiated contractual negotiations with the major Chinese *quevees* [K'uai] (merchants/brokers) for the large quantities and best qualities of the available trade items, particularly raw silk and silk piece goods. The Portuguese would then, in the case of silk piece goods, advance substantial portions of their capital to these Chinese merchants who contracted the requisite number of looms and weavers to supply these orders. Such contracts were not without risk to both parties. Bocarro, whose ethnocentric bias is obvious, wrote that 'there are many [Chinese merchants/brokers] who entrust great sums of money and goods with the Portuguese, and consequently the Portuguese with them, but it has been and still is frequently seen that these *quevees* embezzle the money of the Portuguese and flee without returning it to them'.[6] Despite incidents of embezzlement by both merchant groups, the Portuguese obtained credit and received merchandise on consignment from Canton's *quevees*. After these contracts were agreed and another substantial gift presented, Chinese officials announced an open market; the departure of Portuguese merchants and merchandise from Canton was, again, linked to the payment of a gift to the appropriate officials.

The importance of Canton's relationship with Macao and Cantonese *quevees* with Portuguese merchants is that they represent an added dimension of partnership, albeit involuntary in certain cases, in European relations with China. The activities and the number of Chinese junks from Fukien are depicted as dominating maritime trade in certain markets such as Japan, the Philippines, and others in the South China Sea in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Yet, when Portuguese trading activity from Macao, on account of that city's dependent economic relationship with the Canton market, is added to the direct Cantonese involvement in China's overseas maritime trade, Kwangtung's role is favourably enhanced and requires reassessment.

With an insatiable demand for silver during the late Ming, China's merchants were attracted to those markets in which they could sell their produce for that metal; their interest in trade with Japan and Manila logically dominated their, as well as Portuguese, resources. Other markets in the South China Sea also benefited from this expansion in the region's maritime trade. The mainland southeast Asian states offered few commodities of great intrinsic value or of interest to China, Japan, India or to the Spanish in the Philippines and, via the Manila galleon, in the New World.

[6] Boxer, C. R., *Macau na Epoca de Restauracão* (Macau, 1942), p.38.

I

322

Tonkin, Cochin-china (together today's north and central Vietnam), and Siam (Thailand), on account of Chinese imperial restrictions on direct trade betweeen China and Japan and their geographical location, attracted Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, and other merchants. Further south, in the maritime southeast Asian states, the Portuguese failed to maintain Malacca's pre-eminence as the central regional market for spices, especially pepper and cloves. The Chinese competed against Indian, Malay and non-Malay indigenous merchants, as well as the Portuguese from Macao, in markets of Java, Sumatra and the Celebes for a portion of that region's spices and aromatic woods.

From Ming to Ch'ing

The invasion of Ming China by the Manchus intensified internal economic and political instability in that country. The establishment of the Dutch East India Company, a potent European maritime power and a virulent anti-Iberian competitor contributed to the diminution of maritime trade in China and the South China Sea in the seventeenth century. Fortunes were still made in maritime trade but the availability of commodities was jeopardized as south China became the battleground in the struggle for political control between the Ming and the Ch'ing, as the Manchu dynasty was called. The risk of piracy, intervention, and competition from the VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie,* Dutch East India Company) weighed on Ming and Ch'ing officials, as well as on Chinese, Portuguese and other investors' minds.

The merchants and traders of south China involved in maritime trade endured the dislocations in their livelihood in the transition from the Ming to the Ch'ing with varying responses and successes. At Amoy, the rise and fall in the fortunes of the Cheng family, Cheng Chih-lung and Cheng Ch'en-kung, characterize these ports' comparatively successful, although temporary, amelioration of the disruption in maritime trade. Through a series of 'combination of commerce; mediation among foreigners, Chinese officials, and Chinese merchants and pirates; and control of their own naval forces', the Cheng family contributed significantly towards the maintenance of Fukien's strong involvement in maritime trade.[7] After the Portuguese were expelled from Japan, Fukien's junks, the majority controlled directly or indirectly by the Chengs, dominated maritime trade in that market much to the chagrin of the VOC.[8]

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[7] cf. Wills, Jr., J. E.,'Maritime China from Wang Chih to Shih Lang', in J. E. Wills, Jr. and J. D. Spence, *From Ming to Ch'ing: Conquest, Region and Continuity in the Seventeenth Century (New Haven, 1979), p. 219.*

[8] cf. van Dam, P., *Beschijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie,* The Hague, 7 vols., [Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatien. Grote Serie, vols. 63, 68, 74, 76, 83, 87, 96] (1927-54), 74, pp.383-553 and J. Hall, 'Notes on the Early Ch'ing Copper Trade with Japan', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* 12 (1949), 444-61.

On the Kwangtung coast, at Macao and Canton, the commercial relations and the pattern of interdependence between Portuguese merchants and Cantonese *quevees*, as described by Bocarro, were severely strained and approached rupture in the late Ming period. The deterioration in their relations and the tension between these two groups was linked to the cessation and decline in Portuguese trade from China to Japan, Manila and India. Macao's prosperity evaporated by the time that the Tokugawa officials in Japan implemented anti-Iberian and exclusion policies, the Spanish Crown's officials at Manila interdicted direct trade with the Portuguese in China, after the restoration of the Crown of Portugal from Hapsburg Spain, and Dutch naval power rendered the passage from China to India almost impossible.

The decline in Portuguese trade influenced an already disrupted market and caused severe fluctuation in the supply and demand of large quantities of highly valuable commodities at Canton. The politics of survival for the Portuguese at Macao demanded a pro-Ming stance which included the provision of small scale military forces and equipment to support that failing dynasty. The consequence of supporting the Ming also threatened the continued existence of that European community. Canton was sacked by Manchu forces in 1650. And the economy and maritime trade of Kwangtung province, became a victim in the struggle between the Ming and Ch'ing.

Fukien initially escaped harsh treatment in this conflict but, after the Cheng family's involvement in the siege of Nanking in 1659, the Ch'ing policy of the evacuation of south China's coastal population and prohibition of maritime trade was implemented with greater force in both Fukien and Kwangtung. Cheng forces, despite the expulsion of the VOC from Taiwan in 1662, were incapable of pursuing policies that would enable them, or the Ming dynasty that they supported, to re-establish a viable political and military presence on the mainland.

The loss of Taiwan for the VOC had an immediate impact on their trade in Chinese merchandise to Japan, India and Europe since their sources of supply were disrupted. The VOC's efforts to restore these sources were first by force and then by Company trading expeditions and political overtures to the Ch'ing at Canton and Peking. When those efforts failed, the VOC relied upon a combination of suppliers of Chinese merchandise including Dutch private traders (the *vrij-burgers*), Chinese and Portuguese traders.

Kwangtung, controlled by forces nominally supporting the Ch'ing was embroiled in the 1660's in implementing the coastal evacuation policy. When the Ch'ing contemplated the dismantling of the Shang feudatory regime in that province in the 1670's, Kwangtung was, again, involved in conflict, known as the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories (the rebellion of the three feudatory princedoms of south China:, Yunnan Fukien and

I

324

Kwangtung), which raged from 1674 until 1680.[9] The struggle for the consolidation of Ch'ing power in Kwangtung ended with a Ch'ing victory in the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories and in Fukien, as a result of the efforts of Shih Lang and Yao Ch'i-shêng in the destruction of the remainder of the Cheng family forces and the capture of Taiwan in 1683.

Many of the markets in the South China Sea also experienced severe dislocations in their maritime trade during these years of turmoil in China. In the mainland southeast Asian states, the ruling families of Tonkin and Cochinchina were engaged in a bitter civil war. They adopted restrictive regulations on maritime trade in order to maximize their revenue receipts used in financing their struggle for power. Their fledgling raw silk and silk piece good production fluctuated and declined, this combined with regulatory difficulties diminished those markets' previous attraction for Chinese, Dutch, Portuguese and other merchants. The rulers of Siam acted in an entirely different manner; although the market never grew to impressive inter-regional standards, the Siamese were ably involved in trade to Japan, China and, for a short period, in the Bay of Bengal.[10]

Further south, in the maritime southeast Asian states, the VOC, after establishing themselves in Java, supplanted the Portuguese at Malacca in 1641 and dealt harsh blows to the politics and economies of the Malay and non-Malay state systems in the Indonesian archipelago. The VOC's efforts to centralize much of the region's pepper trade at Batavia met with success but their efforts to monopolize clove production in the eastern Indonesian archipelago were tenaciously resisted. Far from being omnipotent, the VOC spent much of the mid-seventeenth century thwarting economic and political competition from the sultanates of Macassar, the Celebes, and Bantam, in Java. Although the Portuguese from Macao and the Chinese were active, especially at Bantam in purchasing pepper, the commercial rise of Macassar and Bantam was linked primarily to trade with India and the Indian Ocean via India and European company and country merchants who exchanged Indian textiles in those markets with Malay and non-Malay indigenous merchants for cloves and other items. In order to eliminate these sources of competition, the VOC with its indigenous allies occupied Macassar in 1667 and supported the establishment of a pro-VOC regime at Bantam in 1682.

After the Ch'ing firmly established their control over south China in 1683, there was a marked increase in China's maritime trade. From Japan to Manila to Acheh, Chinese junks, in numbers and in the values of the

[9] cf. Kessler, L. D., *K'ang-hsi and the Consolidation of Ch'ing Rule, 166 '684* (Chicago, 1976), pp.81-90 and J. E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns and Parleys: The Dutch East India Company and China, 1662-1681* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), pp. 154-7.

[10] cf. Viraphol, S., *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977) and Ishii Yoneo, 'Seventeenth Century Japanese Documents about Siam', *Journal of the Siam Society*, 59 (1971), pp. 161-74.

I

goods they imported and exported, dominated most of those markets in the South China Sea in the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century. The maritime trade in those markets, however, declined in value and in importance. This decline was in part a result of a world economy being formed with European company, Asian and European country traders arriving to trade in China from Europe, India and the Indian Ocean. Chinese merchants from Chekiang, Fukien and Kwangtung, as well as the Portuguese at Macao, competed in the primary markets in the South China Sea such as Batavia and Manila.

Batavia

Batavia, in Java, was one such primary market developed by the VOC, employing imported Chinese labour, and regularly visited by Chinese junks since the early seventeenth century. The VOC decided in the early 1690's to cease trading directly with China and to rely upon Chinese and Portuguese merchants to supply them with Chinese merchandise at Batavia for the Company's trade to Europe and the Indian Ocean. The reason for this decision was the failure in the VOC's diplomatic initiatives to obtain more favourable trading conditions from Peking.

Chinese maritime trading activity at Batavia over the entire eighteenth century was dominated by the junks that arrived from and departed for Amoy, Canton and Ningpo. From 1684 to 1754, for example, the total arrivals were 853; 385 from Amoy, 127 from Canton and 119 from Ningpo with the remainder coming from Japan, Tonkin, Manila and Shanghai. When the numbers and size of junks from Canton and Portuguese ships from Macao are combined and then compared with the tonnage of the junks arriving from Amoy and Ningpo, the Cantonese and Portuguese tonnage surpassed that of Ningpo and closely approximated, equalled or surpassed Amoy.[11] Fukien's domination of the Batavia trade was seriously contested by the combined activities of the Cantonese *quevees* and Portuguese at Macao.

Macao's prosperity was long diminished but its market relationship with Canton and Sino-Portuguese commercial relations permitted this rivalry between Fukien and Kwangtung. Portuguese and Dutch records reveal that the produce which the Portuguese sold at Batavia was purchased at Canton and, in many cases, the Chinese goods freighted on the Portuguese ships were on the Cantonese *quevees'* accounts. The Cantonese merchants were also capable of manipulating the Macao customs duties rates on the goods that the Portuguese ships imported from Batavia on their behalf.

The commodities which the Chinese and the Portuguese sold at Batavia in the late seventeenth and the entire eighteenth century reflect a major

[11] cf. Souza, G. B., 'Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, c. 1630-1754', unpublished Ph. D. dessertation, University of Cambridge, 1981, pp.282-6. [This work has since been published as : G. B. Souza, *The Survival of Empire : Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630-1754* (Cambridge, 1986). *Eds.*]

I

326

change in the structure of maritime trade in China. With the emergence of demand for tea, Europe's interest in raw silk and silk piece goods from China, which had dominated for most of the seventeenth century, was curtailed. Tea was the most important commodity traded by the Chinese and the Portuguese at Batavia.

The commodities that the Chinese and the Portuguese purchased at Batavia consisted of merchandise the VOC obtained from throughout the Indonesian archipelago, Sri Lanka and Europe. Pepper was a particularly important commodity purchased; large scale purchases of this commodity from the VOC were not an innovation in the pattern of trade in the South China Sea, but an intensification of an existing commercial relationship. The quantity of pepper purchased at Batavia suggests that annual supplies in the port/markets of south China, barring significant losses by shipwreck, sustained a rise from 4000 picols($133\ ^1/_3$ lb/picol) in the 1680's to 20-26000 picols in the early years of the first decade of the eighteenth century.[12]

China's demand for pepper from the South China Sea in the early eighteenth century had important implications for the English East India Company(EIC) and VOC trade in that commodity. Although there was a general stability in the supply of pepper to the East India Company and VOC, the total exports to Europe were not exclusively dependent upon European demand but fluctuated on account of instability in supply from producers in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean, European company difficulties in obtaining capital for the purchase of these supplies and, of primary importance, demand from the China market. It is possible to compare the amounts of pepper that the EIC and the VOC carried to Europe with those exported by the Chinese and the Portuguese from Java to China. The volume of pepper imported by the VOC into Europe dominates this comparison. A trend suggesting an equality, if not a slight overall advantage, in the quantities of pepper supplied to Europe by the EIC and to China by the Chinese and the Portuguese is also evident from the late seventeenth and into the first three decades of the eighteenth century.[13]

By the 1710's the Ch'ing, absorbed in the court politics of succession, renewed its immediate interest in the southern periphery. This concern developed on account of the popular support shown in south China for the *Chu San T'ai-tzu* (the third Heir Apparent of the Ming royal house), the *I-nien* revolt (an insurrection led by a Buddhist monk of the same name in the Ta-lan mountain area near Ningpo), and the dramatic increase in bandit bands operating in the Ssu-ming mountains (also near Ningpo).[14] Fearing the reimportation of anti-Manchu ideology and pro-Ming support

[12] Ibid., pp.293-4.
[13] Ibid., pp.294-5.
[14] cf. Wu, S. H. L., *Passage to Power: K'ang-hsi and his Heir apparent, 1661-1722* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), pp.106-11.

from overseas Chinese, the Ch'ing implemented a ban on overseas trade in 1717.

The Ch'ing maritime trade ban temporarily disrupted Chinese trading activities at Batavia but the Portuguese from Macao, who were excluded from the ban, benefited and attempted to alter their dependent relationship with Canton. It was, however, the VOC's decision to return to trade directly with China at Canton from Batavia and Europe in the 1730's that caused a decline in profits from the sales of Chinese goods to the VOC at Batavia. Although they continued to dispatch shipping and especially after the massacre of the Chinese population in 1740, Chinese and Portuguese interest in trade at Batavia for the rest of the eighteenth century was emasculated.

After successfully crushing an anti-Manchu rebellion on Taiwan by 1723 and with the official revocation of the ban on overseas trade in 1727, Ch'ing policy towards Chinese participation in maritime trade was to encourage that activity but, more importantly, to place it under tighter official controls. Chinese contracts with foreign traders were also the target of increased regulation. Canton grew in importance as European Company and Asian and European country trade with China expanded. By 1754, Ch'ing officials decided to intensify their reliance upon existing *hongs* (merchant associations) to control foreign trade at Canton.

From 1755 to 1761, Ch'ing officials initiated and developed a control model over China's foreign trade that became known as the Canton system. All trade in which foreigners participated was centralized at Canton. Bureaucratic control over Chinese transactions with foreigners was consolidated with the *hong* establishing a *co-hong* (an enlarged merchant association) in 1761, entitled the *Wai-yang hong*. This system of control over China's foreign trade was maintained into the nineteenth century.

The expansion in maritime trade to China in the eighteenth century was influenced by Chinese supply and the interaction of Chinese and European country trade in the South China Sea. It also fluctuated on account of European naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea and the struggle for empire in India, and relied upon demand for Chinese produce in India, the Indian Ocean and Europe. The activities of the various European companies in China and their trade to Europe attracts a great deal of attention as a result of the importance of that trade in economic terms, the drain of precious bullion from Europe, and its influence on European society, especially in art.

The activities of Asian and European country traders and their interaction with European company involvement in the maritime trade to China and the South China Sea from India and the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth century, certainly, receives less attention than European company trade to China from Europe. Until relatively recently, the

I

328

commercial decline of Surat and Malabar's position in Asian trade was viewed largely in an European imperial context.[15] It was the establishment of British dominion in Bengal and the expansion of the opium trade to China in the late eighteenth century, it must be remembered, that reversed the drain of Europe's bullion to China.[16]

Recent research into Portuguese country traders' involvement in maritime trade from China, at Macao, to India and the Indian Ocean reveals a story of enterprise and initiative on a small but widespread scale. As their search for profitable markets in which to trade widened and shifted in the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century from the South China Sea into the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese country traders from Macao were heavily involved in the sale of Chinese sugar for Malabar pepper, and came close but failed to make arrangements with the EIC at Madras in the 1740's for the transhipment of Chinese produce to India, similar to the Batavia trade for the VOC.[17] Their early involvement in the opium trade, especially with Malwa opium, to China and the South China Sea is well known; by the late eighteenth century, they imported for a short period, a significant percentage of the total brought into China.[18] Much work remains to be done on the activities of Asian and other European country traders as well as on the European company trade from India to China and how that trade influenced the economies of India and maritime trade in the Indian Ocean.

Maritime trade and politics in China and the South China Sea from the sixteenth and until the end of the eigtheenth century inherently offers a vast and bewildering panorama of investigative problems for the student and researcher. It requires inquiry into areas seemingly remote from the field of maritime trade. The internal economic political organization of the states and the individual groups involved in maritime trade as well as their attitudes, must be examined in order to determine whether change occurred or not and why over the passage of time. The organization of the European companies and their colonial societies as well as the economic policies of other Asian traders, who were the major external forces interested in the maritime trade of this region, demand investigation. Fortunately, with the growth in research and interest in the early modern economic and political development in India, China and the South China Sea, our comprehension is also improving of the relationship of land and production, political restraint or encouragement, to maritime trade and politics in China and the South China Sea.

[15] cf. Das Gupta, A., *Indian Merchants and The Decline of Surat, c. 1770-1750* (Weisbaden, 1979) and *Malabar in Asian Trade 1740-1800* (Cambridge, 1967).
[16] cf. Marshall, P. J., *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1976).
[17] cf. Souza, 'Portuguese Trade', pp.154-6, 300-06
[18] cf. Morse, H. B., *Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China*, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1926-9, reprint Taiwan, 1975), 2, pp.77-8, 89, 429-31.

I

China and the South China Sea   329

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I

330

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Annex 524

Vu Phi Hoang, *Hoang Sa (Paracel) and Truong Sa (Spratly) Archipelagoes: Vietnam's Territory* (1988)

VU PHI HOANG

HOANG SA (PARACEL) AND TRUONG SA (SPRATLY) ARCHIPELAGOES VIETNAM'S TERRITORY

[…]

5. Parallel with the survey and exploitation of the two archipelagoes [*Paracel and Spratly Islands*], Vietnamese feudal dynasties also paid attention to securing the safety of foreign boats, and consolidated Vietnam's sovereignty over the two archipelagoes.

The Hoang Sa archipelago was initially known as uninhabited coral islands. The Nguyen rulers sent workmen to the islands to build a temple, plant trees, erect steles, and develop construction works for the safety of foreign boats passing by, and affirmed Vietnam's sovereignty over the islands.

Đại Nam thực lục chính biên [Truthful Accounts about Dai Nam Present Dynasties] reads: "In the eighth month, during the autumn of the Quy Ty year, the 14th year of the Minh Menh Era (1833), His Majesty the Emperor told the Ministry of Public Works that: "In the territorial waters of the Quang Nghia province, there is the Hoang Sa range. The water, as well as its depth and shallowness, and the sky in that range cannot be distinguished from afar. Trading boats have recently become victims of its shoal. We shall prepare

sampans, wait until next year to go to the area to construct a temple, erecting steles, and planting many trees. Those trees will grow luxuriant in the future, thus serving as landmarks for people to avoid getting stranded in shoal. That shall benefit everyone forever!" (Volume 104, pages 16b and 17a).

This guidance manifests a state's high sense of responsibility of its sovereignty and obligations over international navigation in the region.

Though the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes were measured and mapped in earlier centuries, successive feudal dynasties of Vietnam regularly conducted surveys and measurements in a detailed and thorough manner. Only with the Emperor's approval can naval boats be excused from sailing to the Hoang Sa archipelago on a yearly basis. A petition by the Head of the Ministry of Public Works submitted to Emperor Thieu Tri available in our records said: "Hoang Sa is within the territory of our country. It is a regular practice that we deploy boats to the area for sea route surveys every year. However, due to the busy work schedule of this year, we implore Your Majesty's permission to postpone the survey trip until next year." Emperor Thieu Tri wrote "*đình*" [adjourned] in red ink to approve the petition."

According to historical documents, a large number of foreign boats shipwrecked on the Hoang Sa archipelago. However, sailors and passengers who survived were all helped by Vietnamese local people and courts with food and means of transport to return to their homeland.

Priest C. M. Labbé's letter on May 31, 1715 said that three Dutch sailing boats were wrecked in October 1714. The Dutch sailors were helped by the Vietnamese fishermen to land on shore and meet the Nguyen lord. They were also accommodated with sufficient food and housing before returning home.

Quốc triều chính biên toát yếu [Important Historical Excerpts of Dynasties] (1909) by the National History Institute of the Nguyen Dynasty reads: "In the lunar twelfth month of the year of Binh Than (1836), an English trading ship with more than 90 members on board got stranded on Hoang Sa

sandbank and reluctantly landed at Binh Dinh seashore. Following the Emperor's command, they were provided with housing and food. The ship's captain and headmen felt so deeply moved. The Emperor then ordered Nhu Tay envoy Nguyen Tri Phuong to lead them to Ha Chau seaport so they could depart for home."

The French Admiral, Count d'Estaing, who engaged in French colonial war in the Far East region during 1758-1762, said that he saw Vietnamese boats patrolling frequently in Hoang Sa archipelago: "Small boats from this country frequently traveled around the islands…. They ran fast and maneuvered easily, which was recognized as the most threatening force of Dang Trong (South Vietnam)." He remarked in his *Ghi chép về châu Á* [Notes on Asia] 1768 that "as many as 400 cast-iron cannons are located in Hue-based Vo Vuong's palace alone, most of them are Portuguese-made and collected from ships wrecked in the Hoang Sa archipelago."[1]

In conclusion, the aforesaid historical documents resolutely point to the fact that feudal dynasties of Vietnam for some successive centuries have been the sovereigns of the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes. The Vietnamese feudal states' official documents, namely *Lịch triều hiến chương loại chí* [Classified Rules of Dynasties] (1821), *Hoàng Việt địa dư chí* [Geography of the Viet Empire] (1833), *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên* [Truthful Accounts about Dai Nam Former Dynasties] (1844), *Đại Nam thực lục chính biên* [Truthful Accounts about Dai Nam Present Dynasties] (1848), *Quốc triều chính biên toát yếu* [Important Historical Excerpts of Dynasties] (1909), and *Đại Nam nhất thống chí* [The Geography of the Unified Dai Nam] (1910), are the books compiled by the historians in the National History Institute of the Nguyen Dynasty by order of the Emperor, evidently recording geographic, economic, and political features of the archipelagoes, and the State of Vietnam's

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[1] *Bulletin de la Socité des études indochinoises*, Sai Gon, No. 1, 1924.

activities to exercise its national sovereignty over the archipelagoes, accordingly proving the documents' solid legal groundwork. The regular presence of the Vietnamese state-founded Hoang Sa flotillas from five to six months annually to perform certain duties in these archipelagoes is itself incisive evidence, demonstrating the exercise of Vietnamese sovereignty.

[…]

VŨ PHI HOÀNG

HAI QUẦN ĐẢO
HOÀNG SA VÀ TRƯỜNG SA
BỘ PHẬN LÃNH THỔ
VIỆT NAM

NHÀ XUẤT BẢN QUÂN ĐỘI NHÂN DÂN
Hà Nội — 1988

trồng nhiều cây cối. Ngày sau, cây cối to lớn xanh tốt, người dễ nhận biết, ngõ hầu tránh khỏi được nạn mắc cạn. Đó cũng là việc lợi muôn đời! » (quyển 104, tờ 16b, 17a).

Đó chính là ý thức trách nhiệm cao của một nhà nước về chủ quyền của mình và về nghĩa vụ đối với hàng hải quốc tế trong khu vực.

Tuy hai quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa đã được khảo sát và vẽ thành bản đồ ngay từ những thế kỷ trước, nhưng qua từng thời gian, nhà nước phong kiến Việt Nam vẫn tiến hành đều đặn việc đo đạc, khảo sát lại một cách tỉ mỉ, toàn diện. Năm nào không phái binh thuyền ra Hoàng Sa được thì phải được nhà vua cho phép. Trong hồ sơ lưu trữ của ta, còn có tờ sớ của thượng thư Bộ Công tâu lên vua Thiệu Trị: « Xứ Hoàng Sa thuộc vùng biển nước ta. Theo lệ hàng năm có phái binh thuyền ra xem xét để thông thuộc đường biển. Năm nay công việc nhiều, bận, xin hoãn để năm sau ». Trên tờ sớ có bút tích châu phê bằng son đỏ của vua Thiệu Trị ghi chữ « đình ».

Theo các tài liệu lịch sử, đã có nhiều tàu biển nước ngoài qua lại bị đắm ở Hoàng Sa. Các thủy thủ và hành khách trên tàu còn sống sót đều được nhân dân và triều đình Việt Nam giúp đỡ lương ăn và phương tiện để trở về nước.

Theo thư ngày 31-5-1715 của linh mục S. M. Láp-bê (C. M. Labbé) tháng 10 năm 1714 có ba tàu buồm Hà Lan bị đắm ở Hoàng Sa. Các thủy thủ Hà Lan đã được ngư dân Việt Nam hướng dẫn vào đất liền và trình diện chúa Nguyễn. Họ đã được giúp đỡ ăn ở chu đáo để đợi ngày về nước.

Quốc triều chính biên toát yếu (1909) do Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn soạn có đoạn viết: « Năm Bính Thân (1836) tháng chạp, tàu buôn nước Anh Cát Lợi qua bãi

Hoàng Sa bị mắc cạn có hơn 90 người, phải ghé vào bãi biển Bình Định, (vua) sai tìm nơi cho ở và hậu cấp tiền gạo. Thuyền trưởng và các đầu mục tỏ ra rất cảm kích. (Vua) sắc cho Như Tây phái viên Nguyễn Tri Phương đưa đến bến Hạ Châu để tiễn họ về nước ».

Đô đốc Pháp, bá tước Đe-xtanh (comte d' Estaing), người đã tham gia cuộc chiến tranh xâm chiếm thuộc địa của Pháp ở Viễn Đông trong những năm 1758 — 1762, ghi nhận là ông ta đã gặp những chiến thuyền Việt Nam thường xuyên tuần tiễu vùng quần đảo Hoàng Sa : « Những thuyền nhỏ của xứ này thường qua lại các vùng quần đảo... Những chiếc thuyền đi với tốc độ nhanh, cơ động dễ dàng là lực lượng đáng sợ nhất của xứ Đàng Trong». Trong tập *Ghi chép về châu Á* viết năm 1768 ông ta nhận xét : « Riêng tại phủ đệ của Võ Vương ở Huế đã thấy có tới 400 khẩu pháo đúc bằng gang, trong đó phần lớn là loại pháo của Bồ Đào Nha thu được từ các tàu đắm ở quần đảo Hoàng Sa »[1].

Như vậy, các tài liệu lịch sử nói trên là cơ sở chắc chắn để khẳng định rằng từ lâu và liên tục suốt mấy trăm năm, từ triều đại này đến triều đại khác, nhà nước phong kiến Việt Nam đã làm chủ hai quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa. Các văn kiện chính thức của nhà nước phong kiến Việt Nam như *Lịch triều hiến chương loại chí* (1821), *Hoàng Việt địa dư chí* (1833), *Đại Nam thực lục tiền biên* (1844), *Đại Nam thực lục chính biên* (1848), *Quốc triều chính biên toát yếu* (1909), *Đại Nam nhất thống chí* (1910) là những bộ sách do các sử thần trong Quốc sử quán biên soạn theo lệnh nhà vua, đã ghi chép rõ ràng đầy đủ các mặt địa lý, kinh tế, chính trị của hai quần đảo và những hoạt động thực hiện

1. In trong: *Bulletin de la Socité des études indochinoises*, Sài Gòn, số 1, 1924.

chủ quyền của nhà nước Việt Nam đối với hai quần đảo, nên có giá trị pháp lý vững chắc. Sự có mặt đều đặn của các đội Hoàng Sa do nhà nước Việt Nam thành lập trên hai quần đảo mỗi năm từ 5 đến 6 tháng đề thực hiện một nhiệm vụ do nhà nước giao, tự nó đã là một bằng chứng danh thép về việc nhà nước Việt Nam thực hiện chủ quyền của mình đối với hai quần đảo.

6. Trong lịch sử trước đây, việc chiếm hữu và khai thác hai quần đảo của nhà nước Việt Nam chưa bao giờ gặp sự chống đối của bất cứ quốc gia nào, kể cả Trung Quốc

Từ thế kỷ XIX trở về trước, chưa bao giờ có một quốc gia nào tỏ ý chống đối việc chiếm hữu và khai thác hai quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa của nhà nước Việt Nam.

Trong mối bang giao giữa Việt Nam và Trung Quốc, đã có những sự kiện xảy ra ở hai quần đảo nhưng phía Trung Quốc chưa lần nào biểu thị thái độ gì chống đối. Sách *Phủ biên tạp lục* có ghi lại một trường hợp xảy ra như sau : «Công văn của viên dường quan huyện Văn Xương thuộc Quỳnh Châu (Hải Nam, Trung Quốc) gửi cho xứ Thuận Hóa đề : năm Càn Long thứ 18 (1753) mười quân nhân ở xã An Vĩnh, thuộc đội Cát Liên, huyện Chương Nghĩa, phủ Quảng Nghĩa, nước An Nam, ngày tháng bảy đi ra Vạn Lý Trường Sa lượm lặt hải vật, tám người lên bờ tìm lượm, hai người ở lại coi thuyền, bị một trận cuồng phong làm đứt neo, giạt vào cảng Thanh Lân (phía đông đảo Hải Nam). Quan địa phương tra xét đích thực, cho đưa về nguyên quán. Chúa Nguyễn đã lệnh cho cai bạ Thuận Hóa là Thức Lượng Hầu viết văn thư phúc đáp cảm ơn » (quyển 2, tờ 84b).

Đây là một bằng chứng hùng hồn chứng tỏ trước đây chính quyền Trung Quốc vẫn thừa nhận và tôn trọng chủ

Annex 525

Daniel J. Dzurek, "The People's Republic of China Straight Baseline Claim," *IBRU Boundary & Security Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1996)

The People's Republic of China Straight Baseline Claim

Daniel J. Dzurek

Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) claimed to use straight baselines in its 1958 *Declaration on China's Territorial Sea*, but did not delimit them at that time. This general claim was reiterated in the PRC's 1992 *Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone*. On 15 May 1996 the PRC gave partial effect to these earlier claims in a *Declaration on the Baselines of the Territorial Sea*, which delimited much of its baseline, from the tip of the Shandong peninsula along the mainland coast to the western cape of Hainan island (Figures 1-3).

The 15 May Declaration also delimits baselines around the Paracel Islands (Figure 3). Subsequent statements by the PRC Foreign Ministry promise delimitation of the remaining baselines, including those around Taiwan and islands associated with it (presumably the Pescadores). There is no doubt that the PRC is justified in delimiting a straight baseline along much of its mainland coast, where it is deeply indented or fringed by islands or there are river deltas, but do the particular baselines defined in the 15 May Declaration comport with the international law of the sea?

The 1958 Declaration on China's Territorial Sea

On 4 September 1958, the PRC issued a Declaration on China's Territorial Sea that established a 12-nautical mile (nm) width for its territorial sea. The declaration stated that: *"China's territorial sea along the mainland and its coastal islands takes as its baseline the line composed of the straight lines connecting basepoints on the mainland coast and on the outermost of the coastal islands."*[1] The declaration also identified the Po Hai (bay) and Chiungchow (Qiongzhou) strait, between Hainan Island and the mainland, as internal waters, and listed nearshore and distant islands that the PRC claimed.[2]

The 1992 Law on the Territorial Sea

On 25 February 1992 the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress adopted the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, which stated that: *"The method of straight baselines composed of all the straight lines joining the adjacent base points shall be employed in drawing the baselines of the territorial sea of the People's Republic of China."* In Article 2, the law reiterated the 1958 declaration by listing the offshore islands, but added the Diaoyutai [Senkaku] Islands, which are disputed with Japan. Unlike the 1958 Declaration, the coastal islands were not catalogued in the 1992 Law.[3] Article 15 stated that the baselines would be promulgated by the PRC government.

The 1996 Declaration on the Baseline of the Territorial Sea

The coordinates for the 15 May 1996 Declaration are given in Table 1. The text of the Declaration states that:

"In accordance with the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone adopted and promulgated on 25 February 1992, the Government of the People's Republic of China hereby announces the baselines of part of its territorial sea adjacent to the mainland and those of the territorial sea adjacent to its Xisha [Paracel] Islands as follows:

1. The baselines of part of the territorial sea adjacent to the mainland are composed of all the straight lines joining the adjacent base points listed below: ...

2. The baselines of the territorial sea adjacent to the Xisha Islands of the People's Republic of China are composed of all the straight lines joining the adjacent base points listed below: ...

The Government of the People's Republic of China will announce the remaining baselines of the

Legend:
- P.R.C. straight baseline declaration (15 May 1996)
- U.S. Department of State hypothetical straight baseline (1972)

Liaotung Gulf

Gulf of Bohai

Bohai Strait

Shangdong Peninsula

NORTH KOREA

Yellow Sea

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

P.R.C. straight baseline declaration (15 May 1996)

U.S. Department of State hypothetical straight baseline (1972)

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF
CHINA

11

12,13

14

15

16,17

East China Sea

18

19

20

Ma - Tsu
(Taiwan)

Senkaku
Islands

21

30°

25°N

Formosa Strait

Quemoy
(Taiwan)

23

24

25

27

Pescadores
Islands

TAIWAN

South China Sea

120°N

territorial sea of the People's Republic of China at another time."[4]

The PRC 1996 Declaration did not define what kind of line is used to link the points (i.e. loxodrome, orthodrome, or arc of a great circle). Nor did it give the geodetic system for the coordinates. Due to these omissions, it is not possible to determine the location of the turning points or line segments with high precision. Under the terms of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (hereafter 1982 UN Convention), the PRC is bound to publish, "*charts of a scale or scales adequate for ascertaining [the baseline's] position,*" or specifying the geodetic datum and depositing the charts or information with the UN Secretary-General.[5] The Director the PRC State Oceanography Bureau has acknowledged this obligation, so the information should be forthcoming.[6]

On the same day that it delimited most of its straight baseline, the PRC ratified the 1982 UN Convention and claimed an exclusive economic zone (EEZ).[7] The instrument of ratification was deposited with the UN Secretary-General on 7 June, accompanied by the following statement:

"1. In accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the People's Republic of China shall enjoy sovereign rights and jurisdiction over an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles and the continental shelf.

2. The People's Republic of China will effect, through consultations, the delimitation of boundary [sic] of the maritime jurisdiction with the states with coasts opposite or adjacent to China respectively on the basis of international law and in accordance with the equitable principle.

*3. The People's Republic of China reaffirms its sovereignty over all its archipelagoes and islands as listed in Article 2 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone which was promulgated on 25 February 1992.*

4. The People's Republic of China reaffirms that the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea concerning innocent passage through the territorial sea shall not prejudice the right of a coastal state to request, in accordance with its laws and regulations, a foreign state to obtain advance approval from or give prior

notification to the coastal state for the passage of its warships through the territorial sea of the coastal state."[8]

It is unusual for a country to include a new jurisdictional claim with an instrument of ratification. The director of the State Oceanography Bureau has indicated that the PRC will promulgate specific legislation to implement this EEZ claim.[9] The ratification statement reiterates the PRC's island claim and makes a confusing reference to innocent passage. It appears to compound "*advance approval*" with "*prior notification*" for warships, although the former is more restrictive than the latter. Many countries view either requirement as contrary to the 1982 UN Convention.[10]

Responses

Concurrent with the baseline and EEZ claims, PRC authorities apparently suggested that their actions had added 2.5 million km^2 of jurisdictional area.[11] A PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman elaborated on the baseline declaration by observing that "*The Chinese Government will successively determine and announce other parts of the baseline of the territorial seas, including the baseline of the PRC territorial seas around Taiwan and other outlying islands.*"[12] The Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam swiftly objected. However, Japan responded that ratification of the 1982 UN Convention would facilitate negotiations over its EEZ frontier with the PRC.[13]

In point of fact, the PRC did not define the outermost limit of its EEZ, so there is no way to determine how much area it claims. Because marginal seas surround the PRC, there are very few areas where it could claim a full 200-nm EEZ without overlapping neighbours. It's ratification statement promises negotiated boundaries with opposite and adjacent states, so its EEZ area is unsettled. The new PRC straight baseline encloses significant areas as internal waters, but the total would fall far short of 2.5 million km^2.

Straight Baselines in International Law

The 1982 UN Convention, which the PRC ratified on the same day that it promulgated its baseline declaration, specifies that:
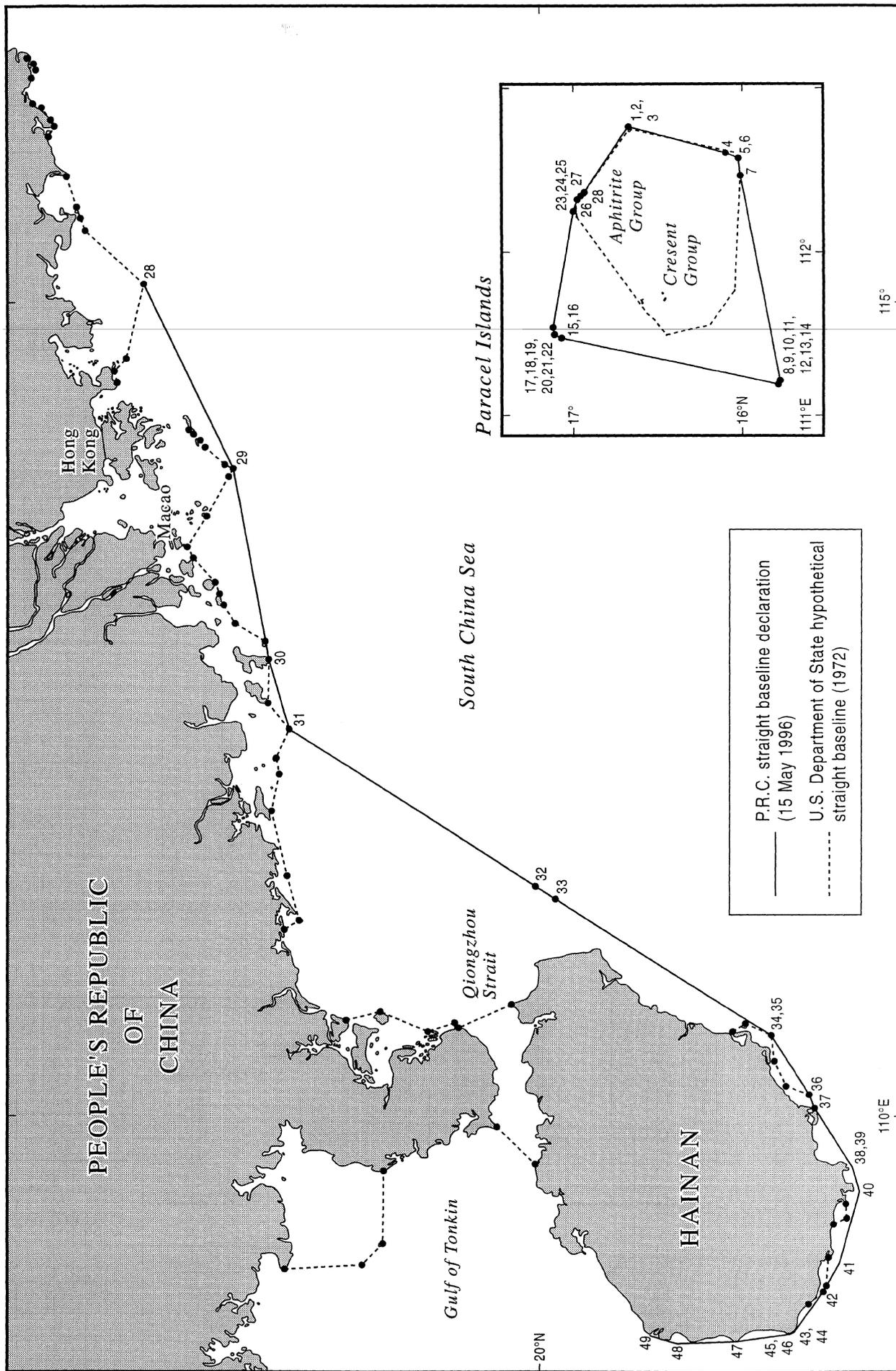
"Except where otherwise provided in this Convention, the normal baseline for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea is the low-water line along the coast as marked on large-scale charts officially recognized by the coastal State."[14]

The territorial sea, contiguous zone, continental shelf, and exclusive economic zone (EEZ) are measured seaward from the baseline. The 1982 UN Convention permits a coastal state to delimit straight baselines only under special circumstances:

"in localities where the coastline is deeply indented and cut into, or if there is a fringe of islands along the coast in its immediate vicinity," or, "where because of the presence of a delta and other natural conditions the coastline is highly unstable."

Article 7 also prescribes that:

"The drawing of straight baselines must not depart to any appreciable extent from the general direction of the coast, and the sea areas lying within the lines must be sufficiently closely linked to the land domain to be subject to the régime of internal waters. ... Straight baselines shall not be drawn to and from low-tide elevations, unless lighthouses or similar installations which are permanently above sea level have been built on them or except in instances where the drawing of baselines to and from such elevations has received general international recognition."

In general, the waters on the landward side of straight baselines forms part of the internal waters of the coastal state.[15] There, a country exercises absolute sovereignty, such as that it has over its landmass.

Macro Analysis of the Mainland Segments

Many critiques of straight baseline systems focus on individual components, discussing whether particular segments digress from the general direction of the coast or enclose excessive areas of former high seas. Before reviewing individual elements of the PRC baseline, an overview of the entire baseline system along the mainland may be informative.[16]

A non-legal way of looking at a proposed straight baseline system is as a mathematical (geometric) model of a natural phenomenon, a country's coastline.[17] A straight baseline generalises and simplifies a complex natural system in order to facilitate human activity – in this case maritime jurisdiction. Like any abstraction from the natural order, the model should preserve important aspects of the phenomenon. The baseline segments should mimic the gross structure of the coastline, suggesting its lengths and directions. Consequently, two simple models have been applied to the PRC straight baseline system.

If an extensive straight baseline system were drawn along a deeply indented coast or one fringed by islands, it would be expected to have many small and medium length segments and few long components. This kind of natural variation often is modelled by a Poisson statistical distribution, which

Figure 4

Distribution of baseline segments by length : Sweden

Distribution of baseline segments by length : Chile

Distribution of baseline segments by length : People's Republic of China
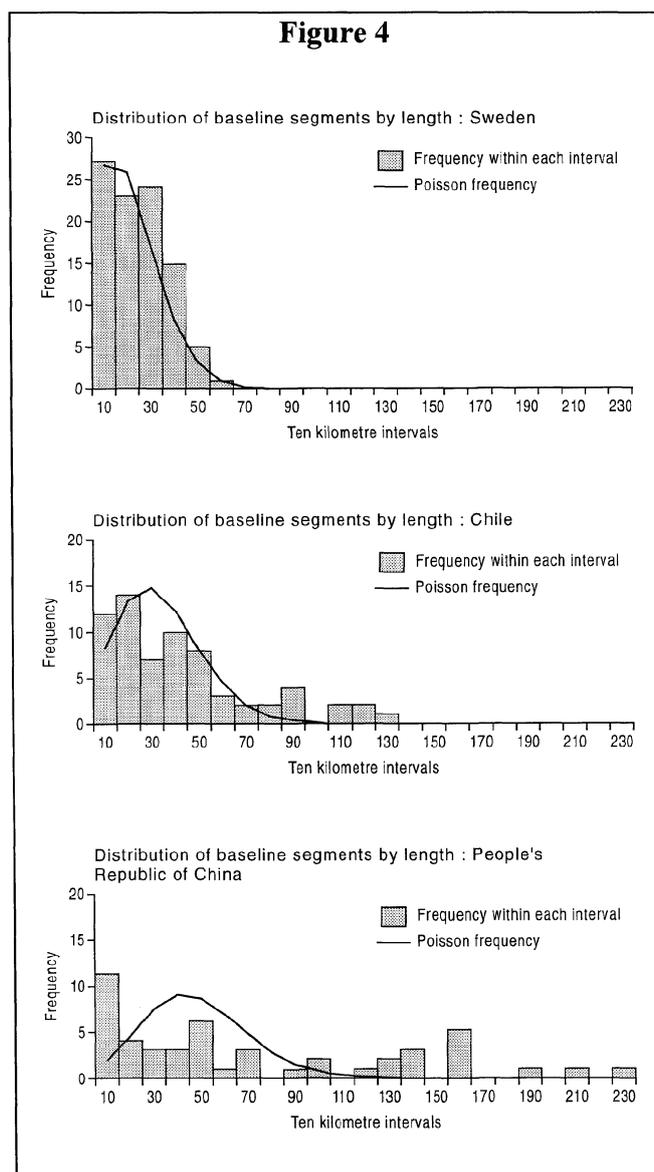
assumes relatively rare, random phenomenon independent of location.[18] Figure 4 illustrates the application of this distribution to three straight baseline systems of comparable length and complexity, those of Sweden, Chile, and the PRC.

The Swedish system, excluding the baselines around offshore Gotland, includes 95 segments extending for 1,844km.[19] Chile's system includes 67 legs, totalling 2,478km.[20] The portion of the PRC's system on the mainland, excluding that about the Paracel Islands, accounts for 48 segments extending 3,230km. For each system, the individual segments were sorted by length and grouped in ten-kilometre-interval classes. The number in each class is depicted in a histogram, with a superimposed Poisson distribution.[21]

The straight baseline systems of Chile and Sweden show a relatively good match to the theoretical distribution. However, that of the PRC diverges from the theoretical curve. There appear to be too few segments – a mere 48 to span over 3,000km. The mean length (67.3km) is much larger than the median length (47.4km), which suggests a very skewed or bimodal distribution. The standard deviation, a measure of the variation in the lengths, is quite high (63.9km).[22] Eleven segments, a fifth of the total, are more than one standard deviation from the mean (longer than 131.2km). Four segments are over 150km (81nm) long, and three much longer: 197km, 201km, and 227km. These outliers suggest that the PRC system of straight baselines are not well constructed and does not represent the natural phenomenon, the coastline, on which it is based.

The PRC histogram also shows an unusually large proportion of very small segments. 23% are less than 6.0km long. One would not expect a distribution where the shortest class had the highest frequency. In the PRC case, this appears due to relying solely on straight baseline segments to round capes and islands. Had the PRC used the low-water line along some portions of its coast, the number of very small segments would have been diminished.

A second aspect of the coastline that should be evident in a straight baseline system is its principal directions. Figure 5 shows the general direction of the PRC baseline segments along the mainland coast from Shandong to and around Hainan Island. The diagram is based on a 'wind rose' that is used in meteorology to depict prevailing winds. An

Figure 5

General direction of PRC baseline segments
(aggregate length in km)
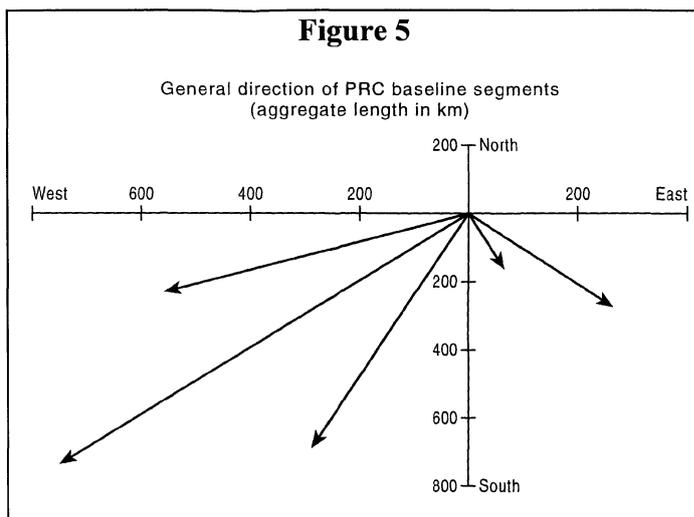
initial azimuth was calculated for each of the 48 PRC segments. The data were sorted and clustered into 16 classes, those nearest major compass bearings (N, NNE, NE, etc.). The length of each radial line, or vector, is proportional to the sum of the lengths of all the segments in that cluster. It is as if one gathered all the baseline segments to one point and put the ones nearest to each principal direction end-to-end. The initial point used to calculate the direction for each segment followed the PRC list, north to south, so most of the vectors have a southern trend.[23]

Does the PRC straight baseline system preserve the general direction of the coast? For a long linear coastline, one can hypothesise long straight baseline segments with little change in direction. However, the general configuration of the PRC coast south of Shandong Peninsula is not linear; it follows the arc of a huge circle with a radius of 1,100km centred at 31°N, 110°E. Because this part of China's coast curves from the northeast to the southwest, the dominant direction of the PRC baseline segments should be southwestward. Since the coastline is roughly circular, one would expect the directional distribution to be gradual and roughly symmetric about the dominant direction. This is not the case. There is an aberrant southeast vector that is larger than expected, and the vector in the dominant direction (southwest) is much too prominent – 40% longer than the next largest vector. The southeast vector is created by only two segments, both north of the Yangtze Delta where the coast is neither deeply indented nor fringed with islands. These legs are 116km and 227km long; the latter is the longest segment in the PRC system. The dominant southwest vector is longer than expected, because it includes the second longest segment plus four large legs, each over 100km. The graph of the general direction of its segments suggests that the

Annex 525

PRC baseline system poorly represents the general direction of its coast. This is probably due to excessive lengths of some legs that do not follow the shoreline or island fringe.

Micro Analysis of the Mainland Segments

In response to the 1958 Declaration, the Office of the Geographer in the US Department of State developed hypothetical baselines for the PRC, which were published in 1972.[24] A comparison of the 1996 PRC baseline with the hypothetical baseline is informative. Along the coast covered by the 1996 Declaration, the PRC delimited 49 turning points where the Office of the Geographer had estimated 121 points. The PRC system is continuous straight segments and uses no low-water lines; the Geographer hypothesised eleven distinct subsets of straight legs separated by normal low-water line sections.

In terms of particular PRC straight baseline segments, there are two regions where the segments are especially problematic. The PRC has delimited sections north of the Yangtze Delta (linking points 8-11) where the coast is not deeply indented and there is no fringe of islands. According to available PRC and US charts, points 9 and 10 appear to be tidal flats or sandbars without lighthouses or other permanent structures.[25] These charts identify the points as Puzi Sha and Jinjia Sha, respectively. (Sha is Chinese for sandbank.) These three legs span 461km and bend well out to sea, but the coast is slightly concave. Point 10 is 69.1km (37.3nm) from the nearest mainland point.

This area of the coast is not a delta, but there are extensive tidal flats. Perhaps the PRC predicates its use of straight baselines here on a claim of a highly unstable coast. However, points 9 and 10 could not be used under this hypothesis, because they are separated from the mainland coast at low tide. Basepoints along unstable coasts are to *"be selected along the furthest seaward extend to the low-water line,"* not on offshore low-tide elevations.[26]

The second troublesome section of the PRC baseline is that linking Hainan Island to the mainland (points 31-34). The three legs span 369km and digress from the general direction of the coast, which is deeply concave. These segments enclose 23,300km² (an area larger than Wales or Belize), which could not be considered closely linked to the land domain and subject to an internal

waters regime. Portions of the longest leg (points 31-32) are 100km (54nm) from the nearest point on the coastline. Points 32 and 33 are mere rocks off the Hainan coast.

The PRC straight baseline may be unique in its enclosure of territories not currently under effective PRC control: Hong Kong, Macao, Jinmen (Kinmen, Quemoy), Mazu (Matsu), and Wuqiu (Wuchiu). The last three are outposts of Nationalist forces from Taiwan. The lines enclosing Hong Kong and Macao would be appropriate in 1997 and 1999, respectively, after these territories revert to PRC control. Prescott has observed that *"presumably no harm will be done if China...does not use the baselines to interrupt air and sea traffic to these territories."*[27] Enclosure of Taiwan's islands may be less benign, given recent tensions in the Formosa Strait. Taipei has taken exception to the incorporation, which appears to violate a *modus vivendi* previously in force around Jinmen and the other islands.[28]

The PRC straight baseline system penetrates well into the Gulf of Tonkin (points 43-49). China's delimitation of straight baselines *within* the Gulf of Tonkin is inconsistent with Vietnam's claim that the gulf is joint historic waters. If it were, the PRC would have stopped at the entrance to the gulf or claimed part of a joint bay-closing line across its mouth.

Paracel Islands Straight Baseline

The PRC has delimited archipelagic baselines around the Paracels, but it is not entitled to such baselines under the 1982 UN Convention, for two reasons. First, according to Article 46, only an archipelagic state (constituted wholly by one or more archipelagos) may draw archipelagic baselines around its island groups. Neither China nor Vietnam, which also claim the Paracel Islands, is an archipelagic state. Second, the ratio of the water to land area in an archipelago must be between 1:1 and 9:1.[29]

The area enclosed by the PRC straight baselines is 17,400km². The land area of the Paracels is not well defined, but the total, including that enclosed by reefs, is probably a few hundred km². That is far less than the minimum 1,933km² required for an acceptable water-to-land ratio.

That said, several continental countries have drawn questionable straight baselines around offshore island groups: Denmark (Faroe Islands), Ecuador (Galapagos Islands), Portugal (Azores), and Spain (Balearic Islands), among others.[30] Although offshore islands may not qualify as archipelagos that does not mean a sovereign could not draw straight baselines around them under provisions of Article 7. This is distinct from *archipelagic* baselines. Some subgroups in the Paracels, parts of the Crescent Group and the northern portion of the Amphitrite Group, might qualify for straight baselines under Article 7, if smaller islets mask a nearby larger island or islands were deeply indented. However, any such straight baselines would affect a very small area and utilise legs only a few kilometres long. The baselines that the PRC drew around the Paracels contravene the 1982 UN Convention.

One implication of the Paracel baselines is interesting. The delimitation of straight baselines around the Paracel Islands is logically inconsistent with any purported claim to historic waters within the irregular, tongue-shaped line found on Chinese maps. Some commentators maintain that this line is a historic waters claim, but historic waters have the status of either internal waters or territorial sea.[31] A straight baseline divides internal waters from territorial sea. Moreover, the 1992 PRC Law on the Territorial Sea specifies that China's territorial sea extends 12nm (22.2km) from its baseline. Therefore, the new PRC baseline delimits its claim to internal waters within the Paracel baseline and territorial sea up to 12nm from that baseline. The PRC must view the remaining area in the northern South China Sea as EEZ or continental shelf.

Conclusion

The 1982 UN Convention failed to place quantitative limits on the maximum length of straight baseline segments, the amount of area that they could incorporate as internal waters, the proportion of coastline that must be screened by islands, or the maximum distance islands may be from the coast in order to be considered in its immediate vicinity. However, numerical limits are not totally absent from the Convention. The maximum length for a bay closing line is 24nm (44.4km). 97% of an archipelago's baseline legs may not exceed 100nm (185.2km), and only three percent are permitted to be up to 125nm (231.5km) in length. The fact that the currently codified law of

the sea does not set maximum limits on straight baselines does not preclude such considerations in critiques. It should be remembered that the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea failed to limit the maximum extent of the territorial sea. Some countries subsequently claimed territorial sea jurisdiction to 200nm from shore, but the world community adopted a 12nm limit in the 1982 UN Convention. Perhaps, the next convention on the law of the sea may restrict straight baselines.

Various authorities have advocated a maximum allowable length for straight baseline legs ranging from 15nm to 48nm (27.8-88.9km) and other numerical guidelines.[32] Both by these standards and from an analysis of the intrinsic features of its straight baseline system, the PRC claim seems excessive in some areas. Prescott could have described the PRC claim, when he wrote:

> *"[I]mproper straight baselines generally have few segments composed of a few legs, and are rarely interspersed with sections of low-water mark. Individual legs may be very long, and the centres of such long legs might be distant from the exposed coast. Such baselines often enclose a high ratio of water to land, and cause the conversion of large areas of contiguous zones or exclusive economic zones into territorial waters."*[33]

The PRC is hardly alone in violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the 1982 UN Convention. Excessive baseline claims are all too common in Asia, and elsewhere. Those of Burma, Cambodia, Malaysia, North Korea, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam are as extreme as that of the PRC.

The PRC 1996 Declaration will, no doubt, trigger a flurry of diplomatic protests from the major maritime powers. What effect such diplomatic objections have is a matter of conjecture. Prescott maintains, *"that the international political community, apart perhaps from the United States of America, is prepared to tolerate blatant infringements of the rules providing the offending state does not try to use the baselines in negotiating international limits with neighbours. This seems to be demonstrated by the fact that countries are allowed to ratify the Convention even when their baselines obviously infringe the rules contained in the Convention."*[34] Following a diplomatic protest to a claimant state, in which the US government raises objections and reserves its rights under international law, American military vessels and

aircraft frequently exercise navigation or overflight in the area under the US Freedom of Navigation Program.[35] It will be interesting to see how the international community responds to the new PRC declaration, and how China chooses to enforce its internal waters.

Further delimitation of the PRC straight baseline may be more worrisome. Beijing deferred extending its baseline to the termini of its land boundaries with North Korea and Vietnam. Perhaps the PRC feared aggravating already tense bilateral relations or complicating negotiations. It has no agreed maritime boundaries with either neighbour. Nor did the PRC delimit straight baselines about contentious offshore islands: Pratas (occupied by Taiwan), the Spratly Islands (claimed by five other governments), or the Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands (occupied by Japan). We must now wait for the proverbial other shoe to drop.

Notes

[1] Declaration on China's Territorial Sea, reprinted in Office of the Geographer (1972) *Straight Baselines: People's Republic of China* (hereafter *Straight Baselines: PRC*), Limits in the Seas, No. 43 Washington, DC: US Department of State: 1.

[2] Article 2 listed the coastal islands: Tungyin Island, Kaoteng Island, Matsu [Mazu] Islands, Paichuan Islands, Wuchiu Island, the Greater and Lesser Quemoy [Jinmen] Islands, Tatan Island, Erhtan Island, and Tungting Island. Article 4 listed: *"Taiwan and its surrounding islands, the Penghu [Pescadores] Islands, Tungsha [Pratas] Islands, Hsisha [Paracel] Islands, Chungsha [Macclesfield Bank] Islands, Nansha [Spratly] Islands, and all other islands belonging to China."* Translations above used the Wade-Giles romanisation system for the Chinese; modern usage favors the Pinyin system.

[3] Legislative Affairs Commission (n.d.) (trans) *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone,* Beijing: Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Legislative Affairs Commission; the Chinese text is also found in PRC (1992) *Gazette of the State Council,* issue no. 3, serial no. 688: 69-71.

[4] 'Declaration on the Baselines of the Territorial Sea', *Xinhua* (Beijing) broadcast in English, 15 May 1996, transcribed in US Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (hereafter, FBIS, *China), 16 May 1996: 35-36. Also transcribed in BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts,* 16 May 1996.

[5] 1982 UN Convention, Article 16.

[6] 'Perfect Maritime Legal System, Update Maritime Concepts,' *Renmin Ribao,* Beijing, 18 May 1996: 3, translated in FBIS, *China,* 6 June 1996.

[7] 'China Says UN Sea Convention Boosts Territory,' *Reuter,* Beijing, 15 May 1996.

[8] E-mail message of Mori Hayashi, Director, Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, UN Office of Legal Affairs, to int-boundaries@mailbase.ac.uk, 7 June 1996, archived at web site http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists-f-j/int-boundaries/.

[9] 'Perfect Maritime Legal System,' 18 May 1996.

[10] Roach, J. A. and Smith, R. W. (1994) *Excessive Maritime Claims,* International Law Studies, Newport, RI: US Naval War College, 66: 16, 143-60.

[11] 'China Says,' 15 May 1996.

[12] 'Spokesman on 'Peaceful' Nuclear Tests, Law of Seas,' *Zhongguo Xinwen She,* Beijing, 15 May 1996, translated in FBIS, *China,* 15 May 1996.

[13] 'Vietnam Sounds Off over Chinese Territorial Claim,' *Reuter,* Hanoi, 17 May 1996; 'Philippines Slams China's Sea Declaration' and 'Asian Reaction Swift to China's Maritime Expansion,' *Reuter,* Manila, 17 May 1996; 'Tokyo to Talk with PRC over 200-mile Economic Zone,' *Kyodo,* Tokyo, broadcast in English, 16 May 1996, transcribed in FBIS, *Daily Report: East Asia,* 16 May 1996.

[14] 1982 UN Convention, Article 5.

[15] 1982 UN Convention, Article 8.

[16] Straight baseline systems about island groups are idiosyncratic and have too few segments to permit meaningful statistical analysis.

[17] It should also be acknowledged that the term 'straight' baseline is inaccurate. The 'straight' baselines used in the law of the sea vary in shape and lie on the curved surface of the earth. For purposes of this study, the straight baseline segments are taken to be arcs of a great circle, which are the shortest distance between points on a sphere. In the broadest sense, we know from the General Theory of Relativity that space-time is curved, so no truly straight line exists in the physical universe.

[18] See, for example, King, L. J. (1969) *Statistical Analysis in Geography,* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall: 40-45.

[19] Office of the Geographer, (1972) *Straight Baselines: Sweden,* Limits in the Seas, No. 47, Washington, DC: US Department of State.

[20] Office of the Geographer (1978) *Straight Baselines: Chile,* Limits in the Seas, No. 80, Washington, DC: US Department of State.

[21] The Poisson frequencies were calculated from the median values for each set of straight baselines. This provides a better fit than the mean of each set.

[22] For comparison, the mean, median, and standard deviation for Sweden's baseline segments were 19.4km, 19.2km, and 12.7km. Those for Chile were 37.0km, 32.9km, and 30.5km, respectively. A more appropriate measure of variation would be the

deviation about the median, but this is less commonly used.

[23] If the second endpoint in each segment had been used to calculate the initial azimuth, the dispersion would be reflected about the origin (i.e. most radial lines would point north). However, this would not affect the analysis.

[24] *Straight Baselines: PRC.*

[25] PRC, China Navigation Press [Zhongguo Hanghai Tushuchubanshe], 'Bo Hai, Huang Hai, and Dong Hai,' chart 9201, 1:2,000,000, August 1976; US Defense Mapping Agency, 'Linhuai to Juegang,' chart 94260, 1:300,000, 5th ed., 26 August 1995.

[26] 1982 UN Convention, Article 7, para. 2.

[27] E-mail message of Victor Prescott to int-boundaries@mailbase.ac.uk, 5 June 1996, archived at web site http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists-f-j/int-boundaries/.

[28] 'Lien Chan Criticizes PRC Claims to Offshore Islands,' *Tzu-li Wan-pao,* Taipei, 17 May 1996: 1, translated in FBIS, *China,* 30 May 1996; 'Lawmakers Inspect Kinmen Waters, Call for Increased Patrols,' Voice of Free China, Taipei, broadcast in English, 4 June 1996, transcribed in FBIS, *China,* 6 June 1996.

[29] 1982 UN Convention, Article 47, para. 1.

[30] Roach and Smith, 1994: 63-67.

[31] Dzurek, D. J. (forthcoming) 'The Spratly Islands Dispute: Who's On First?' *Maritime Briefing,* Durham: IBRU.

[32] Office of Ocean Law and Policy (1987) 'Developing Standard Guidelines for Evaluating Straight Baselines', *Limits in the Seas,* Washington, DC: US Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, 106.

[33] Prescott, J. R. V. (1985) *The Maritime Political Boundaries of the World,* London: Methuen: 69.

[34] Prescott, 5 June 1996, see note 27.

[35] Roach and Smith, 1994: 3-6.

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The 4th International Conference of the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU)
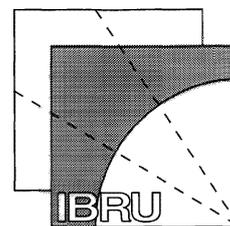
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Table 1 – PRC Straight Baseline Claim

Point no.	Name[a]	Latitude (North)		Longitude (East)		Distance[b] nm	km
	Mainland Points						
1	Shandong gaojiao, 1	37°	24.0'	122°	42.3'		
2	Shandong gaojiao, 2	37	23.7	122	42.3	0.3	0.6
3	Moye dao, 1	36	57.8	122	34.2	26.7	49.7
4	Moye dao, 2	36	55.1	122	32.7	3.0	5.5
5	Moye dao, 3	36	53.7	122	31.1	1.9	3.5
6	Sushan dao	36	44.8	122	15.8	15.1	28.2
7	Chaolian dao	35	53.6	120	53.1	84.0	156.5
8	Dashan dao	35	0.2	119	54.2	71.8	133.7
9	Macaiheng	33	21.8	121	20.8	121.7	226.6
10	Waike jiao	33	0.9	121	38.4	25.0	47.6
11	Sheshan dao	31	25.3	122	14.6	100.4	186.9
12	Hai jiao	30	44.1	123	9.4	62.5	116.3
13	Dongnan jiao	30	43.5	123	9.7	0.6	1.2
14	Liangxiong diyu	30	10.1	122	56.7	35.2	65.6
15	Yushan liedao	28	53.3	122	16.5	84.4	157.1
16	Taizhou liedao, 1	28	23.9	121	55.0	34.9	65.0
17	Taizhou liedao, 2	28	23.5	121	54.7	0.5	0.9
18	Dao Tiaoshan	27	27.9	121	7.8	69.3	129.1
19	Dongyin dao	26	22.6	120	30.4	73.3	136.5
20	Dongsha dao	26	9.4	120	24.3	14.3	26.6
21	Niushan dao	25	25.8	119	56.3	50.4	93.8
22	Wuqiu yu	24	58.6	119	28.7	36.9	68.8
23	Dongding dao	24	9.7	118	14.2	83.6	155.6
24	Daganshan	23	31.9	117	41.3	48.3	90.0
25	Nanpeng liedao, 1	23	12.9	117	14.9	30.8	57.3
26	Nanpeng liedao, 2	23	12.3	117	13.9	1.1	2.0
27	Shibeishan jiao	22	56.1	116	29.7	43.8	81.5
28	Zhentouyan	22	18.9	115	7.5	84.5	157.3
29	Jiapeng liedao	21	48.5	113	58.0	71.2	132.6
30	Weijia dao	21	34.1	112	47.9	66.7	124.2
31	Dafan shi	21	27.7	112	21.5	25.4	47.3
32	Qizhou liedao	19	58.5	111	16.4	108.0	201.1
33	Shuangfan	19	53.0	111	12.8	6.5	12.0
34	Dazhou dao, 1	18	39.7	110	29.6	83.9	156.2
35	Dazhou dao, 2	18	39.4	110	29.1	0.6	1.0
36	Shuangfan shi	18	26.1	110	8.4	23.7	44.1
37	Lingshui jiao	18	23.0	110	3.0	6.0	11.2
38	Dongzhou, 1	18	11.0	109	42.1	23.2	43.2
39	Dongzhou, 2	18	11.0	109	41.8	0.3	0.5
40	Jinmu jiao	18	9.5	109	34.4	7.2	13.4
41	Shenshi jiao	18	14.6	109	7.6	26.0	48.3
42	Xigu dao	18	19.3	108	57.1	11.0	20.5
43	Yingge zui, 1	18	30.2	108	41.3	18.5	34.5
44	Yingge zui, 2	18	30.4	108	41.1	0.3	0.5

45	Yingge zui, 3	18	31.0	108	40.6	0.8	1.4
46	Yingge zui, 4	18	31.1	108	40.5	0.2	0.3
47	Gan'en jiao	18	50.5	108	37.3	19.6	36.6
48	Sigengsha jiao	19	11.6	108	36.0	21.1	39.4
49	Junbi jiao	19°	21.1'	108°	38.6'	9.8	18.3

Total:	1,734.7	3,230.1
Mean:	36.1	67.3
Standard Deviation:	34.3	63.9
Maximum:	121.7	226.6
Minimum:	0.1	0.3

Paracel Islands Points

1	Dong dao [Lincoln Is], 1	16°	40.5'	112°	44.2'		
2	Dong dao, 2	16	40.1	112	44.5	0.5	0.9
3	Dong dao, 3	16	39.8	112	44.7	0.4	0.7
4	Langhua jiao [Bombay Rf], 1	16	4.4	112	35.8	36.4	67.8
5	Langhua jiao, 2	16	1.9	112	32.7	3.9	7.2
6	Langhua jiao, 3	16	1.5	112	31.8	1.0	1.8
7	Langhua jiao, 4	16	1.0	112	29.8	2.0	3.7
8	Zhongjian dao [Triton Is], 1	15	46.5	111	12.6	75.7	140.9
9	Zhongjian dao, 2	15	46.4	111	12.1	0.5	0.9
10	Zhongjian dao, 3	15	46.4	111	11.8	0.3	0.5
11	Zhongjian dao, 4	15	46.5	111	11.6	0.2	0.4
12	Zhongjian dao, 5	15	46.7	111	11.4	0.3	0.5
13	Zhongjian dao, 6	15	46.9	111	11.3	0.2	0.4
14	Zhongjian dao, 7	15	47.2	111	11.4	0.3	0.6
15	Bei jiao [North Rf], 1	17	4.9	111	26.9	79.1	147.3
16	Bei jiao, 2	17	5.4	111	26.9	0.5	0.9
17	Bei jiao, 3	17	5.7	111	27.2	0.4	0.8
18	Bei jiao, 4	17	6.0	111	27.8	0.6	1.2
19	Bei jiao, 5	17	6.5	111	29.2	1.4	2.7
20	Bei jiao, 6	17	7.0	111	31.0	1.8	3.3
21	Bei jiao, 7	17	7.1	111	31.6	0.6	1.1
22	Bei jiao, 8	17	6.9	111	32.0	0.4	0.8
23	Zhaoshu dao [Tree Is], 1	16	59.9	112	14.7	41.4	77.1
24	Zhaoshu dao, 2	16	59.7	112	15.6	0.9	1.6
25	Zhaoshu dao, 3	16	59.4	112	16.6	1.0	1.9
26	Bei dao [North Is]	16	58.4	112	18.3	1.9	3.6
27	Zhong dao [Middle Is]	16	57.6	112	19.6	1.5	2.8
28	Nan dao [South Is]	16	56.9	112	20.5	1.1	2.1
1	Dong dao, 1	16	40.5	112	44.2	28.0	52.1

Total:	282.3	525.6
Mean:	10.1	18.8
Standard Deviation:	21.9	40.9
Maximum:	79.1	147.3
Minimum:	0.2	0.4

Notes: The broadcast did not provide the geodetic system or datum for the coordinates.

[a]Chinese generics: dao – island; jiao – reef, shoal; liedao – island group; shi – rock; yu – islet; zui – point

[b]Distances measured along arcs of a great circle (shortest distance on a sphere).

Source: Xinhua Broadcast, 1102 GMT, 15 May 1996, transcribed in BBC SWB, 16 May 96. Also transcribed in FBIS, Daily Report: China, 16 May 1996: 35-36.

Annex 526

B. Catley & M. Keliat, *Spratlys: The Dispute in the South China Sea* (1997)

Spratlys: The Dispute in the South China Sea

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1997
LL

32   *Spratlys: The Dispute in the South China Sea*

Claimant	Islands Occupied Presently	Also Claimed By
The Philippines	Panata	China Taiwan Vietnam
	Kota	China Taiwan Vietnam
	Pang-Asa (Thitu)	China Taiwan Vietnam
	Parola (Northeast Cay)	China Taiwan Vietnam
Malaysia	Terumba Layang-Layang	China Taiwan Vietnam
	Terumba Laya (Dallas Reef)	China Taiwan Vietnam
	Terumbu Mentani (Marivelles Reef)	China Taiwan Vietnam The Philippines
	Terumbu Perahu (Barque Canada)	China Taiwan Vietnam The Philippines

Note: The words shown in brackets are the internationally recognised names.   For geographical location of the occupation see map.

Legal Contention

Since the contest over the Spratlys relates to the issue of ownership, it certainly involves those legal aspects and claims which are vigorously

debated between each of the claimants. China has laid its legal claim through the principle of first discovery. This was put forward on the basis of its own historical records.[34] Beijing said that the Spratlys, along with the Paracels, were discovered by Chinese in the second century AD and therefore they have been part of its territorial sovereignty from that time. Following this discovery, China added, the Spratlys have been exploited by Chinese and is a place of livelihood for some of them. Furthermore, China said, the geographical location of the Spratlys had been mapped by the Chinese in the third century and archaeological findings such as axes and ceramics in the Spratlys have had clear similarities with Chinese artifacts from the Han dynasty era which ruled China between the first and the second century.[35] Samuels reproduces old Chinese maps of the Spratlys dating to the mid-eighteenth century.[36]

Commenting on the French action in 1930, which seemingly placed the Spratlys under French colonial Vietnamese territory, China argued that this does not mean that its own sovereignty over the archipelago was illegitimate or nullified. According to China, the nationalist government had sent protest notes through diplomatic channels at that time. Furthermore, quoting Zhou En Lai's statement before the signing of the 1951 San Francisco Treaty, China maintained that the peace makers could not over rule the undisputed sovereignty of China over the Spratlys. Commenting on Vietnam's claims, China cited the stand of North Vietnam before 1975 which supported the Chinese position over the Spratlys and Paracels.[37]

Notwithstanding that China and Taiwan have competed legally to become sole master of the Spratlys, it is important to note that they extend similar arguments. The first discovery arguments, the past economic activities of the Chinese, and the maritime expeditions launched by the Chinese kingdoms between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, have been cited both by Taiwan and China to support their claims.[38] The competing claims to the Spratlys were intensified after the outbreak of the Sino-Japan war in the early 1930s. After this war, some countries like Japan and France had taken advantage of Chinese weakness by occupying the Spratlys. Nevertheless, Taiwan stated that there was an understanding with Japan that the islands occupied by Japan in the South China Sea would

be placed under Chinese jurisdiction in due course.[39]   Taiwan maintained that it restored its own sovereignty over the Spratlys in 1947.   Taiwan also cited the 1952 Sino-Japanese Treaty which recognised its sovereignty over the Spratlys.   Taiwan insisted that although the 1951 San Francisco Treaty did not include the Spratlys as part of Taiwan, its sovereignty over the Spratlys cannot be nullified.

Vietnam, on the other hand, mainly advances its claim on the principle of effective occupation.[40] Vietnam argues that the principle of first discovery advanced by China cannot be accepted.   Vietnam says that the principle of first discovery should be accompanied by the principle of effective occupation.   In this context, Vietnam insists that it has fulfilled international law conditions as the Spratlys have been effectively administered by it since the 18th century.   Vietnam also provides its own historical records in a similar fashion to China to justify its claims.

According to Vietnam, the Spratlys, along with the Paracels, had been mapped as part of its territory in the 18th century and it called them Houng Sa and Troung Sa respectively. Under Emperor Gia Long, a research team was established in 1815 to explore the economic potential of the Spratlys.[41] This research was then continued in the years of 1833, 1835 and 1836. Thereafter, the Spratlys and the Paracels were colonised by France and maintained as a part of the French administration of the colonial state of Vietnam. When Japan first tried to occupy these two archipelagos, France had lodged its official protests. It was only just before the Second World War that Japan succeeded in seizing the Spratlys and the Paracels.

Vietnam maintains that following the end of the Second World War, its sovereignty over the Spratlys was restored. Referring to the statement released by the Vietnamese delegation in 1951 on the eve of San Francisco Treaty, and followed by the 1954 Geneva Conference which accepted the Spratlys and the Paracels as part of South Vietnam, the Vietnamese contend that they have legitimacy of jurisdiction over the Spratlys.

Vietnam argues that the other parties' claims either to the Spratlys or the Paracels cannot be legally justified. Referring particularly to China, it argues that no proof exists that only Chinese people had sailed to and from the Spratlys and the Paracels.

According to Vietnam, the Vietnamese, the Malaysians, the Indonesians and the Arabs had sailed to these archipelagos long before the Chinese.[42]   Evaluating the Chinese claim, therefore, the Vietnamese are of the opinion that the Chinese military action which had taken over the whole Paracels in 1974, as well as the Chinese attack against Vietnamese troops in some of the Spratlys in March 1988, were simply motivated by contemporary Chinese expansionist and hegemonistic policy.

The Philippines laid its claim on the principle of *terra nullius* (no man's land) and thereby differs substantially from the other three claimants already mentioned.[43]   First, it claims there was either no effective occupation of, or exercise of sovereignty over the Spratlys by any country before the twentieth century.   The long distances involved and the hazards of sea travel kept the Spratlys as an unoccupied territory which did not belong to any country.   Second, Japan had acquired the islands but renounced its sovereignty over the Spratlys at the time of 1951 San Francisco Treaty without ceding them to any other country.   Third, Thomas Cloma, a Filipino, who had sailed frequently to the Spratlys between 1947 and 1950, proclaimed part of the Spratlys as *res nullius*, which was then named Kalayaan.   He possessed Kalayaan as a citizen of the Philippines and later he transferred it to the Philippines government.

The only claimant laying its claim without providing historical records is Malaysia.   Its claim to some islands of the Spratlys is based on the principle of the continental shelf.   Malaysia published the map of its continental shelf in 1979 wherein it showed some islets of the Spratlys within its 200 miles Exclusive Economic Zone.[44]

Summarising the above arguments, it could be said that each of the claimants have their own historical records and legal arguments, and that they disagree with and are often in conflict with one another. It is pertinent here to provide a critical review of the legal and historical records advanced by each of the claimants, for without this it would be difficult to grasp the major underpinnings of the dispute.

Judged by the perspectives of international law, each claimant's argument has indeed got some significant limitations.   It is true that the principle of first discovery, as advanced by China and Taiwan, could provide grounds to acquire a territory.   Nevertheless, such a

principle does not automatically establish a valid and permanent title. It may be superseded by title acquired through occupation.[45] What is meant by occupation is that the said territory should not be already occupied by another state or must be unappropriated (*res nullius*). Secondly, the occupation should be manifest through the act of physical presence.[46]

Considering such requirements, the claims of China and Taiwan are questionable. As a matter of fact, these two countries did occupy some part of the Spratlys, but only after the failure of the San Francisco Conference to make a clear decision on the ownership of the Spratlys. Taiwan occupied Itu Aba of the Spratlys between 1947 and 1950. It had subsequently withdrawn its troops from the island between May 1950 and July 1956 and thereafter its military forces had returned.[47] Likewise, China occupied some islands of the Spratlys only after the 14 March 1988 successful military engagement with Vietnam. Therefore, even though one may accept for the time being that the Chinese may have discovered the archipelago many centuries ago, since they have not continually occupied it since that time, their legal arguments are not wholly convincing.[48]

Furthermore, the historical records of China and Taiwan also contain other issues which arouse controversy. First of all, it was not until the fifth century, and not since the second century as claimed by China and Taiwan, that the South China Sea witnessed the Chinese expansive maritime movements.[49] The maritime communication and transportation system of the South China Sea had become important for the Chinese mainly to maintain a tributary system and trade relations with Southeast Asia.[50] As most of the trading partners and kingdoms paying tributes to the Chinese empire were situated in the coastal regions of Southeast Asia, the principal lanes thus ran along the Western and Southwestern margin of the South China Sea. In other words, the pattern of sailing in the South China Sea in ancient times passed along the coastal areas, as was the common form of maritime trading at that time in order to maintain full cargoes by coastal trade, and not through the high seas passage of the South China Sea where the Spratlys are located.[51]

Such logic has also led to some questioning of the validity of the archaeological findings of China in the Spratlys. It is

unconvincing to say that the findings of Han dynasty coins and ceramics in the Spratlys can alone be a justifiable basis of a Chinese 1990s territorial claim. The existence of those artifacts may merely indicate that there were trade relations between China and Southeast Asia rather than showing that there were Chinese settlements in the disputed Spratlys.[52] Moreover, the Asian concept of territorial sovereignty in ancient times was not drawn in the form of clear-cut territorial boundaries as was generally known and later developed in the Western countries as the sovereign state system evolved.[53] Consequently, China's arguments from this point of view are inadequate as a basis for its territorial claims.

Similarly, the arguments advanced by Vietnam should be examined carefully, particularly its historical records. Vietnam argued that the Spratlys were placed under Vietnam effectively when it was a colony of France. Nevertheless, France has on one occasion stated that it had not placed the Spratlys within Vietnamese territory.[54] This in turn is not decisive, however, since the Indonesian government was to successfully claim succession to the entire Netherlands East Indies despite the Dutch desire to withhold a part of it, namely West Irian. Again, the then communist regime in North Vietnam publicly supported the claims of Communist China in the South China Sea from 1954 to 1975. It was only after the unification of North and South Vietnam that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam became vocal about its own claims in the South China Sea. It came out with historical texts, archaeological findings and legal interpretations to augment its claims. It is, therefore, understandable that social scientists question the legitimacy of these claims. Choon Ho Park has thus made an interesting observation that

> Both China and Vietnam rely on foreign literature and cartographies. However, strictly speaking, the evidentiary value of such foreign references must be considered at best doubtful, for the obvious reason that such materials cannot reach beyond information from the countries to which they refer (sic).[55]

The shortcomings of the Chinese and Vietnamese arguments do not, of course, show that the Philippines and Malaysian arguments

are correct. It is true that according to international law, a territory can be acquired if it is *res nullius*. But the arguments that the Spratlys were *res nullius* are not entirely accurate. Before the Philippines occupied some islands of the Spratlys, China, Taiwan and Vietnam indeed had already competed against each other to be the sovereign rulers over the archipelago. In addition, Taiwan and Vietnam had occupied parts of the Spratlys and Taiwan had been garrisoning the largest island since 1956. This means that the principle of *res nullius* claimed by the Philippines is different from that which has been previously widely accepted. A *res nullius* means that the territory should be either uninhabited or not occupied effectively by other countries.[56] Effective occupation, as generally accepted, does not necessarily mean that the whole territory should be occupied. It is enough to be valid if there is a force in the centre to exercise control.[57]

Malaysian claims also have some limitations. Firstly, there is no provision in international law to support acquisition of land by using the principle of the continental shelf. According to international law, only five principal methods are generally accepted: occupation, cession, conquest and subjugation, prescription and accretion. Occupation means the habitation and control by the state of territory. Cession is the transfer of sovereignty over state territory by the owner state to another state. Conquest and subjugation is today a most controversial method but has traditionally been perhaps the most common method for a state to acquire territory. Prescription is almost the same thing as occupation. The difference only lies on the status of the occupied territory and it would be valid only through a period of uninterrupted occupation. Accretion is the acquisition of territory through new formations. These new formations may be artificial through embankment or by natural process.[58] Furthermore, as such a principle is meant to apply to the acquisition of immediately adjacent sea territory - such as with the Netherlands reclamation projects - it is not usually justified to use it for land areas in the Spratlys. The construction of structures designed to raise sometimes submerged islets above sea level, however, might be a different matter.

In this regard, the opinion of a Taiwanese scholar seems to be logical. He said that "it is not the waters which give title to islands but

islands which confer rights to waters".[59]   Besides, it is also uncertain that the claimed islands are a prolongation of Malaysia's continental shelf, for there is a view that none of the disputed islands in the South China Sea are geographical extensions of any country's continental shelf. The islands' continental shelves are often assessed to be totally separate both from the Asian landmass and from the Philippines and Borneo/East Malaysia.[60] Thus, the validity of the claims by the Malaysian government are also contestable.

From this survey it may be concluded that there is no obvious resolution to the competing legal claims to the Spratly Islands and, short of a World Court decision, it is not immediately apparent who would triumph in a legal action.   In any case, we may observe that whenever a scramble for a territory arises, it stems not from legal disagreements but usually from various other motives.   In that context, Peter Calvert, in his study of boundary disputes in Latin America, has observed two important motives namely, economic gain and geopolitical security.[61] Ken Booth, in another study,[62] has also stated that the motivations of states for grabbing islands which are often at the fore include increasing demands for resources and security considerations - a similar conclusion.   In the case of the Spratly Islands there are various quite rational motivations for claimant states to pursue economic and security advantages. An attempt will now be made to examine those economic motives which might help clarify the objectives of the states party to the disputes over the Spratlys.

Notes

1.   Chinese historical views have been compiled by Dick Wilson *et al*, "Islands in the South China Sea", *China Quarterly*, Contemporary China Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies, No. 65, London, January 1976, pages 184-232.

2.   Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *The Huong Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes and International Law*, Hanoi, April 1988, pages 2-3.

3.   The Kuang Chung, "China's Claim of Sovereignty Over Spratly and Paracels Islands: A Historical and Legal Perspective", *Journal of International Law*, Vol. 23, No. 3, Summer 1991, pages 399-436.

Annex 527

Epsey Cooke Farrell, *The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Law of the Sea: An Analysis of Vietnamese Behavior within the Emerging International Oceans Regime* (1998)
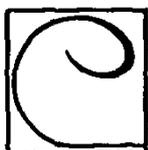
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The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Law of the Sea

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CHAPTER 4

Baselines, Historic Waters, Islands and Archipelagos

BASELINES

The drawing of baselines from which the outer limits of the territorial sea and other maritime zones are measured has become controversial because of the straight baseline systems being implemented by a number of states, including the SRV, rather than using the "normal" low-water line of the coast.[1] In the words of one American expert: "Straight baseline practice may well be the single most potentially harmful threat to high seas freedoms in state practice today."[2]

States draw baselines in the most advantageous way possible for three reasons. It is a means of enhancing security by increasing the combined zones of territorial sea and internal waters. The latter lie on the landward side of a state's baseline and with one possible exception concerning innocent passage, a state exercises complete sovereignty over them. It is a means of increasing the seaward extension of the boundaries of a state's maritime zones. It may create an advantage in a particular maritime boundary negotiation.[3]

South Vietnam's Baseline Position

South Vietnam appears to have adhered to the "normal baseline," which is defined in Article 3 of the 1958 Convention and Article 5 of the 1982 Convention as "the low-water line along the coast as marked on large-scale charts officially recognized by the coastal State." Although the RVN did not address the topic at UNCLOS I or in the 1965 decree on sea surveil-

lance, the 1936 French fishery decree on which South Vietnam based its original fishery zone specified that the zone "extends twenty kilometers from the shore at low-water mark."

As a practical matter, the question had to be dealt with in the context of U.S. naval operations under the sea surveillance decree during the Vietnam War. The rules of engagement for Operation Market Time made it necessary for the U.S. Navy to determine precisely the boundaries of the South Vietnamese territorial sea and contiguous zone. Therefore, supplemental operational orders included "directions for drawing the territorial sea from basepoints" and "the method of delimiting the adjacent territorial seas of Vietnam and Cambodia."[4]

It is clear from remarks made at the 1974 UNCLOS III session that the South Vietnamese intended to move to a straight baseline system in conjunction with adoption of a more extensive set of maritime zones. The Vietnamese position was that "baselines should be drawn between the outermost points of the national territory, whether continental or insular."[5] Taking into account the geography of both North and South Vietnam, the South Vietnamese based their position on the contention that the northern and central coast was heavily indented and was fringed by islands, the two criteria for use of straight baselines in the 1958 Convention (Article 4(1)), which were repeated in the 1982 Convention (Article 7(1)). In addition, it appeared that the South Vietnamese intended to claim that the Mekong Delta qualified as an unstable delta area, taking their position from that enunciated by Bangladesh.[6]

The SRV's Baseline Position

The 1982 CLOS baseline provisions were already settled before the SRV made its 1977 statement or entered UNCLOS III. The 1977 statement agrees with the 1974 position taken by the South Vietnamese. Paragraph 1 states in full:

> The territorial sea of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has a breadth of 12 nautical miles measured from a baseline which links the furthest seaward points of the coast and the outermost points of Vietnamese offshore islands, and which is the low-water line along the coast.

Over five years passed before the SRV implemented the 1977 statement by announcing a specific baseline system in its declaration on the baseline of the territorial waters of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam of 12 November 1982. This is the second of Vietnam's three basic documents on the law of the sea and establishes what has been called "one of the more

64   *Chapter 4*

radical baseline systems."[7] The declaration was issued just a month before the 1982 CLOS was opened for signature, and in two authoritative articles the Vietnamese claimed that its provisions are "in accordance with international law and practice."[8] Undoubtedly, however, the Vietnamese wanted it in place before signing the Convention, as the baseline system deviates from both customary and conventional law.[9]

Using "a continuous system of straight baselines with ten segments running 846 miles," Vietnam has enclosed as internal waters about 27,000 sq nm, or 93,000 sq km.[10] The length of the baseline segments ranges from 2.0 nm to 161.8 nm.[11] Nine of 11 basepoints are on islands, with the closest 7.6 nm from the mainland and the farthest 80.7 nm. The system will remain incomplete until maritime boundary settlements are reached in the Gulf of Thailand with Cambodia and in the Gulf of Tonkin with China. These already complex disputes were rendered even more so by the introduction of historic waters claims by Vietnam.

Like the RVN, the SRV has indicated generally that the Vietnamese coast meets both the geographical criteria for the use of straight baselines—a "deeply indented" coast or "a fringe of islands along the coast in its immediate vicinity."[12] It appears difficult to justify use of either criterion for much of the coastline, however. In addition, while the Vietnamese claim that the baseline segments follow the general direction of the S-shaped coast, geographers question whether they follow it sufficiently closely. Further, in Vietnam's baseline system, Point O, which is to form the terminus in the Gulf of Thailand following settlement of the Cambodia-Vietnam maritime boundary, is located "on the high sea" and meets none of the criteria for a basepoint.[13]

A great difficulty with the evaluation of straight baseline systems is the lack of generally accepted standards for baseline measurement which would clarify the ambiguous general provisions of the 1958 and 1982 conventions. J.R.V. Prescott has observed that abuse of the straight baseline system is so great that "it would now be possible to draw a straight baseline along any section of coast in the world and cite an existing straight baseline as a precedent."[14]

According to one suggested standard under development within the U.S. government, fringing islands generally should be no more than 48 miles from the coast and no more than 24 miles apart.[15] Of the nine Vietnamese islands used as basepoints, five exceed that distance from the mainland and only a cluster of three islets grouped around Con Dao are less than 24 miles apart. The effect has been to produce exceptionally long baseline segments, two of which are over 161 nm in length, while five

others range from 60.2 to 149 nm. It is the extremely long baseline legs which may produce significant increases in EEZ or in potential continental margin, in addition to the increase in internal and territorial waters, according to Prescott's calculations.[16]

The Vietnamese insisted in 1982 that, despite these questions of distance, "our stipulations on the base line of territorial waters do not conflict with the stipulations of international law and customs thus far."[17] They cited specific practice of other Southeast Asian states as precedent, including basepoints and baseline segments used by Burma, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia, although in at least some cases these are considered to be legally unacceptable.[18]

Most significantly, however, in a *Luat Hoc* article written four years earlier on the subject of islands and archipelagos, Nguyen Ngoc Minh indicated that security would be given priority in the drawing of Vietnamese baselines. General principles on the relationship of islands to coast could be overridden, Minh said, by "other issues such as defense, security or any other reasons" which could make an island eligible for use as a basepoint. Furthermore, Minh argued, the diversity of state practice permitted considerable latitude in the distance between two points or two islands used as basepoints.[19]

Also significantly, in 1982 the Vietnamese based the legitimacy of their choice of certain island basepoints on Article 4(4) of the 1958 Convention and the identical Article 7(5) of the 1982 CLOS, which state that if general conditions for the use of straight baselines are satisfied,

> account may be taken, in determining particular baselines, of economic interests peculiar to the region concerned, the reality and the importance of which are clearly evidenced by long usage.[20]

Like a number of other states, the SRV recognized clearly that if it could demonstrate sufficient reason to do so, "this point offers a legal basis for coastal countries to expand their baselines far away and widen their internal waters...."[21] In addition, although it is not included in the clause, the Vietnamese cited national defense and security, as well as economic interests evidenced by long usage, as entitling them to use the basepoints selected.[22] Vietnamese publicists have recognized that a right of innocent passage exists in waters which have been enclosed as internal waters, but previously were not considered so, through the use of a straight baseline system.[23]

The three basepoint areas discussed in some detail by Vu Phi Hoang and Hai Thanh are those in the Phu Qui (A6), Con Dao (A3-5) and Tho

Chu (A1) groups, which were singled out as having strong economic links and historically close ties to the mainland. With regard to the Tho Chu group, no reference was made to the long dispute with Cambodia over the islands' ownership.

Writing with particular reference to Phu Qui, Vu Phi Hoang noted that "on the military and security sides, these island groups serve as frontiers, check points and secure protection for the whole seacoast of South Vietnam." The Phu Qui islands "lie across the sea route to Vung Tau port and Ho Chi Minh City port" and several of the islands provide natural navigation markers for Vung Tau.[24]

Although not mentioned by the Vietnamese publicists writing at the time, the Con Son island group, largest of which is Con Dao and which is located strategically opposite the mouths of the Mekong, was reported in February 1982 to have a naval base under construction by Soviet military advisers and technicians.[25] Con Son, formerly known as Poulo Condore, had been of great interest to the French (and British) since the late 17th century for commercial and naval purposes.[26] In April 1975 the North Vietnamese were quick to "liberate" the group, where South Vietnamese offshore petroleum exploration had been underway. The SRV established the Vung Tau-Con Dao special economic zone in 1979, which "has now become truly an economic center of our country."[27]

In what the Chinese undoubtedly interpreted as a direct challenge to their claim to the Paracel and Spratly island groups, paragraph 5 of Vietnam's 1977 statement declared that "islands and archipelagos, forming an integral part of the Vietnamese territory and beyond the Vietnamese territorial sea" have their own maritime zones, which also would be determined using straight baselines. Paragraph 4 of the 1982 baseline declaration stated that the baseline "of the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagos will be determined in an ensuing text." A *Nhan Dan* article noted that it was "impossible to implement the project at one time" because of the question of actual control.[28]

Questions of control are emphasized by actions such as the decision to construct what in August 1989 the Vietnamese called "an off-shore economic, scientific and technical complex" on submerged coral reefs in the Vung Tau-Con Dao special economic zone.[29] The controversial project, which has been protested by China as a violation of its sovereignty over the Spratly Islands,[30] includes construction of a lighthouse. In the absence of further information, one may speculate that the lighthouse is being built on a low-tide elevation which ultimately could become part of a straight baseline system.[31]

While archipelagos belonging to continental states may not be enclosed within archipelagic baselines under the 1982 CLOS, several states have used straight baseline systems around island groups. Lewis M. Alexander has noted that while these "presumably" are not intended to be considered archipelagic baselines, "the net effect of these straight baselines, however, is similar to the system which would be encountered if archipelagic baselines were used." [32] Regardless of any qualification for the use of straight baselines, [33] and depending in practice upon ultimate disposition and extent of control, Vietnam clearly intends to use straight baselines in the Spratlys. Not to do so would place Vietnam at a disadvantage relative to China in terms of their rival claims to the Spratlys and the Paracels.

Chinese and Cambodian Baselines

The People's Republic of China had instituted a straight baseline system in its 1958 declaration on the territorial sea. From the Vietnamese point of view, as indicated above, it is significant that the declaration provides that the straight baseline method applies to all islands owned by China, including the Paracels and Spratlys.[34]

In a working paper submitted to the U.N. Seabed Committee in 1973, the PRC stated that any "archipelago or an island chain consisting of islands close to each other" could "be taken as an integral whole" for the drawing of baselines.[35] China did not comment, however, when the archipelagic principle was limited to archipelagic states from an early stage of UNCLOS III. [36] Presumably, the Chinese believed that the proposed straight baseline provisions provided adequate room to maneuver.

The aggressive Cambodian approach to baselines is in many respects directly related to Vietnamese and Thai practice and claims. All Cambodian governments have used straight baseline systems since 1957, when the Sihanouk government made its five-mile territorial sea declaration. The 1969 declaration, which extended the territorial sea to 12 miles, used the same baseline system but also gave territorial seas to a number of islands, including the disputed Tho Chu group.

The 1972 straight baseline system proclaimed by the Khmer Republic made the major departure of using islands, islets and reefs at a distance from the coast for basepoints and of including Phu Quoc within the system.[37] These Cambodian moves drew South Vietnamese and Thai protests, though for different reasons. Essentially, the South Vietnamese were defending their claims to sovereignty over Phu Quoc and other islands and to sovereignty and control over maritime territory which those

islands generated. The Thais protested the distance of island basepoints from the coast and the direction and length of baselines, as their own maritime boundary claims would be adversely affected.[38]

Democratic Kampuchea's 1978 statement did not specify a type of baseline system, but that government apparently has continued to utilize the 1972 system. [39] This raises questions concerning alteration of the baseline segments enclosing Phu Quoc, since Democratic Kampuchea abandoned the Cambodian claim to the island in negotiations with the SRV in 1976.[40] The PRK/SRV historic waters agreement indicates that the PRK/SOC accepts that Phu Quoc is Vietnamese. It remains uncertain, however, that all of the parties in a coalition government will do so. [41]

The PRK's declaration of 31 July 1982, which specifies a straight baseline system, followed immediately upon announcement of the 7 July 1982 historic waters agreement between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea.[42] Announcement of Vietnam's baseline system followed on November 12. The Cambodian baseline system is dependent upon creation of the historic waters zone, just as is the Gulf of Thailand portion of the Vietnamese baseline system. The intent and effect is to form a unified SRV/Cambodian straight baseline system. The PRK system, which uses three island basepoints and links the coast at the Thai-Cambodian border to Point 0, produces the most extreme effect of all the Cambodian baseline systems.

VIETNAM'S USE OF THE HISTORIC WATERS DOCTRINE

Vietnam made use of the controversial historic waters doctrine both in designating a joint historic waters zone with Cambodia and in unilaterally designating historic waters in the Gulf of Tonkin (Bac Bo Gulf to the Vietnamese and Beibu Gulf to the Chinese), the latter announced in the 1982 Vietnamese baseline declaration.

The concept of historic waters or, more narrowly, historic bays rests upon customary law. It was not dealt with in either the 1958 Territorial Sea Convention or the 1982 CLOS and discussion of the issue was quite limited at both UNCLOS I and III.[43] Although disagreement remains on the scope and interpretation of the doctrine, the three elements generally considered to be involved in establishment of historic title are effective exercise of sovereignty, prolonged usage and the toleration of other states.[44]

While economic and security interests always have played a role in historic waters claims, increasingly in the postcolonial era the concept of

"vital interests" has had a liberalizing influence on the doctrine, to the extent that D.P. O'Connell concluded that

> it is likely that the category of historic waters will change its fundamental character, so that history will play a less prominent role than one would reasonably expect, and strategic and economic factors a much greater one.[45]

Jean-Pierre Quéneudec has found this to be the case with Asian claims generally, including those of Vietnam.[46]

The Vietnamese-Cambodian Claim

The Vietnamese-Cambodian historic waters claim, which extends from their respective coasts out to the Poulo Wai and Tho Chu island groups, was motivated by Vietnamese political, economic and security interests. The 1982 agreement, signed at Ho Chi Minh City to further "the special Vietnam-Kampuchea relations," undoubtedly was concluded by a dependent PRK government at Vietnamese behest.

The agreement both made possible the two countries' straight baseline systems in the Gulf of Thailand and was considered a first step toward negotiation of their long-disputed mutual maritime boundary.[47] Further, "historic title or other special circumstance" exempts opposite or adjacent states from the general obligation in Article 15 of the 1982 CLOS to use the median line, barring agreement to the contrary, in delimiting territorial seas of the two countries. Also, disputes involving historic bays or titles are among those which may be exempted from compulsory dispute settlement procedures (Article 298(1)(a)(i)).

The Vietnamese particularly cited Soviet practice on straight baselines and historic waters, as well as that of China and North Korea among other states, in justification of their use of the historic waters doctrine.[48] In giving the Vietnamese rationale for the zone, Vu Phi Hoang asserted geographical unity and special circumstances of a shifting coastline; evidence of sovereignty and control on the part of Vietnamese and Cambodian rulers since the early 18th century, as well as control by the French colonial administration; cooperative security and defense measures taken historically by the two countries against Chinese and Thai pirates, as well as later French measures; and heavy use of the area by fishing boats of both countries.[49] The picture painted was one of longstanding amity and cooperation, rather than of conflict and rival territorial claims.

Despite a very strong interest in potential petroleum resources in disputed areas of continental shelf, the South Vietnamese government never attempted to bolster its case with a historic waters claim in that area. In the early 1970s Nguyen Quoc Dinh, who was closely associated with South Vietnamese law of the sea policy, suggested instead that some form of bilateral cooperative structure would be to the benefit of both countries for exploitation of the continental shelf in the absence of a maritime boundary agreement.[50] Nor, despite an expansionist approach to maritime zones, had any other Cambodian government made a unilateral historic waters claim for any portion of that area. Had they considered such a claim legitimate or feasible, it seems unlikely that either Cambodia or South Vietnam would have foregone the opportunity.

The newly-formed Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea denounced the historic waters agreement in a 10 January 1983 statement as part of Vietnam's "expansionist and annexationist policy" and reiterated earlier DK statements that all agreements made by the PRK are null and void. At the same time, the CGDK rejected the 1982 Vietnamese baseline declaration, which was denounced as "incorporat[ing] a large area of Kampuchea's waters."[51]

The Gulf of Tonkin Historic Waters Claim

The Vietnamese historic waters claim in the Gulf of Tonkin was made formally in the SRV 1982 baseline declaration. Because the PRC had consistently rejected Vietnamese efforts, begun in 1974 negotiations, to reach a bilateral agreement that the gulf constituted a historic bay, the Vietnamese made a unilateral claim in Article 3 that "the waters in the part of the gulf belonging to Vietnam constitute the historic waters pertaining to the juridical regime of the internal waters of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam."[52]

This highly unusual and legally unsustainable claim[53] stems from the Vietnamese interpretation of the 26 June 1887 Sino-French boundary convention, in which a north-south line (known as the "red line") with no southern terminus was drawn at 108° 3' east of Greenwich in the Gulf of Tonkin, with islands east of the line allocated to China and west of the line to Vietnam.[54] In November 1982 the Vietnamese reiterated their position that this "historic demarcation line" had settled the boundary in the gulf and insisted that only delineation of the closing line across the entrance to the gulf should have been necessary, an issue which also had arisen in the earlier 1974 negotiations.

The two countries should have agreed on a common legal system for this gulf area and for the sea zone of each individual country in the gulf in order to resolve at the same time the outstanding problem of gulf opening. However, due to China's lack of good will and long range plots concerning the Bac Bo Gulf, the problem remains unresolved.[55]

In his article, Vu Phi Hoang supported the Vietnamese position with evidence of long usage and control on the part of China and France/Vietnam. In addition he cited the "special importance" of the gulf for the security and defense of both countries, but of Vietnam in particular, noting its use historically by "invasion forces of China, imperialist Holland, France, Japan, America."[56] What was not mentioned, however, was the immediate trigger of the Vietnamese request for delimitation of the gulf, which was North Vietnam's strong desire by late 1973 to begin offshore petroleum exploration there.

The North Vietnamese themselves had made no mention of historic waters in their 1964 declaration of a 12-mile territorial sea. Nor had the PRC made any such claim with regard to the Gulf of Tonkin in its 1958 territorial sea declaration, although the Chinese enclosed the Gulf of Po Hai (now Bo Hai) at that time and also claimed Chiungchow (now Qiongzhou) or Hainan Strait, between Hainan Island and the mainland, as internal waters.[57] This latter move may have been the reason the Vietnamese asserted in defense of their position that no international shipping routes ran through the Gulf of Tonkin.[58]

From the Chinese point of view, no joint claim of the Gulf of Tonkin as a historic bay would be possible on Vietnamese terms, as the "red line" distinctly favors Vietnam. Further, that Vietnamese claim is linked with other Vietnamese claims with regard to the land boundary with China and with regard to South China Sea islands. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs was quick to protest in a 28 November 1982 note that no boundary line had been drawn in the Gulf of Tonkin, but left aside the legal status of the gulf.[59]

In this regard, the position taken by France is particularly significant. In a note dated 5 December 1983, the French government stated that it was "unaware of any title which would substantiate Vietnam's" historic waters claim. At the same time the French stated that the drawing of Vietnam's baseline points from A1-A7 was "at variance with the well-established rules of international law applicable to the matter," though no specific reference was made to the Vietnam-Cambodia claim to historic title.[60] In addition the United States has issued two notes, one protesting the Vietnamese baseline system and the other protesting the historic waters

agreement with Cambodia.[61] Thailand and Singapore also have issued notes of protest.[62]

ISLANDS AND ARCHIPELAGOS

"Certain provisions" of the articles dealing with archipelagic states (Articles 46-54) and the regime of islands (Article 121) were difficult for the SRV to accept, delegate Le Kim Chung stated on 16 April 1982 during the 11th UNCLOS III session. Vietnam "would not, however, obstruct the adoption of the convention by raising objections at so late a stage" to articles which essentially had been discussed and framed before the SRV entered the conference.[63]

This statement typified the public Vietnamese approach late in the conference. While voicing genuine and serious objections to provisions they had no chance of changing, the Vietnamese could contrast their behavior with that of the United States, which had insisted upon a review period under the new Reagan administration, and could support the Group of 77 position, which called for the swift adoption of the Convention.

The Vietnamese concern over provisions on archipelagos stemmed from the effect of the drawing of maritime boundaries by archipelagic states on maritime boundary claims of others. Specifically, the SRV's unhappiness stemmed from competing continental shelf claims with Indonesia which arose originally under the South Vietnamese government in 1971 and to which were later added overlapping EEZ claims.

South Vietnam had stated at UNCLOS III in June 1974 that "it would consider with sympathy and understanding the legitimate claims of archipelagic" states.[64] South Vietnam's understanding of the archipelagic concept differed from that of the archipelagic states, however. Despite efforts since the 1950s by Indonesia and the Philippines, in particular, it was only through the UNCLOS III process that the concept of the archipelagic state received general acceptance.[65] It had not been accepted during UNCLOS I or II and the announced archipelagic regimes of the two Southeast Asian states had met with protests. At the time the South Vietnamese-Indonesian continental shelf dispute developed in the early 1970s, therefore, Nguyen Quoc Dinh wrote that it "appears extremely hazardous" to state that the archipelagic principle has been recognized in positive international law. Rather, he wrote, the issue turned on the question of the effect of islands situated at a distance from the coast.[66]

Nevertheless, according to Indonesia, the South Vietnamese government indicated that it did recognize the Indonesian archipelagic state

regime during an unofficial exploratory negotiation held in an effort to resolve the continental shelf boundary issue.[67] The South Vietnamese did not accept the inclusion of Indonesia's outermost islands within the archipelagic baselines, however. The islands in question are the Anambas and Natuna groups, with the Natunas of particular geographical importance for the Vietnamese claim. It was the Vietnamese contention that the Indonesian baseline should be drawn from the "mainland" coast (as should South Vietnam's) and that the outermost islands fell into the category of "special circumstances" for the delimitation of continental shelf. The Vietnamese considered that to employ the system of archepelagic straight baselines in the way the Indonesians had done was quite disadvantageous to Vietnam. That is, the South Vietnamese objected to the effect of the archipelagic baseline system as drawn by Indonesia.

This is essentially the objection later raised by the SRV against the archipelago articles of the 1982 Convention. As explained by Ambassador Le Kim Chung in 1989, the SRV does "not object [to] the existence of the archipelagic States and their legitimate interests concerning the unity of their archipelagic territory." But the SRV does not want archipelagic baselines to be able to "be employed to create a serious disadvantage to the counter-party of such an archipelagic State in their maritime boundary delimitation."[68] The Vietnamese consider this contrary to the equitable principles doctrine which they insist must be the basis of any maritime boundary delimitation. The legal and political ramifications of Vietnam's dispute with Indonesia will be discussed in detail in Chapter 10.

Undoubtedly, Vietnamese concerns stem from the vague and imprecise language of Article 46, which defines the terms "archipelagic state" and "archipelago," and Article 47, which gives criteria for drawing archipelagic baselines.[69] Early in the conference the question was still open as to whether the special regime for archipelagos should also apply to those belonging to continental states. South Vietnam did not address the issue, although it had obvious relevance to the Paracels and Spratlys. China likewise was silent on the subject, although it had supported application of the archipelagic principle to all archipelagos in its 1973 working paper presented to the Seabed Committee.[70] This idea was strongly opposed by the Soviet Union which, like other maritime powers, accepted the archipelagic state concept only when specific navigation rights were included.[71]

Interestingly, Laos participated in the 1974 debate on archipelagos. The then-coalition government used the occasion to attempt to strengthen its position with neighboring ASEAN states and to urge a compromise of

74   *Chapter 4*

interests for the sake of ASEAN unity. While recognizing that archipelagic baselines were the "most rational method" of enclosing the waters of archipelagic states, Laos urged that the "traditional interests" of the other three ASEAN states "be taken into account in the context of their common efforts to build a zone of freedom, peace and neutrality." Most tellingly, the Lao delegate expressed appreciation for the ASEAN states' understanding of his country's problems and stated Laos's intention to join ASEAN "as soon as circumstances permitted."[72]

Questions concerning islands, in general, are particularly important to the Vietnamese. First, the role of islands in maritime boundary delimitations has concerned both the RVN and the SRV because virtually all of their potential maritime boundaries are affected by the presence of islands. After leaving the 1974 UNCLOS session South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Vuong Van Bac complained that the problem of islands in boundary delimitations had not been solved.[73] The basic question of how to deal with the presence of islands as "special circumstances" or factors remains to be resolved within negotiations or before arbitral tribunals or the International Court of Justice.[74]

In addition the definition of islands has been modified in the 1982 CLOS to include a provision on rocks (Article 121 (3)), which has significance for Vietnam. Rocks unable to "sustain human habitation or economic life of their own" are denied an EEZ or continental shelf, although islands are not. There is no consensus on the definition of what constitutes a rock, however, and state practice on claims of island v. rock has varied considerably, depending upon perceptions of overall advantage or upon location, resources or size.[75] This would apply to some of the formations in the Spratlys.

In his 1978 *Luat Hoc* article on islands and archipelagos, Nguyen Ngoc Minh discussed the general definition of islands, but did not deal specifically with the question of rocks. He stated that there is no unanimity on the question of the minimum surface area requirement for an island. Minh emphasized that the level of importance of islands and archipelagos was determined not by size, but by military, political and economic factors and by location.[76]

NOTES

1. See Article 5 of the 1982 Convention. In it, baseline rules remain part of the territorial sea provisions as they were in the 1958 Convention on the Territorial Sea, although their application and implications now are much wider. See Appendix 6 for the SRV declaration on the baseline of the territorial waters of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 12 November 1982, and inside cover for a map showing the SRV straight baseline system.

2. J. Peter A. Bernhardt, "Straightjacketing Straight Baselines," in *International Navigation: Rocks and Shoals Ahead?* ed. Van Dyke, Alexander and Morgan, 85.

3. See J.R.V. Prescott, "Straight and Archipelagic Baselines," in *Maritime Boundaries and Ocean Resources*, ed. Gerald Blake (London: Croon Helm, 1987), 39.

4. O'Connell, *The Influence of Law on Sea Power*, 176.

5. See the remarks of Le Van Loi before the Second Committee, UNCLOS III, *Official Records* 2:119.

6. See ibid., 109, for the original Bangladeshi position. Various Bangladeshi proposals led to the provisions on unstable deltas adopted as Article 7(2) of the 1982 CLOS.

7. Lewis M. Alexander, "Baseline Delimitations and Maritime Boundaries," *VJIL* 23, no. 4 (Summer 1983): 518.

8. Vu Phi Hoang, "May Van De Phap Ly Trong Tuyen Bo Cua Chinh Phu Ta Ve Duong Co So Ven Bo Luc Dia Viet Nam" [Some Legal Points in Our Government's Declaration on the Baseline of Vietnam's Territorial Waters], *Luat Hoc*, 1983, no. 1:10. This article gives the rationale for the Vietnamese position in some detail. A shorter, but similar, article by Hai Thanh [pseud.], "The Base Line of Vietnam's Territorial Waters," appeared in *Nhan Dan*, 15 November 1982, and may be found in *JPRS 82621*, 12 January 1983, 183-88.

9. See Alexander, "Baseline Delimitations and Maritime Boundaries," 503-21. See also Churchill and Lowe, *Law of the Sea*, 28-33.

10. Smith, "Global Maritime Claims," 90.

11. *Limits in the Seas No. 99*, 5-6. All figures cited in the discussion of the SRV's 1982 declaration may be found in this study.

12. Article 7(1) of the 1982 CLOS.

13. On the points in this paragraph, see the analysis in *Limits in the Seas No. 99*, 7, 10 and 11.

14. Prescott, "Straight and Archipelagic Baselines," 38.

15. The U.S. Department of State, through its Office of Ocean Law and Policy of the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, has been developing standards for measurement of straight baselines with the goal of general international acceptance of standard guidelines for state practice. See the discussion in Bernhardt, "Straightjacketing Straight Baselines," 85-99 and esp. 95; and U.S.D.S., Office of Ocean Law and Policy, *Limits in the Seas No. 106*, "Developing Standard Guidelines for Evaluating Straight Baselines," 31 August 1987, esp. 17 and 22.

16. Prescott, "Straight and Archipelagic Baselines," table 3.1 and text, 48-49; and see inside cover for map of the SRV straight baseline system.

17. Hai Thanh, "The Base Line of Vietnam's Territorial Waters," *JPRS 82621*, 184.

18. Ibid., 185, and Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 11-12.

19. Nguyen Ngoc Minh, "Luat Bien: Cac Dao Va Quan Dao" [Law of the Sea: Islands and Archipelagos], *Luat Hoc*, 1978 no. 4:29-30.

20. This provision was taken from the *Anglo-Norwegian Fisheries Case*, where the interest was fishing, the "most obvious such economic interest." See Churchill and Lowe, *The Law of the Sea*, 30.

21. Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 11.

22. Hai Thanh, "The Base Line of Vietnam's Territorial Waters," *JPRS 82621*, 185.

23. Ibid., 184, and Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 11. This provision is found in Article 5(2) of the 1958 Convention and in Article 8(2) of the 1982 CLOS.

24. Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 12.

25. Chang, *The Sino-Vietnamese Territorial Dispute*, 73.

26. For a description of French efforts leading to the acquisition of Poulo Condore, see Le Thanh Khoi, *Le Viet-Nam: histoire et civilisation* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1955), 294-95, 315-16 and 368-69.

27. Hai Thanh, "The Base Line of Vietnam's Territorial Waters," *JPRS 82621*, 186.

28. Ibid., 188.

29. "Offshore Research Complex Established," VNA in *FBIS-EAS-89-158*, 17 August 1989, 82.

30. "Vietnam 'Violation' of Sovereignty Protested," Xinhua, in *FBIS-CHI-89-160*, 21 August 1989, 8.

31. Article 7(4) of the 1982 CLOS states: "Straight baselines shall not be drawn to and from low-tide elevations, unless lighthouses or similar installations which are permanently above sea level have been built on them...."

32. Alexander, "Baseline Delimitations and Maritime Boundaries," 518. Alexander cites straight baselines used by Ecuador around the Galapagos, Denmark around the Faroes and Norway around Svalbard.

33. According to the analysis in U.S.D.S., Geographer, *Limits in the Seas No. 43*, "Straight Baselines: People's Republic of China," 1 July 1972, 6: "The Spratly Islands, because of their small size and wide dispersion, defy any logical system of straight baselines." See also J.R.V. Prescott, *Maritime Jurisdiction in Southeast Asia: A Commentary and Map*, EAPI Research Report No. 2 (Honolulu: East-West Environment and Policy Institute, January 1981), 38.

34. See *Limits in the Seas No. 43*, 1-2, for the text of the Chinese declaration.

35. In Article 6 of the Chinese Working Paper on Sea Area Within the Limits of National Jurisdiction, as quoted in Jeanette Greenfield, *China and the Law of the Sea, Air, and Environment* (Alphen aan den Rijn, the Netherlands: Sijthoff & Noordhoff, 1979), 64.

36. See Hungdah Chiu, "The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Settlement of China's Maritime Boundary Dispute," in *Contemporary Issues in International Law: Essays in Honor of Louis B. Sohn*, ed. T. Buergenthal (Kehl, Republic of Germany: N.A. Engel, 1984), 195-96.

37. These claims are detailed in Khim, "Le Cambodge," 154-74. A set of maps showing the expansion of Cambodian maritime claims is included in Khim's Maps section: see maps no. 24, p. 141; no. 25, p. 165; no. 26, p. 173; and no. 33, p. 222. Map no. 33, "Comparisons of the Extensions 1957-1969-1972," is reproduced in Park, "Vietnam, Kampuchea, and the Law of the Sea," 453, as map 3.

38. Khim, "Le Cambodge," 174-80. Although Khim dismissed these protests, Prescott noted that, under the terms of the then Draft 1982 CLOS, certain sections of the Cambodian baseline would be difficult to justify because they did not follow

the general direction of the coast sufficiently and those island basepoints were not in the immediate vicinity of the coast. See Prescott, *Maritime Jurisdiction in Southeast Asia*, 4.

39. Kittichaisaree, *The Law of the Sea and Maritime Boundary Delimitation in South-East Asia*, 14.

40. See Prescott, *Maritime Jurisdiction in Southeast Asia*, 28-29 and 53n.23. In May 1977 DK published a list of 44 claimed islands and excluded Phu Quoc. In August 1977 DK published a map showing the Brévié Line as the maritime boundary with Vietnam rather than as an administrative division, which is all that Vietnam accepts. The map is reproduced in Khim, "Le Cambodge," 727.

41. This issue is discussed in its political context in Chapter 9.

42. For the text of the historic waters agreement between the SRV and the PRK, see Appendix 5.

43. Article 7(6) of the 1958 Convention and Article 10(6) of the 1982 Convention exclude "historic bays" from the application of baseline rules for bays.

44. For discussion of the historic waters doctrine, see D.P. O'Connell, *The International Law of the Sea*, vol. 1, ed. I.A. Shearer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 417-38. See also "Juridical Regime of Historic Waters, Including Historic Bays" (Doc. A/CN.4/143), *Yearbook of the International Law Commission*, 1962, vol. 2; and McDougal and Burke, *The Public Order of the Oceans*, 340-68.

45. O'Connell, *The International Law of the Sea* 1:425.

46. See Jean-Pierre Quéneudec, "Les baies et eaux historiques en Asie," in *Actualités juridiques et politiques en Asie: Études à la mémoire de Tran Van Minh*, ed. J.-P. Quéneudec, P. Tavernier, and J. Nguyen Duy-Tan (Paris: Éditions A. Pedone, n.d.), 50-58.

47. See Article 2 of the agreement. See inside cover map for the claimed historic waters.

48. Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 14.

49. Ibid., 15-16.

50. Nguyen Quoc Dinh, "La République du Viet-Nam et le droit de la mer," 646.

51. Statement issued 10 January 1983 by the Foreign Ministry of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, *FBIS-APA*, 14 January 1983, H4-H5.

52. See Chang, *The Sino-Vietnamese Territorial Dispute*, 24-26, 36-38 and 65-66, for a succinct account of Sino-Vietnamese negotiations prior to the Vietnamese baseline declaration. See map inside cover.

53. "Juridical Regime of Historic Waters," 20-21, paras. 141-48 (Doc. A/CN.4/143); and *Limits in the Seas No. 99*, 8-10.

54. See J.R.V. Prescott, *Map of Mainland Asia by Treaty* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1975), 449, and para. 2 of the 1887 convention text, 453.

55. Hai Thanh, "The Base Line of Vietnam's Territorial Waters," *JPRS 82621*, 188.

56. Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 16.

57. *Limits in the Seas No. 43*, 1, 4 and 5.

58. Vu Phi Hoang, "Our Government's Baseline Declaration," 16.

59. Quéneudec, "Les baies et eaux historiques en Asie," 55.

60. *LOS Bulletin*, no. 3 (March 1984): 16.

61. *Limits in the Seas No. 99*, 5 n.3. The U.S. protested the SRV baseline system in a 6 December 1982 aide-mémoire, and the SRV rejected that protest in a 1 February 1983 aide-mémoire. See *LOS Bulletin*, no. 10 (November 1987): 23, for the text of a note dated 17 June 1987, sent by the U.S. Mission to the U.N. to the U.N. secretary-general. In it, the U.S. rejected the Vietnam-Cambodia historic waters agreement as not meeting the criteria in customary law for establishing a valid claim.

62. The Thai statement may be found in *LOS Bulletin*, no. 7 (April 1986): 111-12; and the Singapore statement in *LOS Bulletin*, no. 9 (April 1987): 53-54.

63. UNCLOS III, *Official Records* 16:110.

64. Ibid. 1:65.

65. See Kittichaisaree, *The Law of the Sea and Maritime Boundary Delimitation in South-East Asia*, 151-68, for the development of the archipelagic state concept by Indonesia and the Philippines and its effect in Southeast Asia. See also Churchill and Lowe, *The Law of the Sea*, 98-111.

66. Nguyen Quoc Dinh, "La République du Viet-Nam et le droit de la mer," 649-50 (my translation).

67. Hasjim Djalal, "Conflicting Territorial and Jurisdictional Claims in South China Sea," *Indonesian Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (July 1979): 45; and Hasjim Djalal, director general of the Agency for Research and Development, Department of

Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, interview with author, 18 and 29 August 1989, New York. See also Nguyen Quoc Dinh, "La République du Viet-Nam et le droit de la mer," 647-48.

68. Personal communication from Le Kim Chung, 14 September 1989.

69. See the critique of the Convention's archipelagic provisions in L.L. Herman, "The Modern Concept of the Off-Lying Archipelago in International Law," *Canadian Yearbook of International Law*, vol. 23, 1985, 172-200.

70. Chiu, "The 1982 Convention and Settlement of China's Maritime Boundary Dispute," 195-96.

71. UNCLOS III, *Official Records* 2:266-67.

72. Ibid., 272.

73. Vuong Van Bac interview with Saigon radio correspondent, *FBIS-APA*, 10 July 1974, L2.

74. J.G. Collier, "The Regime of the Islands and the Modern Law of the Sea," in *The Law of the Sea and International Shipping: Anglo-Soviet Post-UNCLOS Perspectives*, ed. Butler, 173-88.

75. See the discussion in Jon M. Van Dyke, Joseph R. Morgan, and Jonathan Gurish, "The Exclusive Economic Zone of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands: When Do Uninhabited Islands Generate an EEZ?" *San Diego Law Review* 25, no. 3 (May/June 1988): 429-65.

76. Nguyen Ngoc Minh, "Law of the Sea: Islands and Archipelagos," 27-28.

Annex 528

Thomas Suárez, *Early Mapping of Southeast Asia: The Epic Story of Seafarers, Adventurers, and Cartographers Who First Mapped the Regions Between China and India* (1999)

Early Mapping of Southeast Asia

The Epic Story of Seafarers, Adventurers, and Cartographers
Who First Mapped the Regions between China and India

THOMAS SUÁREZ

INSULAE IAVAE PARS OCCIDENTALIS EDENTE HADRIANO RELANDO

Opening end paper: Gulf of Siam and Indian Ocean, from the *Traiphum*, late eighteenth century. The peninsula in the nine o'clock position is Phatthalung, in southern Thailand; the chain of islands along the bottom is Rama's Bridge leading to Sri Lanka.

Closing end paper: Southeast Asia, from the atlas of the twelfth century Sicilian geographer, Sharif al-Idrisi. A copy of 1553; south is at the top. [Courtesy of the Bodleian Library, Oxford]

Half-title page: Southeast Asia by Pierre Mortier, ca. 1700.

Chapter 3

Asian Maps
of Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia had a place in much of the literature and cosmography of her continental neighbors. Some of these references were direct cartographic records, while others were cosmographic concepts in which Southeast Asia played a significant role. Most often, however, Southeast Asia is found in textual entries. These include literary allusions, and the substantive content of travel records, as well as the itineraries of the pilots who sailed to the 'lands below the winds' or the 'southern ocean'.

Arab and Indian pilots relied on itineraries and sailing directions rather than charts. Although Marco Polo and other early European travelers in the Indian Ocean mentioned their pilots' 'charts', no such Arab or Indian navigational maps of the region are known. Detailed lists of places, latitudes, and relative compass bearings contained in some Arab navigational texts could in theory be used to construct maritime maps of the seas and oceans, but there is no firm evidence to suggest that any such charts were ever employed.

Marco Polo, making the trek westward across the Indian Ocean in the latter part of the thirteenth century, twice mentioned seeing maps. Once, in an apparent reference to sea charts and pilots' books used by his vessel's pilots, Polo stated that "it is a fact that in this sea of India there are 12,700 Islands, inhabited and uninhabited, according to the charts and documents of experienced mariners who navigate that Indian Sea."

Polo's other testimony to his Indian Ocean pilots' use of maps is especially important, because in it he unknowingly left us one detail which corroborates his story. He explains that although Ceylon has a circumference of

> 2,400 miles . . . in old times it was greater still, for it then
> had a circuit of about 3,600 miles, as you find in the
> charts of the mariners of those seas.

Polo's explanation of the size accorded Ceylon on the chart was that the chart's geography originated at an earlier time before much of the island had been submerged. In fact, what this passage indicates is that the chart followed the Ptolemaic model with its characteristic reversal of the relative proportions of Ceylon and India. Yet Ptolemy's *Geographia*, and maps constructed from it, were virtually unknown in Europe at this time, even among academics, and remained so until a century after Polo's return. Thus Polo clearly did not fabricate this key Ptolemaic error, which he himself did not understand. Ptolemy's

Geographia was, however, known to Arab scholars, and had profoundly influenced the Arab conception of Southeast Asia. But the fact that the map seen by Polo retained such an incorrect dimension for Ceylon supports the view that native pilots guided their vessels by navigational texts, and did not refer to the charts themselves.

Another important European witness to south Asian sailing was Nicolò de' Conti. In the first half of the fifteenth century, Conti mentioned that Arab and Indian sailors steered their vessels for the most part by the stars of the southern hemisphere, and made a statement which has commonly been interpreted as meaning that they were not acquainted with the use of the compass. In fact, he merely said that they did not *rely* on the needle for navigation.[68]

At the very end of the fifteenth century, Vasco da Gama was purportedly shown a chart of India by a 'Moor of Guzarat', just before his crossing of the Arabian Sea, but this is only mentioned retrospectively by João de Barros in the 1540s, and is not reported in earlier accounts of the voyage. Barros wrote that this chart was "of all the coast of India, with the bearings laid down after the manner of the Moors, which was with meridians and parallels." This is reminiscent of Ludovico di Varthema's claim that his Southeast Asian (presumably Malay) pilot consulted a chart marked with coordinates (1505). Barros described the map seen by da Gama as containing "bearings of north and south, and east and west, with great certainty, without that multiplication of bearings of the points of the compass" which typified Portuguese charts.

India

India's record of Southeast Asia is an enigma. Despite the profound influence of Indian civilization on much of Southeast Asia, there remains hardly any trace of Indian voyages to the east. No Indian maps of Southeast Asia whatsoever are known, nor geographic treatises detailing the itineraries and commerce of Indian sailors and traders. How is the contradiction between the undeniably extensive Indian presence in Southeast Asia and the utter void in cartographic and historical evidence reconciled?

India never 'colonized' Southeast Asia. Contact was not organized on any large scale, nor did Indian culture have the sense of posterity which led the Chinese to keep meticulous records of

the world as they knew it. With the exception of military expeditions sent by the Chola emperors to Malaya and Sumatra in the eleventh century, India did not undertake a conquest of Southeast Asia. Rather, Indian influence was probably the result of successive individual initiatives as merchants sailed east to find their fortunes among the fabled isles of gold. No doubt many perished, but others established themselves in coastal communities where they married the daughters of local chiefs and assumed some degree of influence. These same local rulers, noting the legitimacy to a king's power afforded by Indian religion and political thought, were receptive to adapting the foreign ideas for their own ends, and similarities between indigenous and Indian traditions made this assimilation all the more natural and fluid. Indians who became respected citizens on Southeast Asian soil eventually returned to their homeland, where others in their family or village, on hearing their story, elected to join them when next they ventured east.

Although the sort of small-scale peregrinations which seem to have characterized Indian contact with Southeast Asia did not leave any formal histories or maps, what they did foster were references to Southeast Asia in Indian literature. Early traces are found in India's *Jataka* fables of popular Buddhist lore, which originated well over two thousand years ago but assimilated stories about Southeast Asia as Indians returned and shared their adventures. These tales became associated with Mahayana Buddhism and its affinity for common folk, for trade, and in turn, travel.

Some of the legends describe Indian merchants who sailed to Southeast Asia on trading expeditions. We hear, for example, of a Prince Mahajanaka, who joined a group of merchants bound for *Suvarnabhumi,* the Land of Gold, representing either Sumatra or Southeast Asia as a whole. Similarly, in the tale of *Kathasaritsagara,* a Princess Gunavati, while *en route* to India from *Kataha* (possibly Kedah, Sumatra), is shipwrecked on the coast of *Suvarnadvipa* (Golden Island or Golden Peninsula). Clear references to Southeast Asia are also found in the *Ramayana,* the classic epic poem about the abduction of Rama's wife by the king of Ceylon and Rama's attempts to rescue her. These stories record seven kingdoms on the 'Gold and Silver Islands' beyond Ceylon.

China

Chinese cartography, which dates back to ancient times, influenced Vietnamese mapmaking, but was not a major cartographic influence in the rest of Southeast Asia (and the West, in turn, was not as much of an influence on Chinese mapmaking as once was assumed).[69]

In China, as in Southeast Asia, the earth was generally believed to be flat. Chinese cosmography, however, held that the flat earth was not level. The plane of the earth was believed to be tilted, that is to say, inclined to the mountainous northwest and falling away to the southeast. The incline made the waters of the earth flow via rivers 'downward' from northwest China, emptying into the ocean sea, which itself leaned to the south and east. Southeast Asia figured importantly in this tilted flat earth concept, since it was in the 'low' southeast corner of the earth, the vast sea world of Austronesia, that all the earth's waters ultimately accumulated. Chinese seafarers, heading south to the lands of the 'barbarians', may thus have envisioned their course as literally 'down'. Mendes Pinto, exploring Southeast Asia and China in the mid-sixteenth century, noted that Sumatra, Makassar, and the other Indonesian islands are "referred to as 'the outer edge of the world' in the geographical works of the Chinese, Siamese, *Gueos* [a purported Southeast Asian nation of cannibals] and Ryukyu [the chain which includes Okinawa]."

Yet the idea of a spherical earth, literally and poetically, co-existed along side this scheme of things. At least as far back as the second century B.C., Chinese astronomers had written about the sphericity of the earth.[70] Taoist cosmography, philosophically describing a spherical earth, held that heaven, after which man was modeled, 'revolved' from left to right, while earth, after which woman was conceived, did so from right to left.[71] The traditional concept of *yin* and *yang* was also applied to the Chinese world concept. *Yin,* the passive power, was associated with the colder north, while the active power, *yang,* was associated with the hotter climes of southern China and the southern realms of Southeast Asia.

In Taoist creation myths, the emperor of the South Sea (that is, Southeast Asia) was *Shu* (Brief). *Shu* periodically visited the central region, *Hun-tun,* which was conceived as a cosmic egg or gourd, where he met with *Hu* (Sudden), the emperor of the North Sea.[72] Interestingly, the analogy of an egg yoke for the earth floating in the heavens was used both in ancient China and ancient Greece.

China and Southeast Asian Trade
Chinese awareness of India, of the Roman Empire, and of the possibilities of trade with both, was heightened in the latter part of the second century B.C. (Han Dynasty) as a result of the adventures of an explorer/diplomat by the name of Chang Ch'ien. Chang made two expeditions, the first in 128 B.C. to Central Asia, during which he was taken prisoner for a decade by the Hsiung Nu (Huns) in the Altai Mountains, and again in 115 B.C. to western China. On his first expedition he found cloth and bamboo in Bactria and Fergana (north of modern Afghanistan), which in turn had been acquired from India, but which Chang recognized as being ultimately of southern Chinese origin. This was to prove eventful for both China and Southeast Asia, since it opened China's eyes to the possibilities of more direct trade with lands to the west, and it set the stage for the role that Southeast Asia would play as a facilitator of this trade. On the second expedition, Chang had his envoys continue further west, bringing gold and silks to Persia and the eastern periphery of the Greco-Roman world. Chang's endeavors led to the birth of the Silk Road along whose length there subsequently flowed not only trade but also an improved knowledge of the world. The latter was shared between Rome and China, and the lands that bordered the route; China learned of Burma and other neighbors in Southeast Asia.

The Southeast Asian mainland, however, was not itself an important destination for the earliest Chinese traders. What little it offered them in terms of indigenous resources could be obtained in ample quantities from sources farther north. It was, rather, itineraries to the west that first lured Chinese seafarers into the Indian Ocean. Thus for early Chinese sailors, Southeast Asia was an impediment as well as a destination, in the same manner that America was initially seen as an obstacle to Europeans sailing west in quest of Asia. Similarly, both the Europeans in America and the Chinese in Southeast Asia sought short-cuts across isthmuses. Many Chinese and Indian traders may have opted to cross the northern neck of the Malay Peninsula at the Isthmus of Kra rather than undertake the arduous voyage around the peninsula and through the Malacca Strait, just as European sailors experimented with crossing Central America at Darien to avoid the lengthy route around South America and through the Magellan Strait. Yet another parallel can be found between the Gulf of Siam and the vast mouth of the Rio de la Plata in Brazil; both must surely have tricked pilots into believing that they had reached the end of the continental obstruction, only for them subsequently to discover that they still had the full Malay Peninsula and the whole of South America, respectively, to round.

Fig. 22 *Traiphum,* 1776 (anonymous).
(Section illustrated measures 51.8 x 138 cm) [With permission of the Staatliche
Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz Museum für Indische Kunst]

The fragmentation of the celestial kingdom resulting from the
fall of the Han dynasty between 190 - 225 A.D., expedited the
beginning of Chinese intercourse with Southeast Asia. As a result
of the dynasty's demise, most of the territory south of the Yangtze
River became part of the kingdom of Wu which, though isolated
from countries to the west, controlled the long southern Chinese
coastline and thus was in an ideal position to trade with Southeast
Asia. In order to exploit this window of opportunity looking on
to the countries that lay to the south, an embassy was dispatched,
in the third century A.D., to southern Indochina under the guidance
of K'ang-T'ai, a senior secretary, and Chu-Ying, who was in charge of
cultural relations. Although the original accounts of this enterprise
are lost, much of their content has been passed on to us by way of
the many later Chinese documents that quote directly from them.
These extracts are often confusing and have probably been
corrupted by copyists, but nonetheless they constitute much of
what is known about Southeast Asia at the time of the early
Christian period, and they have provided us with the only clear
record of the kingdom of Funan.

Chinese maritime contact with Southeast Asia probably began
over two thousand years ago. According to the *Han Shu* (*History of
the Han Dynasty*), Chinese vessels were visiting Sumatra, Burma,
Ceylon, and southeastern India during the Western Han Dynasty
(206 B.C. - 8 A.D.).[73] The scholar and official, Jia Dan (730-805),
described the sea route from Canton (Guangzhou) to Baghdad, via
Singapore and the Malacca Straits, the Nicobar Islands and the
Indian Ocean, Ceylon and India, and finally the Arabian Sea and
the Euphrates, at which point the journey was completed by land.

Chinese vessels began regularly to make the round trip to
Southeast Asia in the eleventh century, during the Song Dynasty.[74]
Although the Song era is remembered as being primarily a period
of intellectual strength, and a time when advances were made in
printing techniques, it was also one in which curiosity about the
outside world was not deemed respectable. Confucian philosophers,
in particular, sought to discredit both the accuracy and the merit of
knowledge about distant realms.

Some Song government bureaucrats did, however, chronicle the
reports they heard about the lands to the south and two texts have
survived with details pertaining to Southeast Asia. One was written
in 1178 by Chou Ch'ü-fei, an official of the maritime province of
Kuang-hsi, the second a half century later, in 1226, by Chao Ju-
kua, the Commissioner of Foreign Trade at Ch'üan-chou (coastal
province of Fukien). Chou Ch'ü-fei explained that

The great Encircling Ocean bounds the barbarian
countries [Southeast Asia]. In every quarter they have their
kingdoms, each with its peculiar products, each with its
emporium on which the prosperity of the state depends.
The kingdoms situated directly south [of China] have [the
Sumatran maritime state of Srivijaya] as their emporium;
those to the south-east [of China] have *She-p'o* [Java].[75]

Referring to Indochina, Chou states that although

it is impossible to enumerate the countries of the South-
Western Ocean . . . we have to the south [of *Chiao-chih* =
Tongkin] *Chan-ch'eng* [Annam], *Chen-la* [Cambodia],
and *Fo-lo-an* [?].
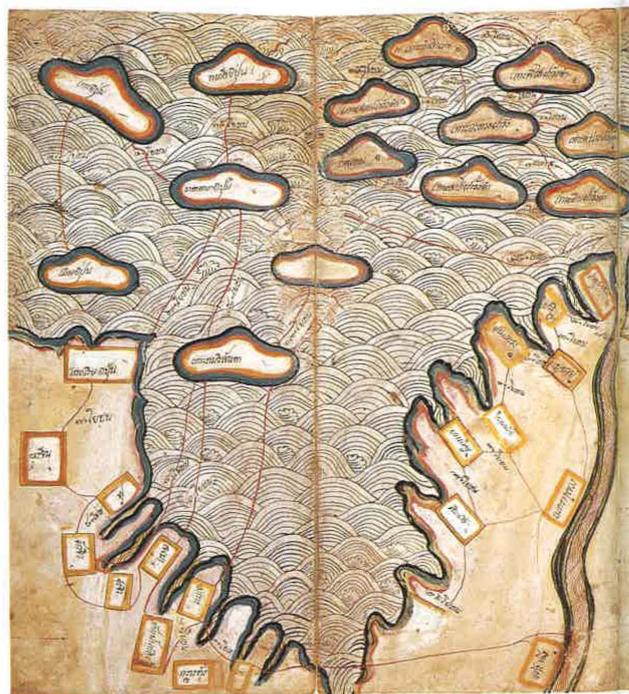
To the west of Cambodia (in present-day Thailand?) lies

the country of Teng-liu-mei. Its ruler wears flowers in his
hair, which is gathered into a knot. Over his shoulders he
wears a red garment covered with white. On audience
days he ascends an open dais, since the country is wholly
without palace buildings of any kind. Palm leaves are used
as dishes in eating and drinking; spoons nor chopsticks are
used in eating which is done with the fingers.

Another kingdom is *Tan-ma-ling,* probably in the region of
Ligor. Around the city of *Tan-ma-ling*

there is a wooden palisade six or seven feet thick and over
twenty feet high, which can be used as a platform for
fighting. The people of Tan-ma-ling ride buffaloes, knot
their hair behind and go barefoot. For their houses,
officials use wood while the common people build
bamboo huts with leaf partitions and rattan bindings.

Among the products of *Tan-ma-ling* are bee's wax, various
woods including ebony, camphor, ivory, and rhinoceros horn.

Langkasuka

Six days and six nights' sail from *Tan-ma-ling* is *Langkasuka,* one of
the most enduring names of early Southeast Asia. *Langkasuka* was
centered in the vicinity of Patani, on the east coast of the Malay
Peninsula, and is amply recorded in Chinese, Arabic, and Javanese
history (fig 121). Probably founded in about the second century,
Langkasuka experienced the eclipses and renaissances of any long-
lived state; it still appeared on a Chinese map compiled from early
fifteenth century data known as the *Wubei zhi* chart (fig. 23), but
seems to have disappeared just before Portuguese familiarity with
Malaya began in the early sixteenth century. So prevalent is the

kingdom in early annals that its name was considered for that of independent Malaysia after the Second World War.

Chinese records of *Langkasuka* date back as early as the seventh century. It is described as a kingdom in the Southern Sea, covering an area thirty days' journey east-to-west, and twenty north-to-south, lying 24,000 *li* from Canton. Its climate and products are similar to those of Funan. The capital

> is surrounded by walls to form a city with double gates, towers and pavilions. When the king goes forth he rides upon an elephant. He is accompanied by banners, fly-whisks, flags and drums and he is shaded with a white parasol. It is customary for men and women to go with the upper part of the body naked, with their hair hanging dishevelled down their backs, and wearing a cotton sarong.

Langkasuka was also mentioned by Chinese monks making the pilgrimage to India. I-Ching records one such visit in the late seventh century, and was clearly impressed by the warm hospitality of the inhabitants of *Langkasuka*. On one voyage, three pilgrims "let hang the mooring ropes" from their port on the Gulf of Tongkin

> and weathered innumerable billows. In their ship they passed *Chen-la* ['Funan' in the text] and anchored at Langkasuka, [where] the king [bestowed] the courtesy appropriate to distinguished guests.

Another Buddhist pilgrim *en route* to *Langkasuka*

> buffeted through the southern wastes in an ocean-going junk, [passing] *Ho-ling* [Java] and traversed the Naked Country [Nicobars]. The kings of those countries where he stayed showed him exceeding courtesy and treated him with great generosity[76]

The Islands

Chou Ch'ü-fei wrote that "to the south of [Srivijaya, i.e., Sumatra] is the great Southern Ocean, in which are islands inhabited by a myriad and more of peoples." Then the concept of a flat earth comes into play, so that "beyond these one can go no further south." The Chinese belief that the flat world is angled becomes especially important to the east of Java, for here "is the great Eastern Ocean where the water begins to go downward."

Chou Ch'ü-fei described the relative importance of these trading itineraries to the south: "of all the wealthy foreign lands which have great store of precious and varied goods, none surpasses the realm of *Ta-shih* (Arabia)." He believed that trade with Java *(She-p'o)* was second in importance, and Sumatra *(San-fo-ch'I)* ranked third. Sumatra, however, because of its position, "is an important thoroughfare on the sea-routes of the foreigners on their way to and from [China]."

Chao Ju-kua also recorded an active role for the Sumatran intermediaries in trade via Southeast Asia, noting that "because the country [Sumatra] is an important thoroughfare for the traffic of foreign nations, the produce of all other countries is intercepted and kept in store there for the trade of foreign ships." He compiled information about twenty-eight countries from discussions with both Chinese and foreign sailors and his book, entitled *Chu-fan-chih* (*Description of the Barbarians*), records information about various countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and as far west as Africa and even the Mediterranean. Although the reports from his first-hand interviews form the principal value of the work, it is supplemented with information from older records.

From Chao Ju-kua we also learn a curious lesson about how Southeast Asian nomenclature could be deliberately manipulated. The Chinese appetite for Javanese pepper was such that the Chinese court, alarmed about the considerable exodus of copper

48   Early Mapping of Southeast Asia
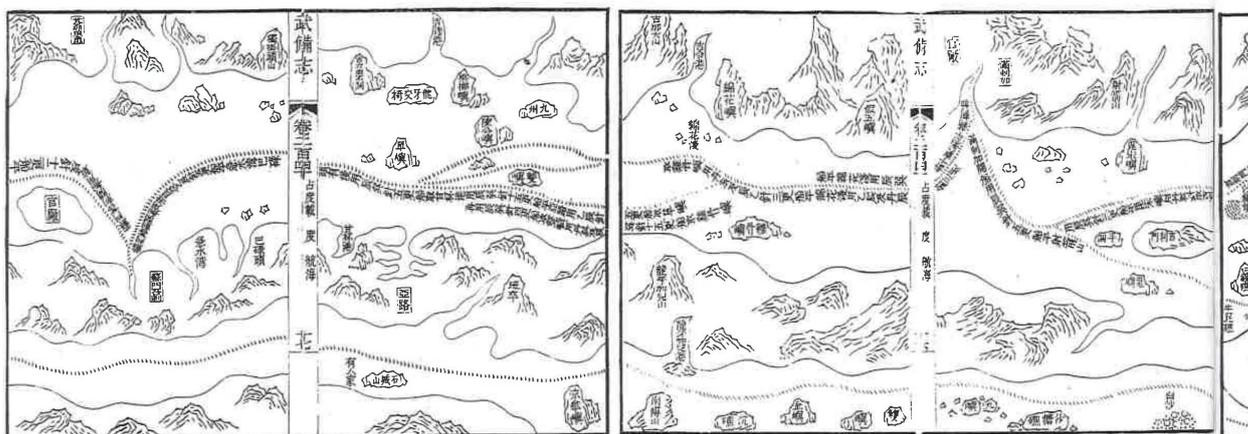
Fig. 23 The section of the *Wubei zhi* Chart covering Southeast Asia, 1621. [Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., E701.M32.1]

coinage to Java to pay for it, banned trade with the island. The Javanese traders, in order to circumvent the trade ban, simply re-named their island; the Chinese traders were now buying their pepper from a land called *Sukadana (Su-ki-tan).*[77]

Religion was another reason for Chinese incursions into the Indian Ocean, and another reason why Southeast Asia benefited from being on the crossroads between two great civilizations. By the first century A.D. Buddhism had reached China, and by the third century it was established along the delta of the Red River in Vietnam. Soon, some of its more devoted adherents began to undertake pilgrimages to their Holy Land, India. Monks traveled to India by both a land route through Burma and the sea route via the Malacca Strait. The earliest surviving record left by such a pilgrim is that of Shih Fa-Hsien, who, inspired to make an accurate Chinese transcription of Buddhist texts from the original Sanskrit, traveled overland from China to India in 399 A.D., returning by sea in 413-14. On the way back home to China from Ceylon, Fa-Hsien's ship went aground off the coast of Java, and he was lost at sea for seventy days before finally reaching China. This is the earliest record of a return to China from southern Asia via the maritime route.

As a result of this sea route, Buddhism was well established in Sumatra by the seventh century. I-Ching, who was in India and the southern seas between 671-695 and compiled records of sixty pilgrims' journeys to India, mentioned a multi-national community of a thousand monks (Mahayana Buddhist) in the Sumatran state of Srivijaya in 671.

### China and the Philippines

Chinese commercial interest in the Philippines dates back at least to A.D. 982, when an Arab ship carrying goods from Mindoro is recorded as having reached Canton.[78] Direct Chinese trade with islands to the east began by the twelfth century. In 1127 A.D., the Song rulers were forced south of the Yangtze River, and a southern capital was established at Hangzhou, from whence ceramics and other commodities were exported to the Philippines. Chinese sailors became increasingly familiar with northern Borneo and the Philippines, and trade links were established as far afield as the Spice Islands which were reached via the Sulu Sea. These trading networks probably elevated Filipino knowledge of their islands as

well, since they precipitated an elaborate system of trading centers to gather the forest goods sought by the Chinese and to distribute the wares acquired from them. In 1226, Chao Ju-kua referred to the Philippines by the general term *Ma-yi,* and to the Visayan islands as *San-hsü* (three islands). He also used the term *Lin-hsing,* which probably referred to Luzon. Interest in Philippine commodities is evidenced by a Chinese writer in 1349, who noted that "Sulu pearls are whiter and rounder than those of India," and that they commanded a high price.[79] Embassies from Luzon were sent to China in 1372 and 1408, bringing such gifts as "small but strong" horses, and returning with Chinese silk, porcelain, and other goods. Chinese trade with the Philippines was evident to the earliest Europeans to reach the islands; the lords of Cebu had Ming porcelain when Magellan reached there in 1521.

Although Chinese interest in Southeast Asia was traditionally commercial, the Philippines were briefly the target of an emperor's conquest. In about 1405-1410 Yung Lo, second Ming emperor, sent an imposing fleet under Zheng He (Cheng Ho) in a bid to establish a foothold in the Philippines. He was unsuccessful.

Zheng He

Zheng He, however, had considerable success in opening China up to much of southern Asia and parts of eastern Africa. In the years between 1405 and 1433 — ironically, the very period that Portugal was beginning to flex its muscles and push ever further around Africa — this Chinese navigator, who became known as the 'three-jewel eunuch', led seven expeditions to the southern seas, following the Southeast Asian coast into the Indian Ocean and along the eastern shores of Africa, possibly reaching as far as Kerguelen Island in the southern Indian Ocean. The scale of these undertakings was fantastic. The first expedition purportedly boasted 62 large vessels, 225 smaller ones and a crew in excess of 27,000 men; it touched on the shores of Sumatra on the outward voyage, and Siam and Java on the return. By the seventh voyage, Zheng He had won China commercial and diplomatic ties with 35 countries in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and eastern Africa. Fra Mauro, on his world map of 1459, records Chinese naval junks off the east coast of Africa — probably those of Zheng He — which came from Arabic sources.

A chart based on Zheng He's voyages (fig. 23) is found in a printed work entitled *Wubei zhi* (*Treatise on Military Preparations*)
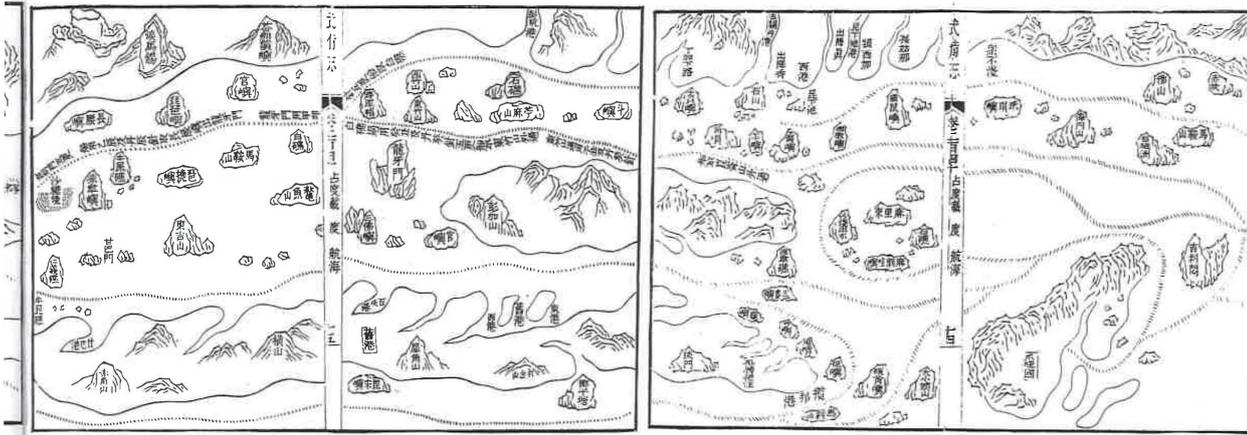
completed by Mao Yuanji about 1621 (the date of the book's preface), and presented to the throne in 1628. Mao does not name the source of the map, but there is little question that it is based extensively on Zheng's voyages. "His maps," Mao states, "record carefully and correctly the distances of the road and the various countries and I have inserted them for the information of posterity and as a momento of [his] military achievements."[80] We know from the text of the *Treatise* that maps and information were collected before each of Zheng's voyages, and that charts were compared and corrected for compass bearings and guiding stars, with copies made of drawings of the configuration of islands, water bodies, and the land.[81] The map, as it has survived, however, appears to have been constructed in part from textual sources.

Originally, the *Wubei zhi* chart was probably a long, single piece, stored as a scroll, though for the book it was divided into a series of strips. One consequence of the strip format (whether in scroll or segmented) is that orientation is not consistent. In addition, scale is stretched and compressed according to the amount of detail included in a particular section. The cluttered and dangerous coastal area of Singapore, for example, is drawn on a scale more than three times larger than that of the east coast of Malaya and two-and-a-half that of the west coast.[82]

The map included sailing instructions that modern scholars have found to be fairly accurate.[83] Sailing the Malacca and Singapore Straits from west to east, the pilot guide states that (using modern compass bearings)

> having made the Aroa Islands, setting a course of 120° and then of 110°, after 3 watches the ship is abreast of [South Sands]. Setting a course of 115° and then 120° for 3 watches the ship comes abreast of [Cotton Island]. After 10 watches on a course of 130° the ship is abreast of [Malacca]. Setting sail from Malacca on a course of 130°, after 5 watches the ship is abreast of [Gunong Banang]; after 3 watches on a course of 130° the ship is abreast of [Pulau Pisang] . . .[84]

From Pulau Pisang, a course of 135° brings them to Karimun, and from there, 5 watches of 115° and then 120° and the ship makes Blakang Mati, passing out through Dragon-Teeth Strait. With 5 watches at 85°, the vessel then reaches Pedra Branca (Pulau Batu

Puteh), and after passing Pedra Branca, sets a course of 25° and then 15° for 5 watches, which brings the ship abreast of 'East Bamboo Mountain', one of the two peaks of Pulau Aur. Finally, setting a course of 350° and then 15°, the ship passes outside of Pulau Condor.

The budding commercial empire pioneered by Zheng He was short-lived. After the death in 1424 of the emperor who sponsored him, Yung-lo, and the death of Zheng He himself a decade later, Chinese authorities rejected any further forays in the southern seas. Commerce in the Indian Ocean trade was once again relinquished to networks of Muslim and Southeast Asian traders on the eve of the Portuguese penetration of eastern waters.

Japan and Korea

Although Japanese vessels were plying Southeast Asian seas from about the turn of the fifteenth century, no Japanese charts are known prior to the arrival of a substantive European presence in the region. Japanese traders were already well familiar with the South China Sea when Europeans first appeared in those waters, and are mentioned, for example, by Spanish sailors reaching the northern Philippine islands of Luzon and Mindoro in the 1560s, yet Japanese mapmaking of Southeast Asian waters is not known until after Europeans introduced their chartmaking techniques into Japan in the latter sixteenth century. These charts of maritime Southeast Asia were known as *nankai karuta* (south-sea charts), as differentiated from charts of their own coasts, *nihon karuta*.

'India' appears in early symbolic Japanese and Korean maps of the world which were inspired by Buddhist pilgrimages to holy sites in the land where Buddha was born. One such world view which may have had a place in China, Japan, and Korea was the so-called Buddhist world map, or *Gotenjiku* ('Five Indias'). Inspired by the travels of a Chinese monk in the Tang Dynasty, named Xuanzhuang (602-64), the world is depicted here in the shape of an egg, with north, the larger end of the egg, uppermost. As in many other world views which have their origins in Buddhist and Hindu cosmologies, Mount Sumeru lies at the center. Southeast Asia is not recorded on this map as such; a 'Mt. Malaya' in the south is another mythical mountain on whose summit sits the 'Castle of *Lanka*'.

Chapter 11

Giacomo Gastaldi's Three Models 1548 – 1565

Italy, though not the sponsor of ocean voyages to Southeast Asia, was a major cartographic 'think-tank' for digesting and sorting out the data that those expeditions brought back. During the late fifteenth and much of the sixteenth century, Italy was a pioneer in printed maps, both loose-sheet and in books. Italy's theoreticians secured geographic data from primary sources and molded it into a coherent whole.

The name of Giacomo Gastaldi dominates the cartography of Southeast Asia on printed maps throughout the middle decades of the sixteenth century. A native of Piedmont, Gastaldi was a brilliant cosmographer and engineer who was active in Venetian affairs, and was largely responsible for the flourishing of geographic disciplines in Venice during this era. He composed three fine maps of Southeast Asia, each of which provided the best and most inspired published rendering of the region in its day. The first was published as part of his edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia* in 1548, the second in 1554 as part of a collection of voyages by Ramusio, and the third was a separately published map of Asia of 1561, to which a supplemental sheet was added in 1565, thus extending the map's reach to south of the equator.

The Three Types and Their Sources

1548 *India Tercera Nova Tabula*

Although the maps in Gastaldi's issue of Ptolemy's *Geographia* are relatively small, they were handsomely engraved on copper, allowing more detail and clarity than their woodcut predecessors. The medium of copperplate had been virtually abandoned by mapmakers for four decades, since the 1507-08 Rome edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*.[197] Gastaldi retains Ptolemy's full complement of maps, including the Ptolemaic rendering of Southeast Asia, which by this time was of no merit except as a testimonial to the reverence in which classical writings were still held. He adds, however, a fine new map of the Southeast Asian mainland and islands, entitled *India Tercera Nova Tabula,* as it was the third of his atlas' 'new' maps (fig. 73). It was extracted from a world map Gastaldi had made in 1546, and was a major contribution to the mapping of the region. Although this map was published in only

one issue in its original form, it was copied by other mapmakers and via such copies, it outlived its relevancy even longer than the map by Münster. In 1561, the map was re-engraved, roughly twice the size, for a new edition of Ptolemy by Girolamo Ruscelli, in which form it was re-published several times up until 1599. It was also re-engraved in a smaller format for the *isolario* of Tomaso Porcacchi, which was published in several editions from 1572 through to 1686.

1554 Ramusio *Terza Tavola*

Gastaldi's next landmark in Southeast Asian cartography appeared six years later, in 1554, in the second edition of Volume 1 of G. B. Ramusio's *Delle navigationi et viaggi*. The map is untitled except for being designated the 'third map' *(Terza Tavola)* in the book. Geographically, it is utterly unrelated to the *India Tercera Nova Tabula* of 1548.

The Ramusio map was first printed from a woodblock but that block, along with those for all the other maps from the *Navigationi* except for one of the Nile, was destroyed by a fire in the printing establishment of Tomaso Guinti in November of 1557. Curiously, while the woodblocks from the third volume of the *Navigationi* (covering America, plus one of Sumatra) were replaced by new, slightly rougher woodblocks, those for the first volume (including the present map) were replaced by more costly copperplate versions (fig. 74), which were first used in the third issue of volume 1 (1563). This volume was last reprinted in 1613.

Separately-published Maps and Made-to-order Atlases

Unlike the 1548 Gastaldi map, the 1554 Ramusio map was not copied by other atlas makers. However, a loose-sheet knock-off of it was published by Bertelli in 1564. Loose-sheet maps (sold as separate, unbound sheets) rarely survived the centuries unless the purchaser opted to have a selection of them bound as a made-to-order atlas. This practice anticipated the formal 'atlas' genre (which began with the 1570 *Theatrum* of Abraham Ortelius) and vastly increased the chance of a loose-sheet map's survival to our day. Such made-up atlases, often called 'Lafreri' atlases after Antonio Lafreri, their greatest proponent, were of 'modern' maps, which no longer relied on Ptolemaic geography or used classical texts as a vehicle.

They differ from the modern connotation of 'atlas' in that these early compilations were neither uniformly sized nor their contents methodically conceived. The next map in the Gastaldi trio was one such separately-published work; it never appeared in a book, but has survived precisely because some map sellers' clients included it among the maps they asked to have bound into a made-up atlas.

The Separately Published 1561 'Lafreri' Map and its Southern Supplement

The publishing history of this last member of Gastaldi's trio is the most complex of the three. In 1559, Gastaldi began issuing a map of Asia in three parts, though only the westernmost section appeared in that year. Parts two and three, of which the latter covered eastern Asia, came in 1561. In its original form, the map extended only to the equator, so that most of the Indonesian islands were not included. To remedy this, in about 1565, two narrow sheets were made by the great Italian engraver Paolo Forlani to supplement the main body of Gastaldi's map. These new sheets, which covered the region to about 17^1/2° south latitude, were probably added to shop copies of the map, and occasionally purchased as a supplement by people who already owned the main Gastaldi map but wished to have the full repertoire of Southeast Asian islands. This lower addition bears an inscription in the lower left corner which reads *'si vende alla libraria di San Marco in Venetia'* (this is sold in the book shop of San Marco in Venice), indicating the location of the shop of the publisher Bertelli. The Gastaldi/Forlani map was also re-engraved by Girolamo Olgiato, in which form all of Southeast Asia falls on a single sheet (fig. 75).

Gastaldi's Sources

All three maps tap the Magellan voyage for their mappings of the Philippines and other Southeast Asian islands, and reflect the marked variations in the printed accounts of the voyage, with differences in nomenclature, and even in itinerary. The second (Ramusio, 1554) and third (Gastaldi/Forlani, 1561/1565) maps are geographically related to each other, while the first (Gastaldi, 1548) stands alone.

The 1548 map from the *Geografia* relies far more heavily on data from the Magellan voyage than either the 1554 or 1561 maps, particularly in relation to the Philippines. But it also records certain features — notably, a remarkably accurate depiction of Palawan and a 'Gunung Api' (a small volcanic island) — which cannot be attributed to Magellan's discoveries and suggest that Gastaldi had access to advanced Portuguese sources.

The 1554 map from Ramusio's *Navigationi* benefited from several new sources of data which were not available in 1548. On the mainland, this results in an enormous advance over the 1548 map, while Ramusio's mapping of the island world is far more comprehensive, though not always better, than the 1548 map. Ramusio states in the preface to the *Navigationi* that the coasts of the 1554 map "are drawn according to the marine charts of the Portuguese, and the inland parts are added according to the descriptions contained in the first volume of this book."

Ramusio cites the history of Asia being compiled by João de Barros in Lisbon, the *Décadas da Ásia*. The second volume of this work, detailing Portuguese maritime adventures in the East from 1505-1515, had been published in 1553, just before the appearance of Ramusio's map in the *Navigationi* (volume one, published in 1552, covered the period from Prince Henry to 1505, and would have had little or no effect on Ramusio's map). With Barros' data, Ramusio believed, "a part of modern geography will be clearly illustrated, and it will no longer be necessary to struggle with the geography of Ptolemy."

Comparison of nomenclature and geographic descriptions in the *Décadas* with the map suggests that Ramusio used the work, but did not rely on it. River names, and the configuration of Lake Chiang Mai (page 222, below), for example, correspond generally, but not in detail.

António de Abreu and Francisco Serrão, who pulled anchor at Malacca in December of 1511 and sailed toward the Spiceries under Malay pilots, should have provided the foundation of first-hand European mapping of Indonesia, coming a scant few years after Varthema's informal spree through the islands. But their jaunt had no discernable impact on maps because news of the voyage was suppressed by the Portuguese authorities, and by the time word of it reached geographers, more current information had already rendered their data irrelevant. However, Serrão was certainly influential on the course of events. He established himself in Ternate as a renegade facilitator of trade between the Spiceries and Malacca, and wrote letters to his close friend Magellan, firing the latter's determination to reach the Moluccas with idyllic descriptions of the islands and the inference that they lay so far east as to be more easily accessible by a voyage west, around the New World.

Among the other voyages from which the Gastaldi maps draw some data are those of Loaisa and Salazar (1526), and Saavedra (1527-29). Some of the data on the Ramusio and 1561 Gastaldi maps appears to have been gleaned from the important chronicle of the Indies by Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdés, the *Historia general y natural de las Indias, islas y tierra-firme del mar océano*. Although first published in Seville in 1535, the relevant parts didn't appear until Part II, published in 1548. Finally, the 1554 Ramusio and 1561 Gastaldi maps reflect knowledge of the account of a voyage from Mexico to the Philippines by Juan Gaytan (often known by the Italianicized *Gaetano,* as coined by Ramusio) and Ruy Lopez de Villalobos, which Ramusio himself was the first to publish, in the first volume of his *Navigationi* (1550).

'Taqwim Albudan'

There is an interesting myth regarding the sources of the 1561 map. According to the Flemish mapmaker Abraham Ortelius, a younger contemporary of Gastaldi, the latter had based his map on information he obtained from an Arab geographer named Taqwim Albudan. Ortelius would seem to have been in a position to know, since he corresponded with the French geographer and mathematician Guillaume Postel, who had purportedly brought this 'Taqwim Albudan' or at least his work to Europe. Ortelius reveals this information in a legend on his own separately-published map of Asia, 1567, which (as he acknowledges) was largely based on the Gastaldi map.

In fact, 'Taqwim Albudan' is an historical folly. It was not the name of an individual at all, but rather the title of a geographic lexicon, the *Taqwim Albudan,* which was written by an Arab geographer named Abu'l-Fida, who lived 1273-1331. This work, itself an undistinguished compilation of earlier material, would have been quite worthless to Gastaldi. Gastaldi's map is derived directly from Spanish and Portuguese exploration, and is vastly superior to Arab knowledge of the region, prior to the advent of a European presence in Southeast Asia.

Comparing the Gastaldi Maps

For clarity, henceforth the 1548 map which appeared in the *Geografia* will be referred to as the 'Gastaldi 1548' (fig. 71); the 1554 map from the *Navigationi* as the 'Ramusio' (fig. 72); and the separately-published map of the Asian continent as 'Gastaldi 1561' (fig. 73). When we sail south of the equator, we will actually be
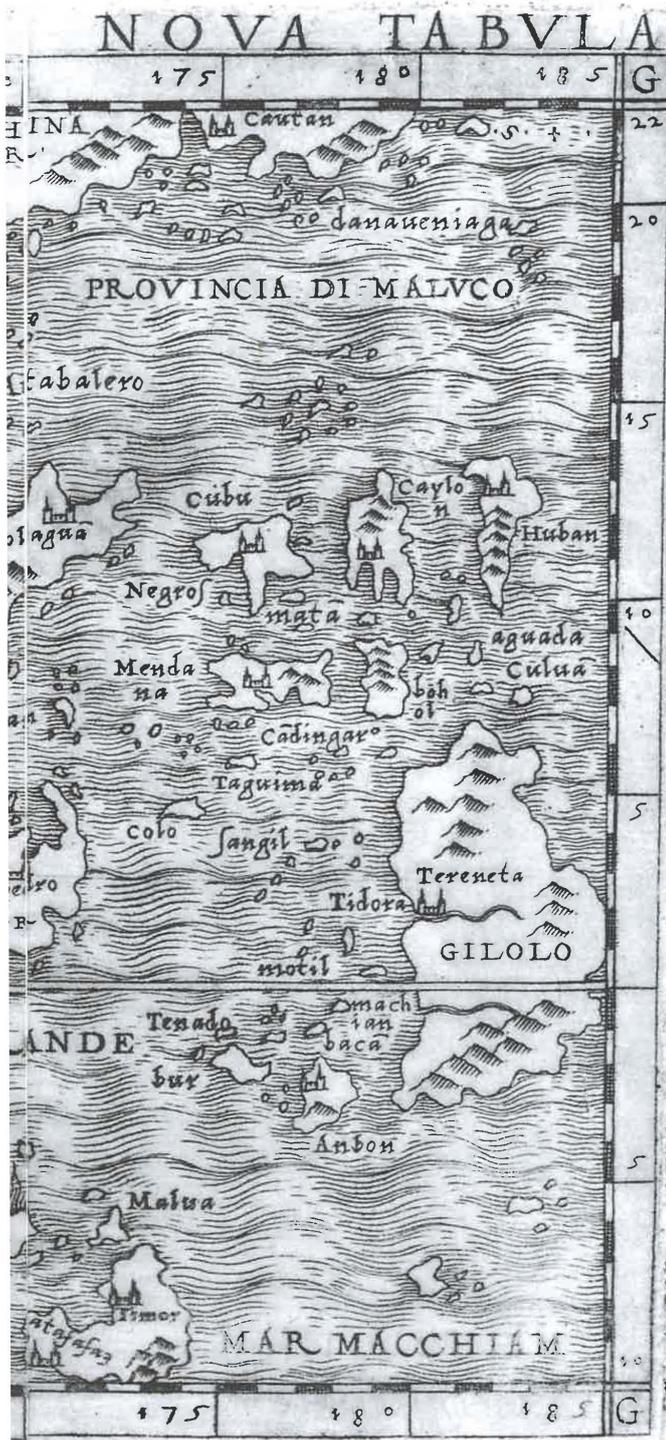
Fig. 73 Southeast Asia, Giacomo Gastaldi, 1548. (13 x 17 cm)

venturing onto the narrow southern supplementary sheet of ca. 1565, and so will refer to it as the 'Forlani', although the Olgiato version illustrated here makes the geography easier to follow by combining the main and supplemental maps into one. We will first look at these three maps' record of insular Southeast Asia together, and then peruse their depiction of the Southeast Asian mainland individually.[198]

Trying to reconstruct how Gastaldi compiled his data for Micronesia and the Philippines for this first crop of modern Southeast Asia maps is frustrating.[199] There are many ambiguities and discrepancies in the various published renderings of Pigafetta's text, and also in the account by Maximilian, so that even the most well-intentioned mapmaker attempting to extrapolate from accounts of the voyage must have often had to settle matters by simply following his nose. Further confounding the mapmaker's job (and our job as well) is the fact that the names of the islands represented, as transcribed by Pigafetta, Maximilian, and subsequent chroniclers, were transliterated and corrupted in various ways by copyists. Furthermore, many of the names, perhaps already similar sounding to European ears, were often confused with one another, or presumed to be others, or were otherwise transposed so that they blurred into each other. First-hand observers sometimes mistook part of an island to be a separate island altogether, while the mapmakers who plotted their data sometimes misconstrued distinct islands as different regions of a single island, or visa-versa. Finally, explorers who searched for specific islands discovered and named by their predecessors often reached different islands but erroneously deemed them to be the original landfall, and then mapped the new island under the original name.

To view the three Gastaldi maps, one must first erase from one's mind any image whatsoever of what the Philippine or Micronesian islands 'look' like; only then can one sympathize with the chaos of these Pacific incunabula. Whereas Sumatra and Java were already known for many years and provided some humble point of reference for east-bound pilots charting the Indonesian islands in their proximity, there was not as yet any such point of departure for mapping Micronesia or the Philippines.

Micronesia

Micronesia, the eastern periphery of Southeast Asia, is an important part of the Ramusio and 1561 Gastaldi maps, but does not appear at all on the Gastaldi of 1548. Gastaldi at that time did not yet have access to the important Micronesia data from post-Magellan voyages, and the 1548 work does not extend far enough east to include even the initial Magellan landfalls in Guam and Rota. Beginning with Ramusio, cartographers had the advantage of three new sources for Micronesia: Gonzalo Gómez de Espinosa, Alvaro de Saavedra, and Ruy López de Villalobos. Many of these early landfalls in Micronesia fell in the proper latitude band to be prominently recorded on de Jode's semi-cosmological cross-section of the earth (fig. 16).

Li Ladroni (the Marianas)
In 1521, after their torturous crossing of the Pacific, Magellan's fleet reached *Li Ladroni* (left border of the Ramusio), the 'thieves' islands, the appellation *ladroni* given by Magellan because of the islanders' supposed propensity for stealing. Pigafetta placed the islands at a latitude of 12° north. He described the Mariana islanders as an isolated people who live in freedom, accountable to no outsider (this in great contrast to Southeast Asia proper, where elaborate tribute systems existed). They traveled their own waters

Annex 529

Robert B. Marks, "Maritime Trade and the Agro-Ecology of South China, 1685-1850", in *Pacific Centuries: Pacific and Pacific Rim history since the sixteenth century* (D.O. Flynn, et al., eds., 1999)

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Lionel Frost and A.J.H. Latham*

ROUTLEDGE

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4

MARITIME TRADE AND THE AGRO-ECOLOGY OF SOUTH CHINA, 1685–1850

Robert B. Marks

Introduction

This chapter focuses on trade patterns in the South China Sea, what the Chinese called the Nanyang, from 1685 to 1850, and the impact that that commerce had upon agricultural land-use patterns in Guangdong province. I look first at the Chinese resurrection of the Nanyang trade after 1685, and then the creation of a domestic trade circuit of sugar and raw cotton that arose because of the Nanyang trade, before turning to a consideration of the nature and extent of European trade with China from about 1700 to 1850. What I argue is that long before European trade with China became significant for either Europeans or China, the Chinese already had established a thriving trade in the Nanyang; the size of Europe's trade with China, I estimate, only by the end of the eighteenth century reached the level of China's *c.* 1700 Nanyang trade, and the European trade reached that level only by tapping into the circuits of trade that satisfied China's domestic market demand. We already know that China in the eighteenth century was as commercialized as the most advanced parts of Europe (Marks 1991); what this chapter suggests is that, in addition, our views of the incorporation of China into the world economy need revision as well. Moreover, both the Nanyang and the European trade precipitated important changes in land use and cropping patterns, contributing to the linked processes of the commercialization of agriculture and ecological change in South China.

ROBERT B. MARKS

Background

The first 40 years of Manchu (Qing dynasty, 1644–1911) rule over South China, from the initial assertion of sovereignty in 1644 to the end of 1683, were difficult ones. The ravages of war, epidemic disease, and depopulation in the early years were followed first in the 1660s by the forcible relocation of the coastal population in an attempt to deprive the Ming loyalist Koxinga of his supply sources, and by what one historian (Kishimoto-Nakayama 1984) calls the "Kangxi depression," a reference to the depressed economic conditions attending the early years of the Kangxi emperor's reign (1661–1722). Only the defeat of Koxinga's successors in 1683 and the taking of their bases on Taiwan prompted the Kangxi emperor to consider reopening the China coast for trade.

The restoration of peaceful conditions in Guangdong provided one condition for the revival of the economy. And while peace itself may have removed obstacles to economic recovery, it did not itself stimulate growth. Yet, we know that by the eighteenth century, the economy of South China not only had revived, but that most of China too was about to experience one of the best economic climates ever. Moreover, the economic recovery was not gradual, but explosive. The cause, the evidence suggests, was a sudden, substantial increase in foreign and domestic seaborne trade beginning in 1684 and continuing, albeit with some important changes, right through to the middle of the nineteenth century, driving economic growth and the commercialization of agriculture. In brief, Chinese overseas and foreign trade after 1684 stimulated demand for raw cotton and silk, thereby prompting some peasant farmers to change their cropping patterns, growing non-food commercial crops instead of rice, which in turn led to the further commercialization of rice. By the end of the eighteenth century, the agricultural economy of South China had become thoroughly commercialized, with even peasant farmers in western-most Guangxi province affected by market demand centered on Guangzhou and the Pearl River delta (see Marks 1998: Ch. 8).

Chinese overseas trade

When we think about China's foreign trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the image that mostly comes to mind is that of European and American clippers arriving in China's ports and

86

then loading up with tea, silk, sugar, and porcelains bound for their home markets. While it is true that European and American trade became the largest part of China's foreign trade by the end of the eighteenth century, the largest number of merchants to take to the seas when the Kangxi emperor reopened the coast to trade in 1684–5 were Chinese, plying both the domestic coastal routes and conducting overseas trade with the many states of what the Chinese called the Nanyang, or the Southern Ocean.[1]

The Nanyang

Chinese merchants and other residents of Guangdong's coastal regions thought of the ocean to the south as being comprised of two parts: the Nan Hai, or South Sea, which was contiguous to the coast and blended with the inland waterways of the Pearl River delta; and the Nanyang, or Southern Ocean, which encompassed both mainland and insular Southeast Asia. The coastline of Guangdong province stretches for some 2,000 miles, and, because of the gradual subsidence of the land, is irregular and dotted with good harbors. Not all of the harbors are deep or sheltered, but there were sufficient places either on the coast or up the coastal rivers for the Kangxi emperor to authorize the establishment of 70 customs houses on the coast of Guangdong when he reopened the coast for trade and shipping.

Many of those customs houses were situated at what the Chinese called "portals onto the sea" (*hai men*), and, as Qu Dajun claimed around 1700, "the portals onto the Nan Hai are the most numerous [of any in China]." The central and largest portal, the Tiger's Mouth, or Bocca Tigris, as Europeans called it, straddled the Pearl River delta and controlled access to Guangzhou. Qu lists scores of other portals for the "eastern route," that is, up the coast from Xin'an (Hong Kong) to Denghai, and for the "western route," stretching from the Pearl River down the coast, including the Leizhou peninsula and Qinzhou (on the northern shores of the Gulf of Tonkin) (Qu 1974: 33).

Beyond the coastal waters of the Nan Hai lay the Southern Ocean, or Nanyang. As described by Cushman, the Nanyang

"should be conceived of as a circle encompassing the mainland Southeast Asian countries bordering the South China Sea [the Nan Hai] and the Gulf of Siam, i.e. Vietnam, Cambodia and Siam, southern Burma, the

ROBERT B. MARKS
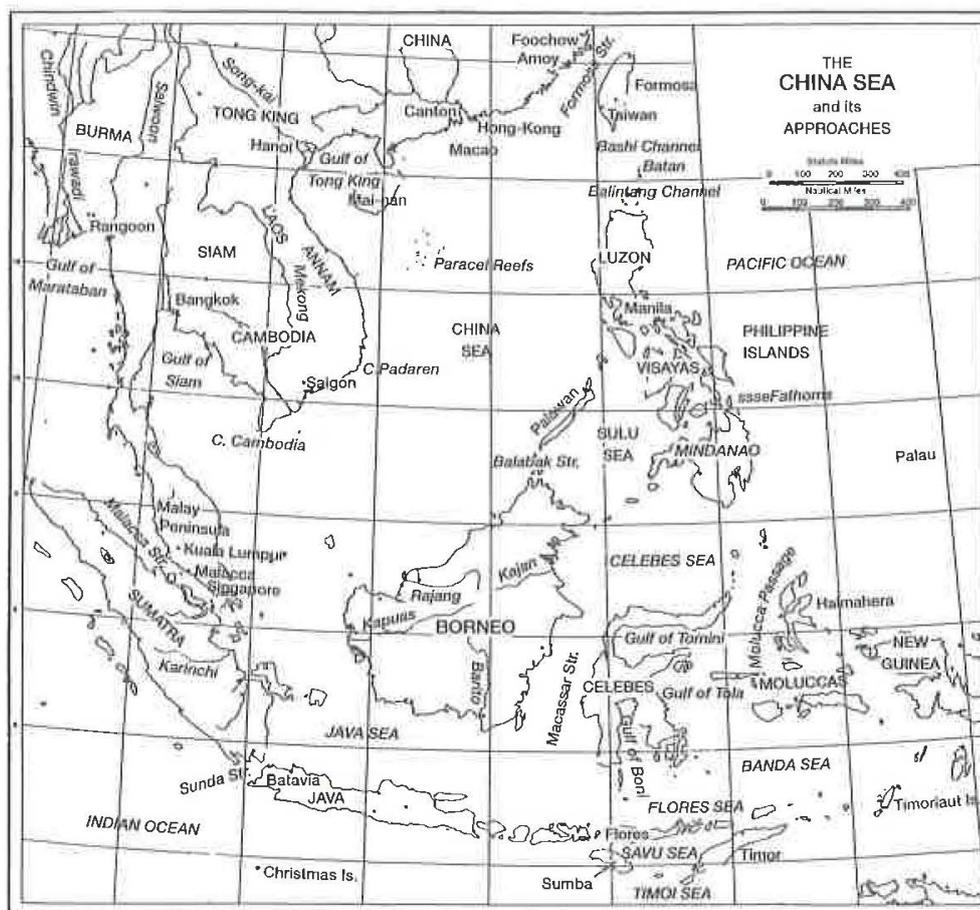
Figure 4.1 The South China Sea
Source: Morse 1966: 24–5

Malay peninsula, Sumatra, western Java, and the northeast coast of Borneo"

(Cushman 1993: 4–5)[2]

The map provided by H.B. Morse in his chronicle of the East India Company (1966, see Figure 4.1) labels the Nanyang the "China Sea," clearly showing both its extent and unity. Stretching from the Tropic of Cancer (which runs just to the north of Guangzhou) to just south of the equator, the Nanyang is longer than it is wide, and it lies more or less on a southwest to northeast axis, a shape made to order for the monsoons. As soon as the telltale signs of the northeasterly winds of the winter monsoon appeared in December or January, junks set sail from one of the numerous "portals on the sea" – the busiest being Guangzhou, Chaozhou, and Haikou (on Hainan Island) (Qu 1974: 33) – for

88

SOUTH CHINA

ports to the south, taking on cargoes in Siam or Malacca and waiting for the winds to change with the summer monsoon. Then in April, gently at first but then with more strength in May, the southerly and southeasterly monsoon winds provided the Chinese junks with the wind power to return home. Ocean currents too facilitated the return voyage, especially for those merchants who plied the Southeast Asian coast up to Tonkin. Easterly currents south of Hainan Island pushed water against the coast of Vietnam, trending then northerly into the Gulf of Tonkin before circling westward and through the Hainan Straight separating the island from the Leizhou Peninsula. Chinese junks could thus easily ride the winds and the currents from the Straights of Malacca or the Gulf of Siam right back to ports on Hainan Island, Guangzhou, or Chaozhou.[3]

With both a natural shape and wind and ocean currents conducive to an annual round of trade, Chinese merchants had long maintained trading relations with the countries of the Nanyang, going back at least to Han times (Chen 1985; Wang 1988), but especially from the eleventh and twelfth centuries when Chinese traders supplanted Arabs as the primary carriers of goods throughout the Nanyang (Cushman 1993: 1). But the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasties, and especially the closure of the coast from 1662 through 1683, had severed the trade links between Guangdong and the Nanyang (Marks 1998: 151–7). To be sure, both tribute missions from Siam (Viraphol 1972: 28), and smuggling kept some goods moving along the old routes (Ng 1983: 52–3; Viraphol 1972: 23–4), but the legal trade had been virtually extinguished (Fan 1992: 239).

Reopening of the coast for trade

With the capture of Taiwan in 1683 by Qing forces, though, the last serious challenge to Qing rule was crushed, and the Kangxi emperor then moved quickly to reopen the coast to shipping and to foreign trade. And as soon as the emperor did so, Chinese merchants set sail up and down the China coast as well as overseas for ports to the south in the Nanyang as well as to the north in Japan. The numbers must have been impressive, for the provincial governor Li Shizheng commented that "in any given year, a thousand ships come and go [from Guangdong]" (Huang 1987: 6). Whether Governor Li had statistics on the numbers of ships passing through the various ports, or was merely estimating, he

ROBERT B. MARKS

does convey the sense of a fairly large fleet of Chinese-owned and -manned junks plying the Nanyang in the years after the coast was opened. Moreover, Governor Li's impression of "thousands" of junks is confirmed by the English Captain Hamilton, who, on a trading mission to Guangzhou in 1703, observed that "there is no Day in the Year but shews 5,000 Sail of Jonks, besides small Boats for other Services, lying before the City" (Morse 1966, vol. 1: 104).

The number of junks "lying before the City" in 1703 was impressive not merely because of its magnitude, but also because most of that fleet had been built anew only after 1684. By all accounts, the Chinese commercial fleet had been virtually destroyed during the disastrous relocation of the coastal population in 1662. "All ocean-going junks," the order closing the coast had read, "are to be burned; not an inch of wood is allowed to be in the water" (Ye 1989: 140). Qing troops apparently carried out the order almost to the letter: according to local gazetteers, in Haiyang county "not a junk was left at the docks," and in Xin'an county "not more than one in a hundred junks remained" (quoted in Ye 1989: 140). And yet by 1685, thousands of junks once again sailed the seas. To be sure, not all had been destroyed in the 1660s; some smugglers and pirates had managed to avoid capture, keeping up a small but lucrative trade from new bases in Tonkin or Siam. By and large, though, it seems certain that most of the junks plying the Nanyang had to have been constructed quickly in the years after 1684. "Rich households compete to build ships," one observer wrote at the time (quoted in Huang 1987: 6). And build they did.

Of the thousands of junks lying before Guangzhou, most were smaller one- or two-masted junks plying the coastal trade; the largest, though, with three to five masts, had been built to sail the Nanyang, principally to Siam but also to the Philippines, Malacca, and Batavia. How many ocean-going junks called at ports in Guangdong in any given year is difficult to say, but a variety of sources allow us to get some perspective on the issue. In 1685, the English pirate, adventurer, and author, Captain William Dampier, arrived in the Philippine Islands intent upon seizing one of the Spanish galleons laden with Mexican silver. At Manila, Dampier observed, "the Harbour is so large, that some Hundreds of Ships may ride here; and is never without many, both of [the Spaniards'] own and Strangers. . . . [T]hey do allow the Portuguese to trade here, but the Chinese are the chiefest Merchants, and they drive

SOUTH CHINA

the greatest Trade; for they have commonly twenty, thirty, or forty Jonks in the Harbour at a time, and a great many Merchants constantly residing in the City, besides Shopkeepers and Handy-crafts-men in abundance" (Dampier 1968: 263). Japanese sources too confirm a large and growing number of Chinese junks at Nagasaki after the China coast was reopened: from 24 junks in 1684 to 73 in 1685, 84 in 1686, 111 in 1687, and 117 in 1688 (Viraphol 1972: 59). From 1684 to 1757, a total of 3,017 junks visited Japan; not all of these were from Guangdong, but we can assume that a substantial number were (Huang 1987: 7–8). The South China Sea, in short, was a Chinese-dominated lake.

But how many ocean-going junks were there, and how large and how important to the economy of Guangdong was the trade that they carried? We can make some estimates by examining data from later periods. Early nineteenth-century sources put the number of Chinese junks from all ports engaged in the trade with Siam at 150–200 (Cushman 1993: 86), while *The Chinese Repository* estimated in 1833 that "the whole number of Chinese vessels, annually visiting foreign ports south of Canton, is not probably, less than one hundred; of these one third belong to Canton; six or eight go to Tungking; eighteen or twenty to Cochinchina, Camboja, and Siam; four or five visit the ports of Singapore, Java, Sumatra, and Penang; and as many more find their way to the Celebes, Borneo and the Philippine islands. These vessels never make but one voyage in the year, and always move with the monsoon" (Anon 1833: 294). Certainly there were fewer ocean-going junks in 1700 than in 1800; Fan I-chun cites early- to mid-Qianlong era sources (*c*. 1750) stating that up to 40 Guangdong junks had received licenses to trade in the Nanyang (Fan 1992: 248). Thus I think that in the years around 1700, when Fujian-licensed junks (which also stopped in Guangzhou) are added, perhaps 50–100 ocean-going junks traded goods to and from Guangzhou. This amounts to one-third to one-half the number of junks engaged in the Nanyang trade in the early nineteenth century.

At first glance those numbers may not seem like much, but they were – at least when placed into comparative perspective with the size of the European trade. In the early 1820s, for instance, the amount of goods exported from Siam to China totaled 35,083 tons (and the two-way trade presumably about double that amount) (Cushman 1993: 83), an amount equivalent to the combined

ROBERT B. MARKS

exports from Guangzhou in 1790 carried by British East India Company and American ships (Morse 1966, vol. 2: 180). Those comparisons mean that in 1700, Chinese junks were carrying perhaps as much as 20,000 tons of goods back to Guangdong. By comparison, the volume of European exports from Guangzhou totaled just 500 tons in 1700, 6,071 tons in 1737, and probably did not reach 20,000 tons until the 1770s.[4] In short, Chinese trade with the Nanyang in 1700 was already at a level not reached by the European trade until the 1770s.

To place these trade figures into global perspective, some comparisons with Europe might help. According to Jan deVries, for the decade of 1731–40, annual Dutch trade in colonial goods to the Baltic passing through the Danish Sound totaled 16,000 tons, and the maximum yearly tonnage of all European ships trading in Asian waters was about 19,000 tons (deVries 1976: 120, 131). And according to Fernand Braudel's estimates, the two-way trade between England and Russia during the eighteenth century (which included considerable quantities of grain) may have amounted to as much as 120,000 tons annually (Braudel 1984: 207).[5] Thus the amount of Chinese trade with the Nanyang was between the amounts of the Dutch- and English-circuits trade in Europe.

That comparison, though, excludes China's domestic grain trade, which was every bit as large as that between Eastern and Western Europe.[6] I estimate that during the eighteenth century, around 240,000 tons of grain flowed into Guangzhou on both the riverine traffic from Guangxi province, and on coastal junks, rendering the total amount of trade in Guangdong somewhat larger than most measures of trade between various points in Europe. The grain trade along the Yangtze River was even larger, perhaps three times that pouring into Guangzhou.[7] The total amount of grain entering long-distance trade in China thus clearly outpaced that in Europe, and should be taken into consideration in comparing the amount of goods entering the market in China, which happened to be a single political entity, with those traded between various European countries.

In addition to excluding the grain trade, Chinese customs statistics did not distinguish among the Chinese inter-port (i.e. domestic) trade, trade with the Nanyang, and the European–American trade. Nonetheless, it is possible to gain some perspective on the value of the combined Chinese domestic and Nanyang trade by examining some data from the early century. In 1735, the

SOUTH CHINA
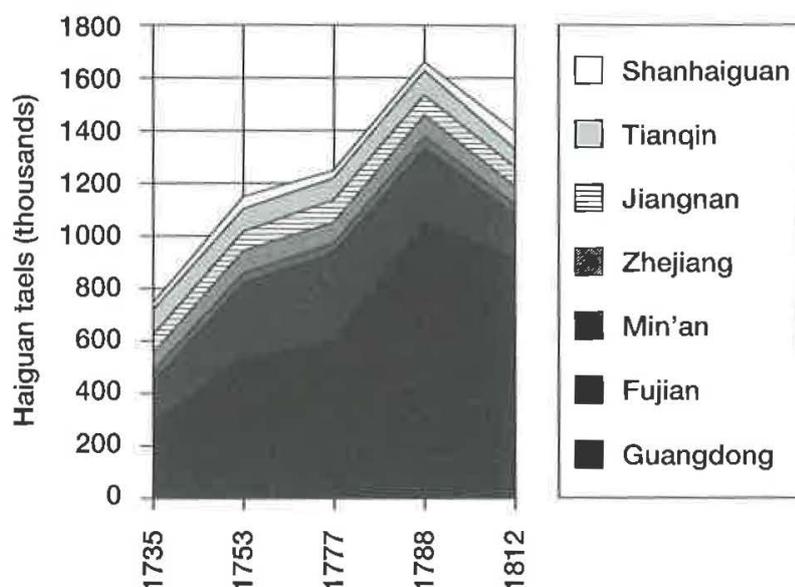
Figure 4.2 Chinese maritime customs revenue, 1735–1812
Source: Adapted from Fan 1992: 241

total amount of duty collected by all of China's customs houses totaled 729,000 taels; of that, 37 percent (272,000 taels) was collected in Guangdong alone (see Figure 4.2). The Guangdong total includes customs duty collected from Chinese merchants trading only on the coast, from Chinese merchants trading with the Nanyang, and from European ships as well. The latter, however, coming from fewer than 10 ships paying perhaps 3,000 taels each, was as yet relatively a small amount. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that, for Chinese coastal and Nanyang trade, the Guangdong customs house reported duty on the order of 250,000 taels. Assuming that to be a low estimate,[8] and that the duty averaged 5 percent *ad valorem*,[9] then the value of annual Chinese coastal and Nanyang trade approached five million taels; that seems to have been a fairly consistent level of trade throughout the eighteenth century (Fan 1992: 242–3). When the grain trade is included, the value of the annual trade through Guangdong ports swells by another three million taels to a total of eight million.

The trade flows between China and the Nanyang were characterized by Chinese exports of manufactured or processed goods, and imports of raw materials and food, in particular rice. According to Cushman, junks from China carried chinaware, earthenware, silk and cotton textiles, brass- and copperware made into utensils or

93

ROBERT B. MARKS

dishes, paper, as well as dried and salted vegetables and fruits and a variety of smaller manufactured items; Viraphol adds iron works of all kinds – pans, axes, cast iron, metal tubes, and wire – to the list (Viraphol 1972: 51). Imports from Siam included rice, wood for building and for extracting dyes used in the textile industry, raw materials for drugs, hides for farm equipment, various spices, and, importantly, raw cotton (Cushman 1993: 82–3, 87).

The Nanyang trade and changes in cropping patterns

The raw cotton originated in India, and was brought to Siam either by Indian, Muslim, or Portuguese traders where it was in turn purchased by Chinese merchants. The raw cotton is interesting because it points to aspects of China's coastal trade and to cropping and land-use patterns in Guangdong that became increasingly important during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Clearly, the raw cotton was imported in order to be spun and woven into cloth of varying grades, some of which was in turn exported back to Siam as finished goods, but most of which was sold within Guangdong. According to Qu Dajun (writing about 1700), "The cotton cultivated in Guangdong is not sufficient to satisfy the needs of the ten prefectures" (Qu 1974: 426).[10] The importation of the raw cotton meant that local sources could not satisfy the demand, and so producers looked elsewhere for their supplies. But did this demand then spur the planting of cotton in Guangdong and thereby change land use patterns?

To be sure, some peasant farmers did plant cotton in and around the Pearl River delta. According to seventeenth-century gazetteers cited by Sucheta Mazumdar (a scholar who has studied extensively the commercialization of agriculture in the Pearl River delta), cotton was planted in rotation with sugar cane in Panyu county. Of all the delta counties, Panyu had higher and drier land than lower-lying Pearl River delta counties like Nanhai or Xiangshan, rendering it more suitable to either cotton or sugar cane. Nonetheless, according to Mazumdar, "cotton was not grown extensively in the Delta" (Mazumdar 1984: 292), and its rotation with sugar cane disappeared some time during the eighteenth century. It is possible that peasant farmers had begun to experiment with cotton after coastal trade resumed, responding to the demand of the textile industry in and around the city of Foshan (located about 20 kilometers west of Guangzhou). But the little evidence that we have indicates that cotton cultivation died out. For

Annex 530

Luis Filipe F.R. Thomaz, "Melaka and Its Merchant Communities at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century", in *Asian Merchants and Businessmen in the Indian Ocean and the China Sea* (D. Lombard & J. Aubin, eds., 2000)

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Melaka and Its Merchant Communities at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century

LUÍS FILIPE F.R. THOMAZ

Early sixteenth century Portuguese sources, namely Tomé Pires'[1] famous *Suma Oriental* and archival documents, describe Melaka as a huge emporium run by the elite and the Sultan. Although the sources are silent with regard to the preceding century, this appears to have been the case from the beginning of the Sultanate. On the eve of the conquest (1511), the city had a population of at least 120,000, and perhaps even 200,000 if we concede the more generous estimates.[2] This large population could not have been due to a hinterland still covered with thick forests, and hence not very productive. It was because of Melaka's unique position on the long maritime route from the Red Sea to the China Sea. Essential commodities such as rice did not come from the surrounding areas but were imported from Java, Siam or Pegu. Melaka's strength lay in its role as an intermediary between Insulindia on the one hand, and India and China on the other. Insulindia produced raw materials and equatorial commodities; the old civilizations of India and China produced silks, cottons, ceramics and other manufactured goods. Hurmuz, which performed the same intermediary role in this period, had, like Melaka, no hinterland, so its development was solely focused on the sea.

Various authors would have us believe that the 'commercial ports' of India of this period presented some 'archaic traits'.[3] Melaka, however, in no way appears to have been a backward relic. State-controlled commerce or 'monitored traffic' would have been out of the question there. It was a free market with a monetary economy. Tomé Pires describes how the value of cargoes was fixed 'in auctions' by a group of ten or twenty merchants who climbed aboard the ships for this purpose, the prices being freely negotiated by demand and supply. For paying the customs duty, a committee of ten merchants

26   *Asian Merchants and Businessmen*

evaluated the cost of the cargo in the presence of the Tumenggung (chief of police) who, as a result, could immediately collect the taxes.

The Sultanate of Melaka was something of a 'mercantile state' though this policy had not been clearly formulated. Commercial practices in Melaka were similar to those in Portugal, which also explains why the brutal political and cultural rupture of 1511 was not duplicated on the business side. In both Melaka and Portugal, the State or the sovereign took an active part in commerce and traded on their own behalf alongside the private merchants. State control, at times arbitrarily imposed, reduced free competition though the framework remained that of a market economy.

THE SULTAN AS THE CHIEF MERCHANT OF HIS STATE

Certain royal monopolies survived from the ancient system of 'monitored traffic', such as the system of exchange or barter that was in use at the level of mere chieftainships. In some of the big centralized states, such as the Chinese empire, the system of 'tributes' has been in force till recently. Hence, State participation in trade is explained by the ever-growing need for ready money, for paying soldiers, buying arms and procuring luxury goods.

The Sultanate indirectly benefited from the profits of commercial activity through levying customs duty. All ships coming from the 'windward side' (*negeri di-atas angin*), i.e. India and the Middle East, had to pay 6 per cent on all merchandise. After 1511, this constituted the principal revenue of the Portuguese city. At the time of the Sultanate, ground rent, raised directly by the Sultan or indirectly by his 'governors' (*mendelika*) in tributary regions, brought additional revenue. We shall soon see that these rents represented a small portion (about 5 per cent) of the total revenue of the kingdom.

We know that in various Asian countries the sovereign reserved for himself the right to trade in certain commodities, specially those of strategic importance, such as horses or arms. After 1511, there are references to a monopoly in spices in Melaka. Though we lack information for the earlier period, we may surmise that the Sultan had exclusive control over certain sectors.

For ships that came from the 'leeward countries' (*negeri di-bawah angin*), that is Insulindia, peninsular South-East Asia and the Far East, there was the system of *beli-belian* or 'reciprocal buying', which remained in force till 1542, that is, under Portuguese rule. Goods

from these countries were exempted from customs duty, but merchants had to sell 25 per cent of their goods to the State at 20 per cent less than the market price and in exchange buy commodities from State-owned shops at 20 per cent higher than the market price. Lastly, the State participated directly in commercial activity by fitting out ships, just like private merchants. In foreign ports State business was probably conducted according to prevailing customs, but in Melaka, State cargoes were exempted from customs duty. This profited the financial backers who had associated themselves with the Sultan for a particular venture.

By means of various sources, we can get an idea of the relative importance of all these revenues. If the list of tribures given by Tomé Pires is complete, the total from the ground rents amounts to 3,820 *cruzados*. We also know through a 1515 document, that the 2 per cent surcharge, known as *peso* or 'weight', levied on certain goods either on entering of leaving, brought in annually 10,000 to 20,000 *cruzados*. The customs duty ('windward countries') and the *beli-belian* ('leeward countries'), after they were merged by the Portuguese, in 1540, together produced 40,000 to 50,000 *cruzados*.[6] On the eve of the conquest, products imported from Gujarat, Coromandel and Bengal were valued at about half a million *cruzados* and yielded 30,000 *cruzados* in taxes. Thus we may reasonably estimate that the annual movement of goods in the port of Melaka was some two million *cruzados*. The combined revenue of customs and *beli-belian* was something like 80,000 *cruzados*.

Hence the Sultanate appears to have been a huge merchant enterprise with numerous staff at its disposal. The figure varies from 1,600 to 3,000 slaves depending on the sources—about the same as the private merchants who possessed 3,500 slaves. According to João de Barros, the public slaves were of two categories: the *hamba raja* or 'king's servitors' were confidential agents comparable to the *criados del rei* in Portugal; their main duty was to manage the commercial affairs of the sultan, the *meneio de feitoria* or 'management of the foreign trading posts'. The *belati* or bought slaves, who formed the second category, were of middling status, 'serving in the shipyards, hauling ships on the beach, and other jobs of this kind'. After 1511, the Portuguese inherited some of both. They did not quite know what to do with the *hamba raja,* as the petty Portuguese noblemen, eager to reap benefits and acquire public status, were there to replace them. The *belati,* however, they continued to use extensively, on the docks and as ship's crew. The main occupation of these urban slaves, it will have been noted, was maritime trade.

Like the sovereign, the mandarins and virtually all the Malayan patriciate were engaged in business. The Sultan's agents received 'gifts' due to them *ex officio*. It seems that some officials of high rank also had 'slaves of honour', but we know very little about them. After 1511, most of these officials followed the Sultan into exile and thereafter Portuguese sources are silent about them. Hence, we are left with the impression that their economic role was rather modest and subordinate to that of foreign merchants residing in the city.

FOREIGN COMMUNITIES

'Once upon a time'—so begins the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*—'there was a king in Indra's paradise. This king had a vast kingdom and none equalled him. When he left his palace, he was assisted by all the other kings, mandarins and *merchants*.' It is not surprising that the author conceived Indra's paradise in the image of the Malay Sultanate and gave to the merchants a high rank. There were probably fewer foreign merchants residing in Melaka than in paradise; nevertheless, Tomé Pires counted not less than 'a thousand Gujaratis and four thousand Bengalis, Persians and Arabs'. In addition, there were the Kelings (Tamils), who probably numbered a thousand, and the Javanese, who were even more numerous.

Essentially, there were four main colonies—the Gujaratis, Tamils, Javanese and Chinese—each with its own chief or *shahbandar* (Persian: 'chief of port'). The *shahbandar's* role was to receive the merchants from his region, present them to the *bendahara* (prime minister and treasurer), and find them lodgings and shops (*gudang*) for their goods. There had been official brokers to do this work, who received one percent of the value of the good handled by them, but just before the advent of the Portuguese, the office was abolished on account of their swindling. The taxes, thereafter, were collected directly by the State. The *shahbandars* probably had military duties assigned to them also. As there was no permanent army, the mandarins armed their dependants in case of war and merchants did the same during the Portuguese period, under the command of their respective *shahbandars*. João de Barros compared them to the European 'consuls': they acted as intermediaries between their home country and the merchant state of Melaka.

On the eve of the fall of the Sultanate, the Gujaratis formed the most powerful community in Melaka. Their *shahbandar* controlled all the merchants who had come from Ceylon and beyond. They

were probably installed in a part of the rich merchant quarter of Upeh, on the right bank of the river. They were all Muslims, although Hindu merchants were also well established in Gujarat at this time. The·Gujarati colony of Melaka specialized in trade with the Middle East and with Mamluk Egypt. Through their trading posts of Aden and Hormuz, they sent drugs, spices and precious woods from Insulindia and received opium, rose water, woollen cloth and dyes. These privileged relations with the Islamic Middle East perhaps explain why no Gujarati of Melaka was a Hindu.

The Kelings or Tamils from Coromandel came second. They were as numerous as the Gujaratis and perhaps even richer, but being Hindus, they did not enjoy the same favour of the Sultan. In Portuguese texts, whereas many Muslim merchants took the title of *adiraja*, the Hindus are only given the 'bourgeois' title of *naina*, which appears to be the equivalent of the Persian *khoja*. Their status and their reputation as experts was, however, no less. We know, for example, that when a cargo had to be valued for the customs department, half the committee nominated to this effect—that is five merchants out of ten—were chosen from among them. Early Portuguese texts tell us that this fortunate position had been theirs since the reign of Muzaffar Shah (1446–59), who was the son of a Tamil princess and had got rid of his half-brother, Raja Ibrahim, to take the throne. Was the murder of Raja Ibrahim a sign of a sustained rivalry between certain rival merchant communities of the city? We do not know.

The *shahbandar* of the Kelings had jurisdiction over ships coming from the countries bordering the Bay of Bengal, from Ceylon to the frontiers of Melaka itself. The Tamils naturally ensured for themselves the commercial exchanges with the Coromandel coast and specialized in trade with Insulindia where they carried Indian cottons and brought back spices. In the Portuguese period—and very probably during the Sultanate as well—they occupied a separate quarter in the city, called Kampong Keling, that stretched out near the seafront in the Upeh zone.

About 1511, the richest merchant of the town was Naina Suryadeva, a Tamil. He shared the monopoly on nutmeg from Banda and cloves from the Moluccas with a merchant of Gresik, Pate Cuçuf (Patih Yusuf?). He sent eight junks a year on an average to these parts, whereas his Javanese rival sent only three or four. He continued his activities under the Portuguese regime and we find traces of his transactions in the Moluccas and even in China till 1527. Another Tamil merchant, Nina Chatu (Naina Setu), became the principal

counsellor and collaborator of the Portuguese after 1511. About 1513, two of his junks were in Siam, another was in Bengal and a *pangajava* (ship of smaller tonnage) in Palembang. Moreover, in association with his friend Araújo, the first Portuguese factor of Melaka, he equipped a junk bound for Banda and Ternate. In equal partnership with the Portuguese Crown, a junk each for Pegu, China and the ports of Coromandel were fitted out.

The *shahbandar* of the Javanese had authority over ships coming from the Indonesian archipelago and from Palembang to the Moluccas and Luzon. Their colony was bigger than that of the Tamils, the Javanese community being divided into two groups. The people of East Javanese origin lived with their chief, Tuan 'Colascar' (who was from Gresik) on the outskirts of Hilir (Ilher in Portuguese), situated to the south-east. Those from Tuban, Japara, Sunda and Lampung, lived with their chief Utimuti Raja, in Upeh, the big merchants' quanter, but a little away from the Kelings and the Chinese. We may, therefore, conclude that this second community was more prosperous. Though western Java (and all the interior) was far from having been Islamized, the sources at our disposal give us to understand that all the Javanese merchants in Melaka were Muslims. Some undoubtedly converted locally.

The Javanese specialized in the trade of foodstuffs. The magnates of the community, like Utimuti Raja, Tuan Kulaskar and Patih Ketir, fitted out ships for importing foodstuffs. They also owned rural estates on the outskirts of the city. Patih Ketir sent a junk to Demak and a *pangajava* to Madura in 1513 to buy rice. Others, more modest, owned boats of small tonnage, which served as their family residence as well. These 'nomads of the seas' voyaged between Melaka and the coast of Sumatra, indeed up to Java, taking cottons and bringing back victuals that they sold in the morning in the main market, called *bazar dos Jaus*, 'the Javanese market'. From this we infer that the economic standing of the Javanese was considerably lower than that of the Tamils amd Gujaratis. Generally speaking, they lacked an aptitude for long-term deals and were content with a subsidiary role. Other Javanese took up humble careers as salesmen, craftsmen, sailors, fishermen or artillerymen; still others became slaves to the sultan or served the notables as ship's crew. They were well versed in the mechanical arts. Albuquerque sent sixty of them to Malabar in 1511, and more the following year, so that they could transmit their technical knowledge to the slaves of the Portuguese king.

Particularly interesting is the case of the small but prosperous Luzonese community. Five hundred of them had settled in Minjam, a small port north-west of Melaka, between Bruas and Klang, and devoted themselves to commerce and, probably, to tin mining. A little before the Portuguese conquest, another small community had just established itself in Melaka under the protection of a leading merchant, Aregimuti Raja, who had attracted many of his compatriots. In 1513, he sent junks to Siam, Borneo, Sunda and China, as well as a *pangajava* to Pasai. He died that year, but his widow sent another junk to Sunda and his father-in-law sent many to China. Another Luzonese, Kuria Diraja, used to send a junk to China every year with a thousand *bahar* of pepper. It seems that he also fitted out one of his junks which accompanied the fleet of Fernão Peres de Andrade to Canton in 1517, the first to reach the Middle Kingdom. Most Luzonese were engaged in maritime trade in the China Sea.

These Luzonese were mostly Muslims, though Islam had not yet reached the north of what was to become the Philippines archipelago. We presume that these Luzonese merchants had come and settled in Melaka in order to eliminate the Brunei middlemen, who had previously controlled exchanges between Melaka and Luzon and that, once settled in the city, they had adopted the religion of the majority. It is not impossible, furthermore, that the Muslim Luzonese of Melaka had originally belonged to the small Muslim community of Manila, that the Spanish came across later. Thus, starting with Melaka, various Islamic communities were formed in the many ports of South-East Asia.

The Chinese were probably a populous and influential group from the outset of the sultanate. They occupied an entire district, the Kampong Cina, situated close to the commercial centre, on the right bank of the river, north of Kampong Keling. Their *shahbandar* had complete authority over ships coming from Campa and Kauchi (i.e. from Tonkin), the islands of Riu Kiu—that served as a transit point *en route* to Japan—as well as from 'Chincheu' (i.e. Quanzhou, or yet again Zhangshou, in Fujian). Portuguese texts of the sixteenth century often distinguish betwen the 'Chins' (or 'Chinas') and the 'Chincheus' (or 'Chancheus'). The distinction might have been linguistic, the 'Chins' being Cantonese and the 'Chincheus' being Hokkien; or religious, 'Chins' designating the Gentiles and 'Chincheus' the Muslims, from Quanzhou or elsewhere. The 'Chincheus' came often to Melaka and some resided there.

In order to counterbalance Muslim influence, the Portuguese encouraged Chinese settlement in the city, as they did that of Hindu Tamils. The Portuguese embassy sent to Pahang in 1520 included some Chinese merchants from Melaka, to lure some of their compatriots. Throughout the sixteenth century, the Chinese community grew, swelled by fugitives from imperial justice. All lived from trade. But there is hardly any mention of this in our sources. Only a certain Chulata (or Fulata) who came often to Melaka with his junks from China (in 1511, 1513 and 1517) is mentioned several times. He established contact with the Portuguese and the Chinese authorities (Siamese also). In 1517 one of these junks joined the fleet of Fernão Peres de Andrade.

Among the other communities, the Bengalis earned their living as tailors, fishermen or labourers. The Peguans were sea people and often served as pilots; they were happy to receive merchants from Pegu. We cannot say with certainty whether the Armenians mentioned were true Gregorian Armenians or Nestorians from Upper Mesopotamia. One of these Armenians, Khoja Iskandar, in 1517 guided the first Portuguese, desirous of seeing the tomb of the apostle Saint Thomas, from Melaka to Mylapore. As to the Jews, 'White Jews who came from the Ottoman Empire and Black Jews who came from Malabar', they were probably not very numerous. While some were engaged in proselytizing the Gentiles, others converted to Christianity. Khoja Azedim, a Jew, in 1514 lent money to the Portuguese. A quarter of a century later, another Jew died in Melaka, leaving a fortune valued at 6,000 cruzados.

TRADING TECHNIQUES AND PRIVATE FORTUNES

There is no precise indication whether trading companies with a permanent base in Melaka existed. While we have numerous examples of merchant associations collaborating over a particular venture (fitting out a ship or purchase of a cargo), no organization, apart from the family, ensured continuity beyond the individual lifetime of the company. A good example is that of the Luzonese merchant, Aregimuti Raja.

The volume of trade handled by a Hindu or Muslim merchant was far larger than by their Portuguese contemporaries, who went from port to port negotiating the sale of their goods. The rich Asian merchants such as Nina Chatu or Naina Suryadeva remained in town

conducting their business and sent their hired factors with the ships; some of these agents were Portuguese even as far back as 1512.

The merchant who did not own ships were more numerous than those who did, and leased a 'compartment' (*petak*) in the big junks. According to Tomé Pires, the freight up to Java came to 20 per cent of the value of the goods (while the profit could be as much as cent per cent). The crew, including the slaves, traditionally had the right to use a part of the tonnage, gratuitously or at a discount. This custom remained in force during the Portuguese possession of Melaka.

Most common was sleeping partnership. The ship owner contracted for investment, the rate of return depending on the destination. If the boat returned, the investor reaped the profit. If not, he lost his investment. The percentages given were quite high, ranging from 35 to 50 per cent for a voyage to South-East Asia, 80 to 90 per cent for a trip to India and even 200 percent for a trip to China. Such a system presented economic advantages, attracting the small investors, and social advantages, giving an opportunity to the poor to participate in the principal activity of the city. The Sultans themselves practised this type of contract and those of Kampar and Pahang invested huge sums with their suzerain. After 1511, the Portuguese were eager to profit from the system, from the grand captain to the simple soldier.

We do not know what proportion of the profit was reinvested in trade. Some of it certainly went into buying slaves and the *dusun*, the rural properties on the outskirts of Melaka. At the time of the Portuguese conquest, the merchants owned more than half the servile population and the more powerful among them made it a point of honour to acquire a large number of slaves. A document of the time comments that the merchants 'could not live without their slaves'. These private slaves were sometimes requisitioned by the Sultan—and later by the Portuguese—when they had to equip warships or construct ramparts.

Other than the slaves bought in the market (imported or prisoners of war), the merchants included many 'slaves of debt' in their household (*ulur* or *orang berhutang*). This custom, which shows that the monetary economy was widespread, extending by the middle of the nineteenth century to Malaya and other regions of Insulindia, is described by Francisco de Albuquerque:

The wealth of the merchants of this country is their slaves, and whosoever possesses the greatest amount is considered as the most rich. To acquire the said slaves the procedure is as follows: if a poor man has need of money, he will go and find a merchant and ask him for ten ducats, or more or less depending on what he wants. He is obliged at the same time to give the

merchant one ducat every month for the ten ducats borrowed by him. Also, he must pledge himself in all the concerns of his patron, on land or on sea, giving him, however, the ten per cent that the slaves in question are obliged to pay. If he wants to be free, he has to reimburse the entire sum that had been lent to him. And this is apparently a common practice as we find a great number of poor people here[9].

In this way the merchants managed to acquire cheaply a vast number of dependants and vie with the mandarins.

The *dusun*, which were as many as 1,150 in the early sixteenth century, were another symbol of power. When the Malay patriciate deserted shortly after the conquest, the merchants vied with the Portuguese *casados*, married to native women, for possession of these *dusun*. The Luzonese merchant, Kuria Diraja, offered 'half a *bahar* of gold of Minang-kabau', i.e. 9,000 *cruzados* to keep his *dusun*. Such a big sum would mean that some of these *dusun* were not only recreational places, but probably agricultural enterprises.

COSMOPOLITANISM AND ISLAM

Cosmopolitanism marked Melakan society. In the Bull of 1557, raising city to the status of a bishopric, the Pope praised this trait. Tomé Pires notes that on a single day one might come across people talking eighty-four different languages. The policy of the Sultans—like that of the Portuguese around 1550—had been to systematically attract foreign merchants. All traders who came to settle here paid only 3 per cent of the customs duty *ad valorem* (instead of 6 per cent).

Such cosmopolitanism implied a very tolerant religious policy. While Islam was the official religion, the cultural cement meant to unite the majority of the residents and also provide access to the numerous co-religionists of the Indian Ocean, which at this point was like a 'Muslim lake', it never became an aggressive Islam. This 'open type of Islam' some even considered degenerate. Ibn Majid notes:

These are bad people who do not observe any rules, the infidel marries a Muslim woman and the Muslim the infidel woman; and when you call them infidels, are you sure they are really infidels? And the 'Muslims' that you talk of, are they really Muslims? They drink wine in public and do not pray before beginning a voyage.[10]

During the Sultanate, Melaka was an important Islamic centre. The *Sejarah Melayu* mentions a deputation sent to Pasai to interrogate the local *'ulama* on certain points of theology. But the disappearance of

the court in 1511 combined with the hostility of the Portuguese changed the situation dramatically. The principal mosque on the left bank near the mouth of the river was razed to make way for the fort *A Famosa*, built with the stones from the mosque. Some *langgar* probably remained. Nearly a century later, in 1604, we learn that the Malays 'continue to write using Arabic characters' (*jawi*) and the more learned know the language of the Koran a little. Islamic teaching was ensured by the so called *cacizes* who came from the middle east and India on Portuguese vessels, disguised as merchants.[11]

Evidence of Melaka's religious liberalism is also the fact that when the young Sultanate was searching for a historical myth to explain its origins, it hesitated between the Islamic tradition and the Hindu heritage. If *Sejarah Melayu* links the royal lineage of Melaka to Iskander Zulkarnain, 'Alexander the Two-horned'. i.e. Alexander the Great, whom the Koran presents as a great propagator of monotheistic Islam,[12] the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* goes even further back to Sang Perta Dewa, a semi-divine king from Indra's paradise.[13] The hesitation is perhaps deliberate: in any case, it corresponds to the pluralistic and composite character of the Melakan society. In jurisprudence, the Koranic law had a somewhat subsidiary role, the customary law (*adat*) being generally observed except when circumstances demanded greater severity. The Melakan Code (*Undang-undang Melaka*) still preserved[14], says frequently 'This is the law of the land, but according to the Law of Allah... .' (*Itulah adatnya negeri, tetapi pada hukum Allah*) which always meant a harsher punishment.

Even after 1511, the atmosphere of tolerance continued, as long as the 'open' nature of the Renaissance was maintained by the Portuguese. Though the atmosphere deteriorated after 1550, with the introduction of the Counter-reformation (and the setting up of the Inquisition in Goa in 1561), Melaka remained on the fringe of the troubles. From 1561 to 1580 (date of the union of the two Crowns) the Inquisition in Goa dealt with only eight cases from Melaka and only two 'new Christians' (converted Portuguese Jews) had to bear severe punishment.[15]

THE EFFECTS OF THE PORTUGUESE PRESENCE

The first and immediate effect of the Portuguese conquest of this merchant city was the eviction of the Sultan and his court and the installation of a new, fairly rudimentary administration which was probably a lesser burden on the exchequer. The ethnic composition

of the population also changed. The Malay patriciate had followed their sovereign into exile and the Gujarati merchants also left town. A new group appeared—the *casados,* Portuguese former soldiers 'married' to native women. The State, desirous of further reinforcing its presence in Asia, regarded this group with a benevolent eye. It gave as dowries to the wives and to the husbands, some of the properties confiscated from the Muslims. In case of a siege, the *casados* participated in defence of the city with their slaves and their dependants, just like the *orang kaya* of the Sultanate. In time of peace they took to trade but had to pay 10 per cent customs duty (instead of 6 per cent) probably because the Crown feared that these subjects might get too enamoured of mercantile activity. The children born of these mixed liaisons with the Asians, naturally swelled their ranks. If the *casados* had difficulty in penetrating the maritime trade nexus—in which the Crown was a participant along with its nobles—they managed to take an active part in the coastal trade. Thus the Portuguese, whether of mixed blood or those who were well-integrated in the society, settled mostly in the centre of the city, around the fort and the church, that had replaced the mosque and the Sultan's palace respectively. The area was fortified (between 1527 and 1542) with bastions and soon teemed with churches and convents. Melaka thus became a typical Indo-Portuguese city where the soldiers intermixed with the religious orders 'just like Moses, captain, rubbed shoulders with Aaron, grand-priest'.

The disappearance of the Malay mandarins left certain important posts vacant to which some of the leading merchants were promoted. The Portuguese maintained the principle of separate jurisdiction—still in force in Portugal for the administration of the Moors and the Jews. Colonies of foreigners were reorganized into two main groups: on the one side, the Gentiles (*cafres* or *gentios*), and on the other, the Muslims (*mouros*). This accorded with the conception of the world of the new masters and institutionalized the gulf between communities. Nina Chatu received the hereditary title of *bendahara* and the high command over all 'Kaffirs'. The post was no longer what it had been in the days of the Sultanate but still came fourth in position in the scale of emoluments paid by the treasurer of His Highness. It was exceeded by the bishop, the captain and the factor, and was on the same footing as the judge. Moreover, the *bendahara* had the same right to taxes and dues as his predecessors. He also retained the privilege of appointing the *shahbandar,* an office that was soon in competition with the *alcaides do mar,* and other Portuguese

administrators. To the Luzonese merchant, Aregimuti Raja, the post of *tumenggung* was entrusted, with authority over the Muslims. His role had lost its earlier prominence and we know little about him.

Under the leadership of these two dignitaries, each community continued to maintain a certain autonomy. These chiefs mostly had a judicial and military role, arbitrating the private differences occurring within the group and organizing the militia for the defence of the city. The city was often besieged and the Portuguese texts give to these merchants, promoted as 'consuls', the title of *capitães* or 'captains'.

The hierarchical standing of the communities was somewhat inverted, with the Gentiles and particularly the Kelings becoming the favourites of the ruling power. Nina Chatu was the principal commercial counsellor of the Rui de Brito Patalim, the first Portuguese captain of Melaka. There was also Naina Suryadeva who borrowed cannon from the official stores in order to protect his ships, as they transported goods belonging to His Highness. When the Portuguese authorities were in poor financial straits, the Tamil merchants advanced to them the necessary sums; it was said that 'without these loans His Highness would not survive'... The Kelings lived, like the Chinese, in the rich district of Upeh. This was the economic heart of the city, protected by a *tranqueira*, which first consisted of a simple palisade, then a mud-wall and finally stone ramparts of which one bastion was held by the *bendahara* in person.

The Muslims occupied a lower position. Their chief, the *tumenggung*, got only half the emoluments of the *bendahara*, i.e. 50,000 *reais*. The group to which he belonged, the Luzonese, was Islamic but neutral and never had to contend with the Portuguese, unlike the Gujaratis. They lived probably in Upeh, inside the *tranqueira*, perhaps in the corner known as *Campom Baco* or *Buco* in ancient maps, not far from the *Campom China*, on the banks of the river. The Javanese, while still playing an imporant role in supplying the city with necessities, continued to decline. They settled in the suburbs and along the canal termed Parit Jawa. Portuguese texts invariably describe them as cunning and disloyal. They had led the one revolt that the authorities had to deal with. Thereafter, their 'captain' was always a Portuguese.

From 1550, various religious orders settled in Melaka and evangelization took off in earnest, recruiting local Christians from among the Kelings and the Chinese. The *bendahara*, in all likelihood a grandson of Nina Chatu, converted in 1564 and handed over the education of his son to the Jesuits. It was probably he who, under the name of Dom João, was killed in 1573 while fighting the Acehnese

who had besieged the place. He was presumably the last *bendahara* of Tamil origin, for the next year the chronicles mention another *bendahara*, Dom Henrique, who was in fact a Muslim convert from the Moluccas, an uncle of the Sultan of Tidore, whose name had been Cachil Labuzaza. He was made a knight of the military Order of Christ as a reward for good and loyal services. Christians remained a minority, but we know from an early seventeenth century map how the parishes advanced and penetrated the *kampungs* of nearly all the communities.

Such is what we can gather from sources found in Portugal. After 1850, though, most of them were transferred to Spain after the Union of the two Crowns. Their analysis is bound to have surprises in store for us.

NOTES

1. Cf. A. Cortesão (ed.), *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan , Written in Malacca and India in 1512–15 and the Book of Francisco Rodrigues, Rutter of a Voyage in the Red Sea, Nautical Rules, Almanack and Maps, Written and Drawn in the East before 1515*, London ,1944. New edition (Portuguese text only):*A Suma Oriental de Tomé Pires e o Livro de Francisco Rodrigues,* Coimbra, 1978. The sixth book of the *Suma* is devoted to Melaka and forms one of our main sources of information here. After this, we will not refer to it each time. Another important work for our purpose is the text of Manuel Godinho de Eredia, published by L. Janssen, *Malaca, l'Inde orientale et le Cathay: facsimilé du manuscript autographe de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique,* Brussels, 1881.
2. We have discussed this demographic problem, indicating our sources, in an article, 'L'esclavage à Malacca au 16e siècle, d'après les sources portugaises', to be published in G. Condominas (ed.), *L'esclavage en Asie du Sud-Est.*
3. See A. Leeds, 'The Port-of-Trade in pre-European India as an Ecological and Evolutionary Type', in V. E. Garfield, (ed.), *Proceedings of the 1961 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society,* Seattle, 1961, pp. 26–48. Leeds bases his study on a rather hasty interpretation of a few documents and his conclusions are inacceptable. For 'commercial ports' in other contexts see K. Polanyi and C. Arensberg, *Les systèms économiques dans l'Histoire et dans la Théorie,* Paris, 1975.
4. Cf. J. Hicks, *Une théorie de l'historie économique,* Paris, 1973.
5. A letter from the Governor Lopo de Soares de Albergaria to the captain of Melaka, Jorge de Brito, written in December 1515. Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Cartas dos Vice Reis, no. 132.

6. Cf. Simão Botelho, *Tombo da Índia,* published by Rodrigo José de Lima Felner in *Subsídios para a história da Índia Portugueza,* Lisbon, 1868.

7. Refer to our article mentioned in n. 2.

8. More details on foreign communities will be found in earlier studies: *Nina Chatu e o comércio português em Malaca,* Lisbon, 1976; 'Les Portugais dans les mers de l'Archipel au 16e siècle, *Archipel,* 18, 1979, pp. 105–25; and 'The Indian Merchant Communities in Malacca under the Portuguese Rule', in T. R. de Souza (ed.), *Indo-Portuguese History, Old Issues New Questions,* New Delhi, 1985. Elsewhere we have published the accounts ledger of one of the junks equipped by Nina Chatu in collaboration with the Portuguese Crown: *De Malaca a Pegu: viagens de um feitor português, 1512–1514,* Lisbon, 1966.

9. The text is published by R. Cessi, 'L'itinerario indiano di Francesco del Bocchier del 1518', *Atti dell'Academia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rendiconti,* serie VIII, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, VI 5-5, 1951, pp. 232–49, and reproduced by Jean Aubin in 'Francisco de Albuquerque, un Juif castillan au service de l'Inde portugaise, 1510–1515' *Arquivos de Centro Cultural Português* (Fondation C. Gulbenkian, Paris), 7, 1974, pp. 175 sq.

10. We have used the Portuguese edition of T.A. Chumovsky and M.M. Jirmounsky, *Três roteiros desconhecidos de Ahmad Ibn Madjid, o piloto árabe de Vasco da Gama,* Lisbon, 1960, p. 70. Tomé Pires bears witness to marriage between 'heathens' and Muslims.

11. There is also mention of 'brahmins' of the Hindu community, but we do not know anything about their religious activities.

12. The Malay text has been edited by Sir R. Winstedt, *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JMBRAS)* (Singapore), 16, pt., 3, 1938, and also by A. Samad Ahmad, *Sulatus Salatin* (Sejarah Melayu), Kuala Lumpur, 1979. English translation of C.C. Brown: 'Sejarah Melayu or 'Malay Annals' with Commentary...', *JMBRAS,* 25, pts 2 & 3, 1952.

13. We have consulted Kassim Ahmed's edition, *Hikayat Hang Tuah,* Kuala Lumpur, 1966.

14. Cf. Liauw Yock Fang (ed.), *Undang-undang Malaka: The Laws of Malaka,* La Haye, 1976. See for example: 5, 3; 7, 2; 8; 2–3–4; 10; 11, 3; 12, 2–3; 14, 1–2; 15, 7; 16, 1; 18, 4, 36, 1; 44, 6. Sometimes we have *hukum kanun* instead of *adat negeri.*

15. Cf. *Repertório Geral de tres mil oitocentos processos que sam todos os despachados neste Santo Officio de Goa e mais partes da India do ano de 1561 que começou o dito Santo Oficio até o anno de 1627,* National Library of Lisbon, Fundo Geral, cod. 203.

16. There remained a small Malay community composed mostly of poor people, fishermen and sailors which was pushed to the outskirts of Upeh and Hilir, near the sea, and to Sabak, up the river.

Annex 531

Hong-kay Lung, "Britain and the Suppression of Piracy on the Coast of China, with Special Reference to the Vicinity of Hong Kong 1842-1870" (2001)

Britain and the Suppression of Piracy on the Coast of China, with Special Reference to the Vicinity of Hong Kong 1842-1870

submitted by

Lung Hong Kay

for the degree of Master of Philosophy

at the University of Hong Kong

in May 2001
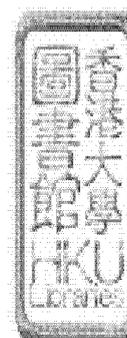
Abstract of the thesis entitled

Britain and the Suppression of Piracy on the Coast of China, with Special Reference to

the Vicinity of Hong Kong 1842-1870

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This thesis studies the problem of piracy on the coast of China in the mid nineteenth century, and the emphasis is laid on the vicinity of Hong Kong where the problem was most serious. There was a sudden increase of piracy on the coast of China after the First Opium War. With the opening of the new treaty ports after the conclusion of the Treaty of Nanjing, trading vessels passed up and down the coast. On a number of occasions, these vessels became the preys of the pirates. The pirates also plundered the fishing junks along the south China coast.

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part examines the factors leading to piracy. Such factors included the poverty of the Dan 蛋 boat people along the south China coast, the unemployment of sailors and boatmen after the opening of the new treaty ports, the socio-economic conditions in Guangdong in the post-Opium war period, the problem of opium, the prevalence of secret societies in Guangdong and the incompetence of the Chinese navy in suppressing piracy. Indeed, the Chinese authorities did regard piracy as a problem to dea with, but it was far less important than most of the problems facing the regime in the mid nineteenth century.
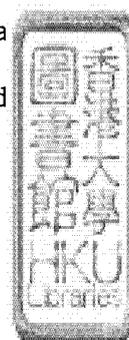
The second part of the thesis deals with the British suppression of piracy on the coast of China from 1842 to 1870. The story is narrated in four distinct periods. From 1842 to 1848, the problem of piracy was almost entirely out of control. Throughout this period the British were in search of an effective means to suppress the evil. From 1848 to 1860, the Royal Navy made the change from giving up the duty of suppressing piracy to playing an active part in destroying piratical vessels on a number of occasions. From 1861 to 1867, the suppression of piracy concentrated on the crackdown of piratical haunts on the coast of China. Since such crackdown yielded little satisfactory result, Macdonnell, the governor of Hong Kong, turned to legislative measures to fight piracy. As a result, a number of ordinances were passed in Hong Kong in the late 1860s to drive the pirates away from the colony. From 1868 to 1870, the suppression of piracy focused on the question of whether vessels should be disarmed. Meanwhile, the Chinese government organized a new steam fleet for policing the sea. Although there was a notable decline of piracy from 1866 to 1869, this decline was unfortunately arrested in 1870.

As a result, this thesis also shows how the Sino-British relations was shaped by the problem of piracy, and how Hong Kong ceased to be an important piratical haunt by 1870.
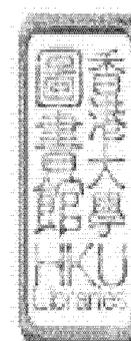
Britain and the Suppression of Piracy on the Coast of China, with Special Reference to the Vicinity of Hong Kong 1842-1870

by

Lung Hong Kay

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy at the University of Hong Kong.

May 2001
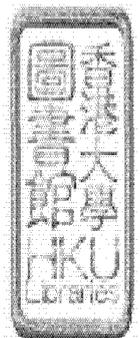
The Chinese Navy and Piracy

Before the Royal Navy actively assumed the duty of protecting British merchants from the late 1840s onwards, pirates had little to fear of. Although merchant vessels were equipped with arms to various extent, vagabonds would only take those they were confident of suppressing resistance. Meanwhile, the Chinese navy (or shuishi 水師) was far from effective in suppressing piracy. Perhaps, we have to look beyond the war junks on the front line of the Chinese navy to examine what went wrong. Here, the traditional Chinese concept of the sea played a prominent part in helping us understand the defects of Chinese naval defense. In this part, we are going to examine various aspects of the Chinese coastal defense, and to see how they facilitated the growth of piracy in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Traditional Chinese Concept of the Sea and the Abandonment of Coastal Defense

To suppress piracy and to prevent its occurrence, a strong navy was necessary for policing the sea. However, it is important to stress that the Qing government paid very little attention to the construction of a strong navy, or naval defense in general. Until the period of modernization in the late nineteenth century, the Qing government never possessed a strong navy. The handful of war junks that sailed along the coast of China constituted what might more suitably be called a small policing force rather than a navy. It could be argued that even if the Chinese authorities possessed a strong navy, they

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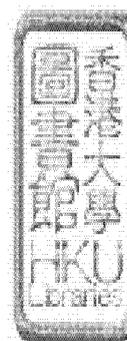
would not necessarily employ the navy for the suppression of piracy. In the context of the mid-nineteenth century, they would probably use it for protection against foreign invasion. This argument is well-justified, though the point here is that the possession of a strong navy could at least enable the Chinese authorities to have the power to suppress piracy in case they chose to do so.

In accounting for the lack of interest in the construction of a strong navy, Wang Shunli 王順力 refers to the traditional Chinese apathy of the oceans, and argued that the naval policies of the Qing government was heavily shaped by this apathy. Four significant points are identified by him. Firstly, with the fertile land around the Huanghe 黃河 and Changjiang 長江 to make a living on, and with the pursuit of stable rural life, the Chinese could hardly find any justification to turn to the sea. Secondly, there was little demand for imported goods from the perspective of the Chinese rulers, which also explains why the Chinese rulers did not build a strong navy to protect the trading vessels along the coast. Thirdly, since Confucianism placed put much emphasis on political stability and disapproved of glory brought by military expansion, the progressive spirit to expand towards the oceans was often sacrificed. Besides, to strengthen traditional Confucian values, the Chinese rulers were only concerned with the training of civil servants. To a considerable extent, they neglected the importance of naval personnel. Fourthly, speaking in strategic terms, since the traditional enemies of the Chinese used to come from the north, most of the military establishments were concentrated in northern China. Again, emphasis was put on the army rather than the navy. Even if an enemy did come from the sea, the Chinese believed that it would be easier to annihilate him on land. Wang also
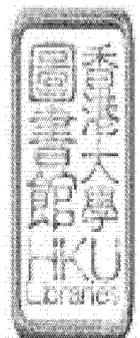
argues that the Qing rulers were not influenced by traditional Chinese values alone. Since they had relied on their cavalry to make their conquest throughout China, it was difficult for them to conceive of the importance of naval defense.[90]

According to Jiang Ming 姜鳴, there were other factors that deterred China from building a strong navy. Firstly, from the perspective of the Chinese rulers, the immense living space made it unnecessary for China to exploit overseas territories for colonization. Secondly, the rulers of the Chinese empire were often entangled by internal affairs, and as a result they could hardly spend any time on overseas ventures. Thirdly, there was no need for naval defense from the traditional Chinese perspective. The sea already constituted a natural buffer between China and overseas countries, which effectively fended off foreign invasion from the sea until the First Opium War. Lastly, since the Chinese rulers often regarded China as a nation superior to others, their arrogance prevented them from conducting exploration overseas.[91]

The Cruise System and General Qualities of the Chinese Navy

With these basic concepts of Chinese naval defense in mind, we can proceed to examine various features of Chinese naval policy in connection with piracy during the Qing dynasty. The waterforces employed for regular purposes by the Qing government

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[90] Wang Shunli 王順力, 'Yapianzhanzheng shiqi chuantong haifangguan de yingxiang yu yangqi' 鴉片戰爭時期傳統海防觀的影響与揚棄, *Xiamen daxue xuebao* 廈門大學學報 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue xuebao zhexui shehui kexueban bianjibu, 1992), Vol. 2, 73-74
[91] Jiang Ming 姜鳴, *Longqi piaoyang de jiandui* 龍旗飄揚的艦隊 (Shanghai jiaotong chubanshe, 1991), 3
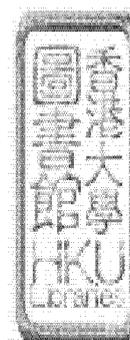
belonged to the Chinese Green Standard units, which were organized by the provinces.[92]

With the coast falling into interlocking patrol areas [93], the job of the Chinese navy was to

guard various ports and arrest pirates.[94] Working on a six-month shift, the naval forces

took turn in patrolling the coastal waters.[95] As remarked by Rowlingson, during the

busiest time of a year at least, 'the coast was covered by cruising vessels, with penalties

fixed for non-performance.'[96]

However, it is doubtful whether the cruises were properly conducted. Here, a case

recorded by Daniel Richard Caldwell, the Superintendent of Police in 1859, illustrates

how ineffective the Chinese cruise system was. In the years 1844 and 1845, there was a

formidable piratical fleet commanded by Le Afai[97], a native of Xiangshan 香山. This

fleet caused the entire stoppage of trade on the west coast, and as a result the governor-

general of Guangzhou ordered the Admiral of the Bogue to send out a fleet of war junks

to destroy this fleet. In the vicinity of the Ladrone islands, the Chinese naval force

attacked the pirate fleet. After two or three war junks fell into the hands of the pirates, the

Chinese force retreated to Macao to take refuge. Probably, before the naval authorities

took action against the pirates, they did not make much efforts to collect intelligence

concerning their enemy. As Caldwell used the term 'formidable' to identify the force of

Le Afai, the Chinese naval authorities should not have much difficulty in finding out its

enormous size. That the Chinese naval force was defeated and had their junks captured

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[92] John L Rawlinson, *China's Struggle for Naval Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Havard University Press, 1967), 6
[93] Rawlinson, 10
[94] *Qingshigao* 清史稿, (Beijing: Qingshiguan, 1928), juan 135
[95] Siu Kwok Kin 簫國健, *Forts and Batteries* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Meseum of History, 1997), 21
[96] Rawlinson, 10
[97] Both Pinyin and Chinese characters are unavailable.
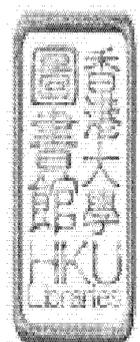
by pirates reveals an indisputable truth. The cruise system of the Chinese navy was so defective that it failed even to detect the strength of the enemy. Even more ironic is that Le Afai openly invited the Chinese admiral to have a duel, though the crews of the war junks refused to leave Macao. The feebleness of the Chinese navy was thus exposed to the full. It was only around mid-1855 that Le Afai lost a large portion of his vessels in a typhoon. Subsequently, all his powerful vessels were destroyed by British men-of-war near Gaolan 高欄 (Kulan). Taking advantage of the British attack on the piratical fleet, the Chinese Admiral pursued the few small vessels belonging to Le Afai, and captured several of them with Le Afai himself on board. However, it was reported to the governor-general that the Chinese war junks have destroyed the whole pirate fleet.[98]

Generally speaking, the Chinese water-force was poor in quality. According to Caldwell, the instances in which mandarins (belonging to the naval authorities) acted against the pirates were rare. It was only when the force of the pirates was so inferior to that of the mandarins that the mandarins would act against the pirates. Despite the fact that the mandarins' junks were repeatedly ordered to go after the pirates, it was their general habit to anchor in the same bay for some time and then report that the coast was already clear of pirates.[99] Even evidence extracted from Qing archival materials attests to the poor quality of the Chinese navy. Although there were clear rules governing cruising duties laid down for the water-force of Zhejiang 浙江 province, the soldiers tended to be lazy. They either hid away in the islands, or stayed somewhere close to towns. As a

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[98] An Account of the Principal Piratical Fleets and their Chiefs since the Year 1849 by D R Caldwell, 2 May 1859, ADM125/4/218-219
[99] Ibid
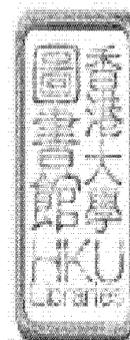
result, piracy became rampant, while the conditions of government craft constantly deteriorated.[100]

However, the blame should not be put on the cruise system alone. Sometimes, the mandarins belonging to the civil authorities were irresponsible in their duties, and obstructed piratical cases from being passed over to the naval authorities for further action. In 1850, a brig under English colors was captured by pirates and taken to somewhere near Yangjiang 陽江. The supercargo, a Chinese, requested the assistance of the mandarin on shore, who not only refused to do anything but tried to induce the supercargo to make a false statement to the magistrate of Yangjiang. Here, the supercargo was probably induced to say to the magistrate that the mandarin had already solved his problem. As a result, the case was not passed over to the naval authorities for further action (such as searching for the missing brig), at least until the case was exposed.

Training of Naval Personnel

Even the mode of training adopted by the Qing Government was hardly enough to ensure proper naval defense. With the lack of large-scale sea battles in the mid-Qing period, the training of the water-force was neglected. In 1806, the Jiaqing 嘉慶 Emperor denounced the commanders along the coast: 'when it was the 55th year of Qianlong 乾隆, an order was issued to substantiate the training of the naval force. With the passage of time, this was overlooked. With regard to sailing, soldiers do not bother to practice. In

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[100] *Choupan yiwu shimo* 籌辦夷務始末 (Kowloon: Zhongguo gujie zhenben gongyingshe, 1964), Daoguang, juan 67, P.1395

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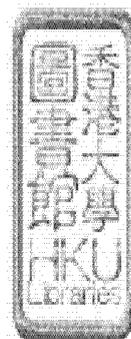
case there is any need of going out to sea, helmsmen have to be employed. Although known as the naval force, it does not possess knowledge of naval affairs.' Hence, Jiaqing issued more stringent orders to ensure the proper training of the water force, introducing advancements and penalties to outstanding and lazy men respectively. Even this did not help much to improve the quality of training. Zhang Tieniu 張鐵牛 and Gao Xiaoxing 高曉星, authors of Zhongguo gudai haijunshi (中國古代海軍史), attributed the problem to the lack of large-scale sea-battles since the founding of the Qing dynasty, as well as the overemphasis on horse-riding tactics.[101] Generally speaking, soldiers did not acquire a deep understanding of the oceanic environment[102], as the water force itself spent more time at the naval station than at sea. This, in turn, indicated how little training the soldiers received.[103] Although the whole Chinese water force comprised over 60,000 men, Wei Yuan 魏源, author of Haiguo tuzhi 海國圖志, remarked that the capable ones did not exceed a thousand.[104] Even worse, Guan Tianpei 關天培, Admiral of the Guangdong waterforce, pointed out that when he was inspecting the soldiers during their examination on shooting, the majority of them missed their targets, or just hit one out of many shots.[105]

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[101] Zhang Tieniu 張鐵牛 and Gao Xiaoxing 高曉星, Zhongguo gudai haijunshi 中國古代海軍史 (Beijing: Bayi chubanshe, 1993), 306
[102] Choupan yiwu shimo, Daoguang, juan 67, 1394/ zhang, 306
[103] Chou-pan yi-wu shi-mo, Daoguang, juan 67, 1395
[104] Wei Yuan 魏源, Haiguo tuzhi 海國圖志 (Taipei: Cheng Wen, 1967), juan 2
[105] Zhang Tieniu 張鐵牛 and Gao Xiaoxing 高曉星, Zhongguo gudai haijunshi 中國古代海軍史 (Beijing: Ba-yi chu-ban-she, 1993), 344
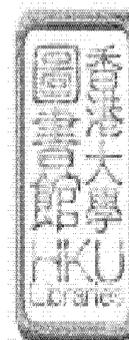
Quality of Naval Officers and Soldiers

Sometimes, even the naval officers were of poor discipline and incompetent to lead their subordinates during operations. On 2 September 1834, the *Canton Register* reported an interesting case. During a rebellion at Formosa, a part of the Xiamen squadron was sent over with soldiers to suppress the rebels. However, the Rear Admiral in charge did not follow the orders properly. Staying on board his junk, he invited the captains to a gambling party. As a result, these people passed day and night in their favourite passtime. Even after the bloody war was over, they had not yet finished their gambling. Upon their return to Jinmen 金門, they were accused of having neglected their duty, whilst the land forces had fought bravely. An order from the Emperor supported the provincial government's decision to deprive the culprits of a year's salary.[106] Another example was about a lieutenant of the waterforce, who had made it a rule for foreign merchants to deliver several hundred chests of opium to him out of every ten thousand chests exported to China. Sometimes, he even authorized the use of war junks to facilitate the importation of opium. In the end, he reported to his superiors that the several hundred chests of opium were derived from his successful suppression of smuggling activities.[107] Sometimes, naval officers colluded with civil officials to embezzle the funds provided for the construction of war junks, and as a result some of the war junks were never built.[108] With

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[106] *Canton Register*, 2 September 1834
[107] Zhang, 345
[108] Zhang, 345
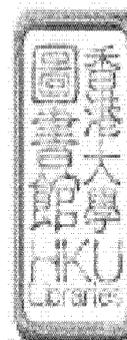
such corrupt naval officers, it was difficult to expect that duties assigned to them could be carried out properly.

The soldiers in the naval force were of poor quality, too. Other than the poor training of soldiers as mentioned above, we have to widen our scope of study to examine the Qing military establishment. In the mid-nineteenth century, the annual living expense of a Chinese was between 15 and 36 taels of silver, while the annual salary of a soldier was between 12 and 24 taels. In addition to this, there was 3.6 *dan* 擔 of grain provided to each soldier annually. Although it seemed that this income was more than enough for the soldier himself, we have to bear in mind that he had his family to take care of (from 2 to 5 people on the average).[109] With an income which soldiers could barely make a living on, it would be hard to find any of them fully dedicated to their duties. Indeed, many of them did turn to other undertakings to augment their income.[110] The morale of soldiers was further affected by the extortion practiced by their superiors, who used various designations to legitimize the regular payments the soldiers were forced to subscribe to. Sometimes, they did not have to use any designations at all, but just 'squeezed' money directly out of their subordinates. According to the record of the Fujian Green Standard unit, various military expenses were deducted from the salaries of soldiers by the officers.[111] Realizing the dark side of military services, many capable young men could have been deterred from joining. Hence, many of the naval units were unable to fulfil the

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[109] Mao Haijian 茅海建, *Tianchao de bengkui* 天朝的崩潰 (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 1995), 65
[110] Ibid
[111] Mao, 69-70
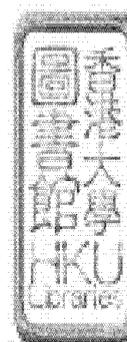
quota of soldiers set for them, and those staying in berets were usually old, feeble and incompetent ones.[112]

Chinese War Junks

Perhaps, we should also focus on the Chinese war junks. Laai Yi Faai argues in his thesis that since the Chinese naval force was depleted after the Opium War, no resistance whatsoever could be put up against the pirates infesting the coast. This argument is probably correct, but what Laai lacks is a longer historical perspective. Indeed, the Chinese war junks were hardly efficient long before the War. According to the *Chinese Repository*,

The Chinese war ships (junks) are large unwieldy looking masses of timber, with mat sail, wodden anchors, ratten cables, a considerable sheer, flat upright stems, no stern posts, enormously high sterns ornamented with gold and painting, considerably weakened too by a large hole in which the monstrous rudder can be hoisted up and housed in bad weather; immense quarter galleries, and look-out houses on the deck; generally drawing but little water, flat floored, painted red and black, with large goggle eyes in the bows.....looming particularly large in a calm; such is the appearance of a celestial 'first rate'.....[113]

It appeared that in the province of Guangdong alone, the local authorities had to pay for the maintenance of a force of about 90 to 100 war junks, and that the expense for each was estimated at $280 per month in the 1850s. According to Caldwell, they were mostly useless and unfit for suppressing piracy. Moreover, these vessels could be seen at all

[112] Haijun silingbu 海軍司令部, *Jindai Zhongguo haijun* 近代中國海軍 (Beijing: Haichao Chubanshe, 1994), 38
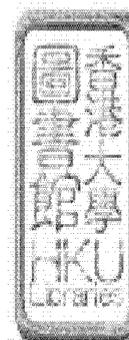
times in different ports, either laid up or altogether unserviceable, whereas the higher authorities were led into believing that they were manned and in good order. As a result, pirates anchored at these ports without the least fear of molestation, and frequently captured civil vessels at anchor.[114]

Most of the war junks were small and had only one mast. Typically, they were armed with two to four cannons. With their moderate speed, even civil vessels could overtake them. Furthermore, without the covering of copper plate over the hull, they could hardly offer much protection.[115] Huang Juezi 黃爵滋 once made a critical judgement on these war junks: 'with thin boards and old nails, they will be blown up immediately when attacks are made on them.'[116] According to him, these Chinese war junks were of no use at all. They were composed of broken helms and slanted masts, or suffered from some other defects. Occasionally, there were repairs, but such repairs were only meant to alter the colours of the junks. In the end, they were so seriously out of order that hardly anyone could handle them.[117] Sometimes, the war junks were just left on beaches, and nobody would bother to enquire about them. In some extreme cases, as found in the waterforce of Jiangsu 江蘇, around ten thousand soldiers were unable to find enough war junks to have them all accommodated.[118] Besides, Rawlinson points out that 'only a few junks were as a rule in one spot', indicating how insufficient the number of junks were in proportion to

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[113] *Chinese Repository* (Canton: Printer for the Proprietors, 1836), Vol. 5, 173
[114] An Account of the Principal Piratical Fleets and their Chiefs since the Year 1849 by D R Caldwell, 2 May 1859, ADM125/4/222
[115] Zhang, 344
[116] Zhang, 344-345
[117] Haijun silingbu, 37
[118] Zhang, 345
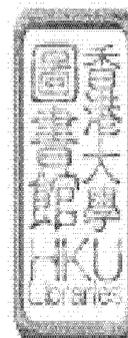
the long coastline.[119] Here, natural disasters did play a part. Ninety-three war junks of Guangzhou were disabled by bad weather during the years 1819 and 1820; and forty were disabled in one month in 1821.[120] In terms of weapons, the cannons on board war junks had only an effective range of around 330m to 360m. It is worth noting that Chinese pirates in this period already adopted European weapons which were superior to the Chinese weapons. At times when repairs immobilized many war junks, the pirates enjoyed the impunity to plunder.[121]

Fortifications along the Coast

Last but not least, we have to take a look at the fortifications along the coast of South China. According to Rawlinson, 'forts and guns ashore better symbolized China's defenses than did the war junk itself.'[122] However, as remarked by Caldwell, the same ineffectiveness characterizing the war junks also applied to most of the forts along the coast. Nearly all of these forts were quite unserviceable, and there were only two or three men to keep watch. Even those manning the guns did not necessarily know how to fire them, as was the case in the berets along the coast of Zhejiang 浙江.[123] As a result, Yuqian 裕謙, the governor of Liang Jiang 兩江, pointed out that 'at every port, the space allocated for guns was almost made redundant.'[124] Indeed, many of these guns could be traced back to as early as the Ming dynasty. Generally speaking, they were of poor

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[119] Rawlinson, 11
[120] *Chinese Repository* (Canton: Printer for the Proprietors, 1835), Vol.4, 561
[121] Rawlinson, 4
[122] Rawlinson, 15
[123] *Choupan yiwu shimo* 籌辦夷務始末, juan 28
[124] *Ibid*
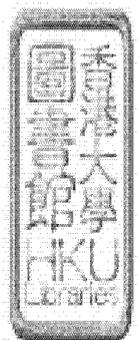
qualities, with short effective range (from around 330 to 990 metres) and feeble

destructive power. To make things worse, a number of them were covered with rust and

could be easily blown up. The kind of ammunitions used were not of good quality, too.

Even if they could successfully hit an enemy vessel, the destructive effect was far from

obvious. Besides, consistent with what Guan Tianpei mentioned with regard to the poor

shooting skills of soldiers, those guarding the forts seldom hit the targets accurately. In

retrospect, this was attributed to their limited training.[125] Also, a number of procedures,

such as the loading of ammunition and burning off the fuse, consumed plenty of time

before the guns could actually be fired. Thus, it was asserted: 'whenever a gun is fired,

the first shot seldom hits the target. When one takes a rush to reload the gun, the enemy

vessel has gone far away. There is no way to stop it in time.'[126] In addition, some of the

forts along the coast had decayed for some time. For instance, when the British passed

through the Chinese forts during the Opium War, they found many of the forts consisted

of only 'sandbags, mud and overturned boats.'[127] Besides, when large piratical fleets

infested the west coast of China in 1849, all the forts there were attacked and their guns

carried off.[128] In the end, the effectiveness of these forts was in serious doubt.

Finally, it is important to examine how various factors leading to piracy worked

together to bring about the increase of piracy after the First Opium War. Firstly, the end

of the Opium War led to mass unemployment in Guangdong, and as a result the

unemployed turned to piracy to make a living. Opium carried on board the vessels that

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[125] Haijun silingbu, 40
[126] Guan Tianpei 關天培, *Chouhai chuji* 籌海初集 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1968), juan 2/ 2
[127] Rawlinson, P. 15
[128] ADM125/4/217
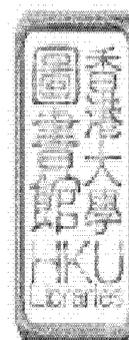
sailed to China constituted an attraction for committing piracy, as opium could ensure huge profits to the pirates. Since the Chinese navy rendered little policing function at sea, the pirates could plunder with impunity. Meanwhile, secret societies provided the nuclei for organizing piracies and the pirates. Piracy was further facilitated by the development of Hong Kong into a depot for pirates. This depot supplied the pirates with their equipment, arms and ammunitions, and the pirates kept their plunders in this depot until the appropriate time arrived for selling the plunders. Hence, rampancy of piracy had much to do with Hong Kong.
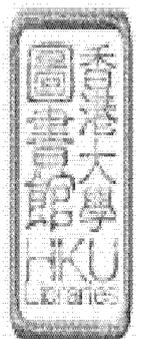
Annex 532

Stein Tonnesson, "The History of the Dispute", in *War or Peace in the South China Sea?* (T. Kivimaki, ed., 2002)

WAR OR PEACE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA?

Edited by Timo Kivimäki

NIAS
Press

2

THE HISTORY OF THE DISPUTE

Stein Tønnesson

Basically there are three ways of writing a history of the disputes in the South China Sea.[1] The first is to apply a national perspective, go as far back in history as possible in order to find evidence that the sea and its islands have been inviolable parts of one's own national patrimony.[2] The second is to compose a non-partisan legal treatise, present the chronology of conflicting claims to sovereignty, and evaluate their relative merits on the basis of international law.[3] The third is to write an international history, where events and trends are analysed on the basis of changes in the international system and the balance-of-power.[4]

Here we shall mostly follow the third approach, but with a side glance to the second. Although history does not need to be as important for the legal resolution of the dispute as is often imagined, it will play a certain role. Thus it does seem necessary to mention the critical dates when treaties, decrees or actions established the various claims to sovereignty over the Spratly and Paracel Islands.[5] Such dates can be found in the years 1877, 1909, 1930–33, 1946–47, 1951, 1956, 1974 or 1988. Readers who are interested in finding the optimal basis for settling the sovereignty disputes should look out for these years in the text below.

The main focus of the chapter will be on the central area of the South China Sea, which includes the Spratly and Paracel Islands (as well as Scarborough Reef, Macclesfield Bank and Pratas Island and Reef), but developments in the Gulf of Tonkin and the Gulf of Thailand will also be taken into consideration.

BEFORE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Although the concept of national sovereignty only really came to East Asia in the 19th century, 20th-century regimes would often read their claims to national sovereignty over islands, reefs and territorial waters much further back in time. They tried to sustain their claims by referring

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to archaeological finds and ancient documents. Chinese archaeologists have found Chinese objects in the islands of the South China Sea dating back more than 2,000 years. The degree to which these objects are 'Chinese' can, however, be disputed. Although an object may be Chinese in style or originally have been made in China, it was not necessarily brought to the island by someone representing China as a state. Then also, for almost a thousand years, much of today's Vietnam was part of the Chinese empire, and retained a tributary relationship to China until the French conquest in 1884.

Since China has the richest historical literature, it is Chinese written sources that contain the first and most frequent mentions of the South China Sea and its islands. The islands were frequented by collectors of feathers and tortoise shells, later also by fishermen, but when Chinese authors named the reefs in the South China Sea and tried to describe their location, the main purpose was to warn against them. These barely visible coral islands represented a great danger to ships sailing up and down the coast of Vietnam or along northern Borneo and the western coast of Palawan and Luzon. Ancient books also reveal the presence of ghastly demons both in the Paracel and the Spratly Islands.[6]

The South China Sea had two main ancient sailing routes, both going in a north–south direction: one along the eastern, the other along the western side of the sea. For captains navigating these routes, it was essential to stay clear of the Spratlys and the Paracels, which at the time were probably not clearly distinguished from each other, but instead considered as one continuous danger zone. When heavy winds blew ships off course, they would sometimes endow the reefs with added value in the form of shipwrecks and precious merchandise, thus producing fields of excavation for 20th-century national archaeologists. There were instances also in the old days when emperors or kings claimed the sole right to issue concessions to plunder shipwrecks. These claims have since been used as a historical argument for contemporary claims to sovereignty. This seems a dubious enterprise since international law requires not only discovery or economic exploitation but also a continuous exercise of sovereignty in order to establish a legitimate sovereignty claim.

From the 12th to the mid-15th centuries, Chinese ships dominated trade in the South China Sea. However, before that, traders from the Southeast Asian state of Sri Vijaya, who in turn had been linked to Muslim merchants of Persian, Arab and other origins, had played the dominant role. It was in this era that the Malay language was established as a lingua franca in long-distance trade. Chinese silk and ceramics were exchanged for Southeast Asian spices or Arab frankincense. Chinese commercial and naval shipping went through a period of intense expansion in the 14th to early 15th centuries, leading one expedition all

the way to Africa. Then suddenly the emperor ordered an end to the building of ocean-going ships. His decision provided new opportunities for other maritime nations, such as the Ryukuyu Kingdom in Okinawa and later, the Portuguese who took Melaka in 1511 and Macao in 1557, and later the Dutch. The Dutch dominated the lucrative spice trade during the 17th century. In the 18th and 19th centuries there was a resurgence of Chinese and also Vietnamese shipping; the first of the Vietnamese Nguyen kings, Gia Long (1802–20) and Minh Mang (1820–47), pursued an active maritime policy, and claimed sovereignty to the Paracels which, probably on the basis of erroneous Western maps, they believed to be a far more significant group of islands than it was in reality.[7]

After the 1830s, when the Europeans started systematic surveys of the tiny Spratlys and Paracels and produced more accurate maps, there is little evidence that the Nguyen dynasty upheld its claim through declarations, effective occupation or utilisation.

The British and French now arrived with increasing frequency, with superior ships and notably better cannons than the local naval powers. The British constructed Singapore as a port city, launched the Opium War (1839–42), acquired Hong Kong and established protectorates in Malaya and northern Borneo. The French displayed their naval supremacy by sinking a number of Vietnamese war junks off Da Nang in 1847. They colonised the whole of Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos) in 1863–84, and leased a territory on the Liaozhou peninsula (north of Hainan) from the 1890s to the 1940s.

THE COLONIAL POWERS AND CHINA

The Europeans brought fire power, silver, gold and opium, but also concepts such as 'sovereignty' and 'freedom of navigation'. They drew a crucial distinction between land and sea. Land was to be divided into territories with mapped and demarcated borders. The sea should be free for all, except for a narrow band of territorial waters along the coasts. Most of the countries around the South China Sea were made into British, French and Spanish colonies (the Spanish Philippines became American in 1898), and treaties were drawn up to separate them from each other. The monarchies in China, Japan and Thailand were not fully subjugated, but forced to open themselves up while also being invited to join the European international society. Thus they would have the right to sign treaties of their own and act as sovereign states. Their governments had to learn European ways: to map and demarcate land borders, delineate territorial waters, plant flags and set up sovereignty markers on islands, and tear down markers erected by others.[8]

The Sino–French treaty of 1887 decided the land border between China and French Indochina, and the dividing line between Chinese and Indochinese coastal islands in the Gulf of Tonkin. The land border

THE HISTORY OF THE DISPUTE

between French Indochina and Siam, and also the maritime border in the Gulf of Thailand, remained contested for much of the 20th century. The border established between the French protectorate Cambodia and Siam, and between Cambodia and the French colony Cochinchina (southernmost Vietnam) left Cambodia with a very short coast. This would put Cambodia at a serious disadvantage later, when maritime zones were calculated on the basis of distance from the coast. From the Cambodian perspective, it was a serious problem that it was deprived of the big offshore island Phu Quoc, which the French placed under the administration of Cochinchina.

The Europeans and Americans were not much interested in the Paracels and the Spratlys. Just as in the old Chinese books, on European maps the Spratlys were called 'Dangerous Grounds'. Nomadic fishermen, who mostly spoke Hainanese dialects and lived in Hainan during the monsoon, inhabited the larger islands during parts of the year. To Europeans the reefs and islets were mainly a danger to navigation, but British ships explored them and gave them British names (such as 'Spratly'). In the 1870s a group of merchants in northern Borneo wanted to exploit guano (bird dung used as fertiliser and for producing soap) on Spratly Island and Amboyna Cay. As a consequence, these two islands were claimed formally by the British crown in 1877. This was probably the first time that any state made a modern, Western-style legal claim to any of the Paracels or Spratly Islands. From then until 1933 Spratly Island and Amboyna Cay were regularly included in the British colonial list, but little was done to exploit them or sustain the British sovereignty claim.[9]

Although the Paracels occupied a strategic position along the shipping route between Singapore and Hong Kong, and were positioned between French Indochina and Hainan, neither Britain nor France took any steps to claim the archipelago before the 1930s. In the first decades of the 20th century, only the Chinese empire displayed an interest in the Paracels, notably by sending a mission to claim the island group in 1909, two years before the Qing dynasty succumbed to the Chinese Revolution. In the next three decades, China fell apart and suffered a series of civil wars, and was not in a position to uphold its claims to the islands through effective occupation or utilisation.

The factor that would generate a much keener interest in the Paracels and Spratlys was the arrival on the scene of a new naval power: Japan.

THE COMING OF JAPAN

Japan had destroyed the Chinese navy in the war of 1894–95 and established a presence in the South China Sea through the annexation of Taiwan (Formosa). Japanese merchant companies competed with the Europeans and Americans in the China trade, and in the years following the Great European War (1914–18), Japanese companies in Taiwan

started a systematic exploitation of guano both in the Paracels and the Spratlys, but without making formal claims. These operations were probably strategically motivated. The Japanese navy thought the islands would provide useful support points for a southward naval expansion.

It was the fear of Japanese expansion that led France to gain an interest both in the Spratlys and the Paracels. In 1930–33, France claimed the Spratlys for itself, and also occupied some of them. In 1938 it established a permanent presence in the Paracels, which were now being claimed on behalf of the protectorate Annam (today's central Vietnam), with basis in the claims made by the Nguyen dynasty in the early 19th century. France recognised, however, that there was a rival Chinese claim, and told the Chinese government that the stationing of a French garrison in the Paracels had a defensive purpose and would not prejudice the legal resolution of the dispute. Britain chose not to oppose the French actions in either the Spratlys or the Paracels, although it did not abandon its own claim to the Spratly Islands and Amboyna Cay from 1877, but merely let the claim stay dormant. Japan protested officially against the French actions.

In 1939, before it occupied Hainan, Japan established a military presence both in the Paracels and the Spratlys. To the dismay of Great Britain, who had relied on France to defend Western interests in the area, the French did not offer active resistance. Japan now launched its own formal claim to the two archipelagos as parts of the Japanese empire. Within the Japanese administrative system, the Spratlys depended on Taiwan and the Paracels on Hainan. The Western powers, including the United States, delivered protests in Manila, but the USA did not protest on anyone else's behalf, just against the unilateral Japanese action. China, ravaged by civil war, could not let its interests be heard, although the provincial Guangdong government was involved in rival demands for concessions to exploit guano in the Paracels.[10]

The Japanese dug out a submarine base in Itu Aba (the largest of the Spratly Islands) and this base is reported to have served as one of the vantage points for the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1942. In the previous year, Japan had entered into a treaty of cooperation with the French (Vichy) regime in Indochina. During much of the Second World War, French (in fact Vietnamese) and Japanese (in fact Taiwanese) troops lived side by side both in the Paracels and the Spratlys. Only in 1945 was the French garrison withdrawn from the Paracels.

SINO–FRENCH RIVALRY

Towards the end of the Second World War, the United States became the dominant naval power in the region, but the Americans showed little interest in the rocky islets in the South China Sea, except as targets

for shooting exercises. The most active claimant at the end of the Second World War was the Republic of China (the government of Chiang Kai-shek) who sent naval expeditions both to the Paracels and the Spratlys in 1945–46, set up sovereignty markers, and established a permanent presence on Woody Island and Itu Aba, respectively the largest island in each group. In 1947–48, Chiang Kai-shek's government also published a map with a dotted U-shaped line encompassing virtually all of the South China Sea. This map would later become standard both in Taiwan and in mainland China, but its legal status has never been clarified. It remains unclear if it is meant as a claim only to all the islands within the line, or if it also should be seen as a claim to the sea and sea-bed, as Chinese 'historical waters'.[11] Legal scholars and politicians in Taipei have quarrelled bitterly about this question.

France also sent expeditions to the Spratlys and the Paracels in 1946–47, reiterated its claims to both archipelagos, and made an unsuccessful attempt to force a Chinese garrison to depart from Woody Island in the eastern Paracels. After the failure France established a permanent presence instead, on behalf of Vietnam, on Pattle Island in the western part of the Paracels.

In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek's government fled to Taiwan, and mainland China became a people's republic (PRC). In May 1950, Chiang's forces were chased from Hainan as well, and shortly afterwards the troops on Itu Aba and Woody Island were withdrawn to Taiwan. This gave France an opportunity to take over the Chinese possessions. Paris decided *not* to use the opportunity, in order not to further compromise its interests in China. Thus Itu Aba and Woody Island, as well as the other Spratly and Paracel islands, remained unoccupied for a period of six years.

DECOLONISATION AND COLD WAR

In the following decades, the conflicts in the South China Sea were affected by the two dominant political processes of the period: decolonisation and the Cold War. The first decolonised states to emerge in the region were the Philippines and Vietnam. The Philippines gained independence in 1946, but when nationalists within the Philippine government wanted to claim the Spratlys, their American advisors discouraged them. The Spanish–American treaty of 1898 made it clear that the western limit of the Philippine islands did not include the Spratlys, and the United States was not keen to carry the cost of a Philippine irredentist adventure that might bring conflict with Chiang Kai-shek's regime in China.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was proclaimed on 2 September 1945, and was recognised by France as a 'free state' on 6 March 1946, but war broke out between France and the communist-led

Democratic Republic of Vietnam in November–December of the same year. When Vietnam was recognised as an independent state in 1950, it had two rival regimes. The Democratic Republic (under President Ho Chi Minh) was recognised by the PRC, the Soviet Union and the East European states. The State of Vietnam (under former emperor Bao Dai) was recognised by Britain and the United States, although for most practical purposes it remained a French colony. Ho Chi Minh depended on support from the PRC and was not in a position to oppose the view of the socialist camp, which held that the Paracels and Spratlys belonged to the PRC. Hainanese fishermen in the Paracels also seem to have assisted North Vietnam in transporting arms and other provisions to the guerrilla forces in South Vietnam.[12]

The leaders of the State of Vietnam tried to push France towards a more active irredentism on behalf of Vietnam both in the Paracels and the Spratlys. France held that the whole of the Paracels was Vietnamese, but claimed the Spratlys to be a French possession, not Vietnamese.

At the peace conference in San Francisco in 1951, Japan formally abandoned its claims to Hainan, Taiwan and all other islands in the South China Sea, but the treaty did not say to whom the other islands were ceded, although it was clear that Taiwan and Hainan would be Chinese. Neither of the two Chinese regimes was present in San Francisco. At this stage the whole socialist camp supported the PRC's claim, but France and the State of Vietnam (who were both represented in San Francisco) maintained their own claims to the two island groups. The USA (which had both France's and Chiang Kai-shek's interests in mind) and Britain (who still had its own claim to Spratly Island and Amboyna Cay, and had to think about its possessions in northern Borneo) preferred to let the matter remain unsettled. Sabah and Sarawak were relieved of British rule only in 1963, as constituent states within the Malaysian Federation, and the Sultan of Brunei did not want independence until 1984. Britain did little to push the interests of North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak in the Spratly area. In 1950, at the instigation of Australia, the British government examined the strategic importance of the Spratlys and the Paracels in order to decide if something ought to be done to prevent them from coming under the rule of a communist state. The conclusion was that the islands were of little economic or strategic value and that the Commonwealth could safely maintain its passive stance.

To compensate for its absence in San Francisco, the Republic of China on Taiwan negotiated its own peace treaty with Japan in 1952, and persuaded Japan to accept a clause about the Paracels and Spratlys that differed from the one in San Francisco in that Japan 'renounced all right, title and claim to Taiwan (Formosa) and P'eng-hu (Pescadores) as

well as the Spratly and the Paracel Islands'. The fact that the Spratlys and Paracels were mentioned along with Taiwan and the P'eng-hu, which are close to Taiwan, gave the impression that they all formed a Chinese whole. However, shortly afterwards, France and Japan exchanged letters to the effect that the new treaty had not, in the view of Japan, entailed any change in relation to the San Francisco treaty. The French government thus felt it had annulled the Taiwanese gain.

1956

1956 was a decisive year not only in Suez and Budapest, but also in the South China Sea. A group of Philippine maritime activists, led by the brothers Thomas and Filemon Cloma, had grown tired of their government's passivity with regard to the western islands. With encouragement from the Philippine vice-president, and claiming that the islands west of Palawan had become *res nullius* after Japan had abandoned them, they sent an expedition to occupy a number of them and proclaimed a new *Kalaya'an* (Freedomland). Thomas Cloma introduced a distinction between his Freedomland and 'the Spratly Islands' further to the west. This distinction, which later became a part of the Philippines policy, was never fully clarified, but it seems that Freedomland encompasses most of what others call the Spratly Islands, but not Spratly Island itself and the banks and reefs lying west of it.[13]

The action of the Cloma brothers triggered a stream of protests, claims and counter-claims. Taiwan reacted strongly and sent a force to expel the Filipinos, but when the Taiwanese arrived, the Cloma party had already left. Not long after, Taiwan proceeded to reoccupy Itu Aba (which it had abandoned in 1950) and has since retained a regular presence, from 1971 a permanent occupation.

The PRC also restated its own claim. Its navy could not yet project power as far south as the Spratlys, but the PRC established a permanent presence in Woody Island of the eastern Paracels, which had only been seasonally inhabited by Hainanese fishermen since Chiang's troops left in 1950. The Vietnamese garrison in Pattle Island in the western Paracels was around the same time relieved of its French command and shifted to US logistical support. South Vietnam also pronounced its own claim to the Spratlys, issued a protest against the Cloma action, and sent an expedition to the Spratlys to erect Vietnamese markers. France did not support the Vietnamese protest, but delivered its own protest in Manila, in defence of its own claim. Britain, Japan and the USA did not take any official position. In 1957 the French government decided to do the same with its Spratly claim as Britain had done in the 1930s: neither officially abandon it nor try to defend it further.[14]

OIL AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

By the mid-1950s British and US oil companies had started to show interest in the possibility of discovering oil in the Spratly area, as an extension of their activities in northern Borneo. Yet oil only really became a factor in the sovereignty dispute in the years 1969–73, at the height of the Vietnam War. The prospect of finding oil provided a new motive for pursuing sovereignty claims, and made it more acceptable to spend resources on keeping troops and other personnel in these unfriendly places.

In 1967 an initiative was taken on the global level to open negoti-ations about the fate of those parts of the world's continental shelf that lie beyond national jurisdiction. In 1969 the International Court of Justice in the Hague adjudicated the North Sea Continental Shelf cases by enunciating the natural prolongation principle, i.e., that national jurisdiction of the continental shelf could extend beyond the territorial waters limit. This led to the opening of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1973 (UNCLOS III, 1973–82), the year of the oil crisis. This refocused attention on how far national jurisdiction of the continental shelf could extend from the shore of a coastal state. In the light of these discussions it seemed increasingly important to possess all kinds of islands, since they could serve as arguments to claim an extensive continental shelf.[15]

The temptation to be more aggressive in pursuing claims in the Spratlys was reinforced when the coastal states participating in UNCLOS III started to push for the creation of so-called Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), where the coastal states would have sovereign rights to exploit the marine resources (notably fish). Kenya proposed a 200-nautical-mile EEZ as early as 1972, and although this was highly controversial, it won out in the end and became part of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOS Convention) that was signed in 1982. The 200 nautical-mile limit was made to apply not only to the sea, but to the sea-bed as well. The LOS Convention established that every coastal state could claim a continental shelf out to the same limit as the EEZ, regardless of the depth of the sea (and to a maximum of 350 nautical miles if the natural shelf was naturally prolonged that far). The states around the South China Sea supported these principles, and of course started to position themselves already in the 1970s in order to benefit as much as possible from the emerging legal regime. The LOS Convention was signed in 1982, and entered into force in November 1994, when the 60th state had deposited its instrument of ratification. It has now been ratified by all the states with claims in the Spratly area – except Taiwan – but not the UK or the USA.

In 1971, clearly motivated by the prospect of finding oil, the Philippines officially declared the *Kalaya'an* (the eastern part of the

Spratlys) to be part of the Philippines. In 1974, while awarding a concession to a consortium of companies to explore for oil, the Philippines occupied five islets in the Reed Bank area. The claim to Kalaya'an was reiterated in 1978, when the Philippines occupied two additional features.

In 1973, the same year as UNCLOS III started, South Vietnam awarded a number of oil exploration contracts to US companies in the area west of the Spratlys, and at the same time took steps to include the Spratlys under the administration of a South Vietnamese province. At the same time, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand made huge overlapping claims to continental shelf areas in the Gulf of Thailand. As we shall see below, the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam, which was founded in 1976, took over the South Vietnamese claims. In 1982, when the Law of the Sea Convention was signed (and three years after Vietnam had invaded and occupied Cambodia), Vietnam drew a system of straight baselines along most of its coast, as a basis for claiming a vast continental shelf and EEZ, and also established a principle (in agreement with its client regime in Cambodia) of a shared Cambodian–Vietnamese historical waters zone in the Gulf of Thailand.[16]

After Sabah and Sarawak left British rule to become part of the Malaysian Federation in 1963, Kuala Lumpur started preparing to make its own claims north of Borneo. A continental shelf act was passed in 1966 and 1969, and in 1979 Malaysia published a controversial map with an extensive continental shelf claim north of Borneo. It also claimed a number of islands and reefs within the area of the continental shelf claim, and sent troops to permanently occupy one of them in 1983, another in 1986. In the Gulf of Thailand, Malaysia and Thailand agreed in 1979 to establish a Joint Development Zone (JDZ) in the area where their continental shelf claims overlapped. It would, however, take 14 years before the zone could be formally established in 1993, and it was only at the end of the 1990s that gas production could begin under a joint legal regime.

The prospects of finding oil and the new law of the sea regime thus prompted a scramble for claiming continental shelf areas and for possessing reefs and islands. The most hotly contested area was the Spratlys. Vietnam moved in from the west, the Philippines from the east and Malaysia from the south, while Taiwan kept Itu Aba. By the mid-1980s, these four states had occupied virtually all such features that were permanently above the sea (high tide elevations). None of the states tried to drive other countries' troops off islands that were already occupied, but were satisfied to occupy new features. After Taiwan lost China's seat in the United Nations in 1971 and Japan and the USA switched their recognition to the PRC in 1979, Taiwan continued to occupy Itu Aba on behalf of China as a whole, not of a separate Taiwan.

The loser in the scramble for occupation of the Spratlys was the PRC, who came too late for the better pieces. However, a new factor would gradually increase the PRC's leverage: the regional isolation of Vietnam.

VIETNAM'S ISOLATION

Since it was recognised by the socialist camp in 1950, the DRV (North Vietnam) had given the impression of supporting the Chinese claims in the South China Sea, not through explicit official declarations, but through the publication of maps, personal communications, and an official declaration in 1956 that fully supported the PRC's recent declaration of territorial waters (without taking exception to the fact that the declaration had specifically mentioned the Paracels and Spratlys as Chinese).[17] It was South, not North Vietnam who pushed Vietnamese maritime irredentism in the South China Sea. During the last years of the Vietnam War, the relationship between the PRC and North Vietnam deteriorated, and Hanoi switched to the South Vietnamese stance. The South China Sea policy pursued by the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) from its founding in 1976 has been a continuation of South Vietnam's policy, not North Vietnam's.

In 1972, the PRC received President Nixon in Beijing, in the same year as the United States carried out its heaviest bombing of Hanoi. In January 1974, after the Paris peace accords which provided for US withdrawal from Vietnam and a year before the Ho Chi Minh offensive, which resulted in the North Vietnamese conquest of Saigon, the PRC attacked and drove out the South Vietnamese troops from the western Paracels. The United States did not intervene. Thus the PRC had ended the equivocal situation that had lasted since 1947, with Chinese troops occupying the eastern Paracels and Vietnamese troops holding the western (until 1956 under French command). Since 1974 the PRC has exercised full military control of the whole of the Paracels. There can be little doubt that the Chinese action in the Paracels in 1974 did much to arouse Hanoi's animosity towards Beijing, and to isolate the pro-Chinese faction in the Vietnamese communist leadership.

In response to the loss of the western Paracels, South Vietnam rushed to permanently occupy several Spratly Islands, using the same troops that had been driven out of the Paracels. In April 1975, even before the final conquest of Saigon, a North Vietnamese task force arrived in the Spratlys and took command of the Vietnamese garrisons there. Since then, Vietnam has gradually expanded its garrisons in the Spratlys and has always occupied more reefs and islands than any other power – despite the cost this must have entailed.

After the end of the Vietnam War, Vietnam and the PRC were rivals in trying to normalise their relations with the member states of the

THE HISTORY OF THE DISPUTE

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which had been formed by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand in 1967. The PRC won, and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978 isolated Vietnam from most other countries in the region. Vietnam came to depend on the Soviet Union, not least in naval matters. The former Japanese, French and American base in Cam Ranh Bay was now leased out to the Soviet Navy, and a joint venture with Soviet oil companies (Vietsovpetro) took over the oilfields that American companies had explored on the continental shelf of South Vietnam. For some years the South China Sea was an important theatre in the Soviet–American naval rivalry.[18] This made it difficult for the PRC to further improve its position, although it was in this period that the Chinese government started to allocate more resources to the PLA navy and to prepare for an assertive maritime policy.

Brunei and the PRC were the only claimant states not to control any features in the Spratly area during the 1980s. This changed when Gorbachev scaled down the costly Soviet deployments abroad and signalled serious reductions in Soviet support to Vietnam. Hanoi now found itself without any powerful allies, and the PRC utilised the situation to move into the Spratlys. A scientific expedition surveyed the area in 1987, and the following year the PRC occupied several reefs. One such reef was close to an island held by Vietnamese forces. The circumstances are disputed, but a battle occurred in March 1988, at which three Vietnamese ships were sunk and more than 70 troops killed or drowned.[19]

The PRC refrained, however, from ousting the Vietnamese forces from any of the positions they were holding. Some Chinese naval circles would later regret this, thinking a chance had been lost to establish hegemony in the Spratly area. As long as Vietnam was occupying Cambodia, it was unlikely that anyone would support Vietnam against the PRC. By 1989, Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia, thus providing the basis for a peace settlement. This made it possible to improve Hanoi's relationship with Beijing (normalisation of relations 1991) as well as with the countries of ASEAN (full membership 1995) and the United States (normalisation 1995 and normal trade relations 2000).

ASEAN VERSUS CHINA

In the 1990s, the main constellation was ASEAN versus China (with Taiwan still maintaining the same claims on behalf of 'China' as the PRC). At the same time the general relations between the states in the region tended to improve. This increased the possibilities of conflict management and dispute resolution, although little progress was made in the central part of the South China Sea. Progress was mainly made in the Gulf of Thailand and the Gulf of Tonkin.

17

WAR OR PEACE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA?

Thailand has the world's fifth largest trawling fleet, and incidents between Vietnamese coastguards and Thai fishing vessels formed an important part of the hostile relationship between the two countries in the 1980s. These incidents continued in the 1990s, and became so serious that both parties sought a solution. The breakthrough came in 1996 when Vietnam and Thailand reached an agreement both on fishery cooperation and on the delineation of the continental shelf. By then, Vietnam had also reached an agreement with Malaysia on establishing a Joint Development Zone in the area where their continental shelf claims overlapped. At the time of writing (2002), the remaining problem in the Gulf of Thailand is to negotiate agreements between Cambodia and its neighbour states. Cambodia has declared a wish to have a Joint Development Zone in the area where its claim overlaps that of Thailand. However, Cambodia no longer seems to accept the joint historical waters zone with Vietnam, which was established in 1982. Cambodia remains geographically disadvantaged, and it will therefore be difficult to find solutions that satisfy the Cambodians.

While negotiating with Thailand, Vietnam also engaged in negotiations with China about both the land border and the maritime border in the Gulf of Tonkin. A land border treaty was signed in December 1999, and treaties on fishery cooperation and maritime delimitation followed in December 2000. The latter treaties seem, however, to have been signed a little prematurely. Negotiations continued after the treaties were officially signed, and it took a long time before the delimitation treaty was made public.[20]

With regard to the disputes in the central part of the South China Sea, there were frequent informal and formal talks throughout the 1990s, and also a great number of incidents between naval forces, coastguards and fishermen, but no progress was made towards conflict resolution. The foreign ministers of ASEAN agreed on a joint declaration on the South China Sea in July 1992 and surprised the PRC by strongly supporting the Philippines in a dispute with the PRC over Mischief Reef in March 1995. The Philippines had discovered new Chinese military installations on this submerged reef, which is located in the eastern part of the Spratlys. Mischief Reef remained a serious bone of contention between the PRC and the Philippines throughout the decade.

ASEAN's unity was less firm towards the end of the decade. As a result of the dramatic political events resulting from the Asian crisis of 1997–98 in Indonesia and Malaysia, Malaysia's relations with the Philippines, Indonesia and Singapore worsened. In 1999, Malaysia pursued its own course in the Spratlys, occupying new features and moving closer to the PRC. An effort was made to maintain ASEAN unity, with Thailand taking over some of Indonesia's former role in brokering between the member states.

18

In the first half of the 1990s, the PRC refused to discuss the South China Sea with ASEAN, and said that it would only discuss the problem bilaterally with each of the states concerned. The PRC later softened its attitude and allowed the matter to be raised in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), as well as in meetings between Chinese and ASEAN representatives. In 1999, ASEAN agreed on a draft 'code of conduct' with the aim of preventing occupation of additional features and preventing conflict in disputed areas. The PRC agreed to negotiate with ASEAN about such a 'code of conduct', but came up with its own proposal, emphasising joint cooperation more than conflict prevention. There were several rounds of negotiations in 2000–01, with the aim of merging the two proposals into a common text. However, when the ASEAN leaders met with China to discuss the South China Sea at the ASEAN summit in Hanoi in July 2001, the disagreement between Malaysia and the other ASEAN states seemed more acute than the disagreements between the ASEAN states and China.[21]

It took time before issues related to the disputes in the South China Sea could be raised in formal international forums. However, throughout the 1990s, Indonesian Ambassador Hasjim Djalal and Canadian law professor Ian Townsend-Gault organised annual informal track 2 'Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea' workshops. Indonesia hosted them and Canada funded them. All the states around the South China Sea participated (including Taiwan) both in the annual workshops themselves and in a number of technical working groups.[22]

Djalal failed, however, to gain support from the PRC to create a Joint Development Zone in the central part of the South China Sea. In principle, China was in favour of joint cooperation schemes, but never came up with – or endorsed – concrete proposals. The main effect of the workshops was to pave the way for multilateral talks within the forums established by ASEAN and, possibly, for other regional mechanisms in the future. The legal, environmental and maritime experts in the region came to know one another. They also improved their understanding of the Law of the Sea.

Many commentators believed that China's reason for refusing to enter serious discussions about the South China Sea disputes was based on an expectation of gradually establishing a naval hegemony. When the Soviet naval presence at Cam Ranh Bay was scaled down and the US naval and air bases in the Philippines were closed in 1992, there was a feeling that a regional power vacuum had emerged and that a regional arms race might follow. A scare spread of 'creeping Chinese assertiveness'.[23] The PRC contributed to the scare by its naval build-up, by pressuring Taiwan, and by expanding its facilities in the Spratly area, notably its constructions on Mischief Reef. However, with the US naval

demonstration in the Taiwan Strait in 1996, Singapore's construction of new base facilities for the US Navy at Changi, and a new visiting-forces agreement between the USA and the Philippines in 1998, it became clear that the USA was not pulling out. The US Commander-in-Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), who was a major player in US diplomacy in East Asia under the Clinton administration, managed a discreet but persistent effort to demonstrate US technological supremacy and foster confidence-building measures. The main aim was to discourage 'rogue states' and to 'engage' the PRC. The new administration of President George W. Bush seemed in 2001 to give up 'engagement' and instead pursue a policy of strategic competition with China. This might lead to a more active posture of the USA also in the South China Sea, where a US spy plane collided with a Chinese fighter jet in April 2001. The fighter jet was lost, whereas the US spy plane was forced to land on Hainan Island. At the time of writing this chapter, the Bush administration's China policy does not yet seem to have been fully clarified, but China clearly tries its best to avoid open conflict.

Throughout the 1990s, both China and Vietnam tried to draw the attention of US oil companies to the exploration opportunities in the South China Sea, albeit with little success. In 1992, the PRC awarded a concession for oil exploration to the small US company Crestone within an area that Vietnam considers to be part of its continental shelf. Vietnamese naval vessels prevented the Sino-American exploration activities, and the Vietnamese government responded in 1996 by awarding a concession in the same area to another far more important US firm (Conoco). However, none of the American companies seemed eager to drill for oil as long as the area was disputed. Generally disappointing results from oil exploration on the Vietnamese continental shelf also reduced the oil industry's expectations of finding huge quantities of oil and gas under the Spratlys.[24]

Oil, however, was not the main bone of contention. The most dangerous incidents in the 1990s were related to fishing activities. Philippine patrol boats would regularly intervene to prevent 'illegal' Chinese fishing. On several occasions they shot at Chinese vessels, in 2000 killing a captain. Each time the PRC protested vehemently. In 1999, there were also Sino–Philippine incidents around Scarborough Shoal, a disputed feature that is not part of either the Paracels or the Spratlys, but situated between Luzon and the Paracels, not far from the former US naval base at Subic Bay.

Fishing disputes have a long tradition in the South China Sea, but a new aspect of the disputes in the 1990s was an increasing awareness of the danger that fish stocks may become depleted, and of other serious threats to the marine environment. This was reflected at the track 2 workshops in Indonesia, since the environment was something everyone

could agree to talk about. The participating countries agreed to cooperate in scientific research and in the monitoring of biological diversity. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) also drew up an ambitious Strategic Action Plan for protecting the environment in the South China Sea. For a long time the PRC refused to participate, but gave the green light in late 2000, with the proviso that the programme must not concern disputed areas. Chinese environmental agencies, and also some coastal provinces, have themselves become deeply worried by diminishing fish stocks. The PRC launched a unilateral temporary ban on fishing in 1999, and the protection of fish stocks formed an essential part of the Sino-Vietnamese negotiations leading to the treaty on fishery co-operation in the Gulf of Tonkin in December 2000. The treaty will hopefully be a step forward in terms of both environmental awareness and maritime conflict resolution.

The overall impression is, at the threshold of the 21st century, that most of the countries of ASEAN are readier than ever before to enter a process of conflict resolution, despite some internal disagreements, notably with Malaysia. China has also recently been more forthcoming, but its main priorities still lie elsewhere: to benefit from its WTO membership, reunify with Taiwan, and prevent a US-dominated re-unified Korea. If China decides to enter a process of conflict resolution in the South China Sea, one of the main motives will be to forestall active US involvement. Another motive might be to establish a foreign policy area where Chinese Taibei could be invited to play a role – as a part of China. There is still ample room for pessimism, but it has also been stated, in a recent doctoral thesis, that the seeds of a regional order in the South China Sea have been sown. This possible order would be based partly on continued US naval supremacy, and partly on growing regional cooperation between ASEAN and China.[25]

NOTES

1   This chapter has been written on the basis of Stein Tønnesson: 'An international history of the dispute in the South China sea', *East Asian Institute Working Paper* No. 71, 16 March 2001, which also served as basis for an article submitted to the *Asian Journal of Social Science.*

2   Chinese and Vietnamese historians are here the main practitioners.

3   Good examples of the second kind of history can be found in Greg Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier. International Law, Military Force and National Development*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, Australia, 1998. See also Mark J. Valencia, John Van Dyke and Noel Ludwig, *Sharing the Resources of the South China Sea*, The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1997 (pbk Hawaii University Press, 1999).

4   A source of inspiration for such a history is Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific, 1945–1995*, London: Routledge, 1996.

15 A highly readable account of the history of the Law of the Sea, and particularly of UNCLOS III, is Clyde Sanger, *Ordering the Oceans. The Making of the Law of the Sea.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

16 Daniel J. Dzurek, 'Maritime Agreements and Oil Exploration in the Gulf of Thailand'. In Gerald Blake, Martin Pratt, Clive Schofield and Janet Allison Brown (eds), *Boundaries and Energy: Problems and Prospects.* The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998, pp. 117–135.

17 A summary of the North Vietnamese statements that are often said to represent a legal *estoppal* of Vietnamese sovereignty claims can be found in Greg Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier*, pp. 126–130.

18 Derek da Cunha, *Soviet Naval Power in the Pacific.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990.

19 Chang Pao-min, 'A New Scramble for the South China Sea Islands'. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 12, no. 1 (June 1990), pp. 24–29; Sheng Lijun, 'Beijing and the Spratlys'. *Issues and Studies*, vol. 31, no. 7 (July 1995), pp. 18(45 (p. 26); Chen Hurng-yu, 'The PRC's South China Sea Policy and Strategies of Occupation in the Paracel and Spratly Islands'. *Issues and Studies*, vol. 36, no. 4 (July/August 2000), pp. 95–131 (pp. 100–102).

20 An English translation of the treaty on fishery cooperation, including a discussion of it, can be found in Zou Keyuan, 'Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Agreement in the Gulf of Tonkin'. *East Asia Institute Working Paper*, no. 77. Singapore, 23 May 2001.

21 Communication 1 Sept. 2001 from Do Hung (Radio France Internationale), who was present in Hanoi during the summit and interviewed several foreign ministers and their advisors. For the code of conduct, see Chapter 9 in this volume.

22 Hasjim Djalal, 'Indonesia and the South China Sea Initiative'. *Ocean Development and International Law*, vol. 32, no. 2, April–June 2001, p. 97–103; Ian Townsend-Gault, 'Preventive Diplomacy and Pro-activity in the South China Sea', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 20, no. 2 (August 1998), pp. 171–189; Lee Lai To, *China and the South China Sea Dialogues.* Westport CO: Praeger, 1999.

23 Ian James Storey, 'Creeping Assertiveness: China, the Philippines and the South China Sea Dispute'. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 21, no. 1 (April 1999), pp. 95–118.

24 Robert A. Manning, *The Asian Energy Factor.* New York: Palgrave, 2000, pp. viii–ix.

25 Liselotte Odgaard, 'Deterrence and Cooperation in the South China Sea. An Analysis of the Spratly Dispute and the Implications for Regional Order between the PRC and Southeast Asia after the Cold War'. PhD dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark, December 1999.

Annex 533

Nha Nguyen, *Process of Establishing Vietnam's Sovereignty over the Hoang Sa (Paracel) and Truong Sa (Spratly) Archipelagoes* (2002)

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NGUYỄN NHÃ

PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING VIETNAM'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE HOÀNG SA (PARACEL) AND TRƯỜNG SA (SPRATLY) AECHIPELAGOES

MAJOR: HISTORY OF VIETNAM
CODE: 5.03.15

DOCTORAL THESIS IN HISTORY

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1. PGS (Associate Professor) Huỳnh Lứa
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HỒ CHÍ MINH CITY
2002

[…]

2.1.2. Chinese and Western documents affirming Vietnamese sovereignty over the Hoàng Sa (Paracel) and Trường Sa (Spratly) Archipelagoes.

+ Chinese documents affirming Vietnamese sovereignty over the Hoàng Sa (Paracel) and Trường Sa (Spratlys) Archipelagoes:

Prior to 1909, i.e. the territorial dispute period, there were numerous Chinese and Western documents that affirmed, directly or indirectly, Vietnam's sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly archipelagoes. The first document is **Hải Ngoại Kỷ Sự (Records of Overseas Events) by Thích Đại Sán (**a Chinese monk**) in 1696** (2.20).

In *Hải Ngoại Kỷ Sự (Records of Overseas Events), Vol. 3,* he mentions Vạn Lý Trường Sa (Ten Thousand Mile Long Strip) or Paracels, and describes Lord Ngãi's exercise of Vietnam's sovereignty over this archipelago:

"*There was a strip of sand running from the Northeast to Southwest, rising like a sea wall whose lowest part was at sea level; the sand was as hard as iron and could smash apart any ship approaching. The sand strip, as they called it "Vạn Lý Trường Sa" (Ten Thousand-Li Golden Sand), was hundreds of miles wide, and went on for a limitless length. Upon the island, no house or plants could be found. Ships forced onto the sand strip by raging waves, if not wrecked by the storm, would not survive due to the lack of food and fresh water. The sand strip was 700 miles or 7 days of travel from Đại Việt. During the previous dynasty, fishing boats were tasked with scavenging the sand strip for jewelry, and tools from the wrecked ships. During fall when the current dried up to the East, one gentle breeze could carry the ship a hundred miles; even a mild wind could present an imminent danger under the Spratlys.*" [116, 125]

Thích Đại Sán described the experience of sailing through the Paracels or Vạn Lý Trường Sa and suggested it would take seven days to travel from the Paracels to Đại Việt. Many Vietnamese documents also mentioned that it would take one day to travel between these islands, therefore crossing hundreds of miles to reach Đại Việt would take as many as seven days. This conclusion is found to be reasonable because travelling from the shore of Vietnam to the Paracels' nearest island would take three days.

"During the previous dynasty, fishing boats were tasked with scavenging the sand strip for jewelry, and tools from wrecked ships," Thích Đại Sán's statement is found to also be consistent with the descriptions of Hoang Sa Flotilla's operations noted in many Vietnamese documents. Their operations were most active during the Lord Nguyễn Phúc Chu Era (1691–1725), also possibly during the Lord Nguyễn Phúc Trăn Era (1687–1691) as well as during other Nguyễn Lords-Era. Thích Đại Sán's observation of Đại Việt's sovereignty over the Paracels was considered objective because there was no territorial dispute during this time. This leads one to believe that the objective and knowledgable Thích Đại Sán only stated the obvious historical facts because there were no records of other Đại Việt's territories listed in any official documents belong to Chinese dynasties. The Westerners, even with their conquering nature would never announce their conquest of lands to other nations.

- **All ancient maps drawn by Chinese cartographers prior to 1909 confirmed that Tây Sa (Xisha) and Nam Sa (Nansha) had never been part of China.** Prior to 1909, all ancient maps made by Chinese cartographers depicted China's southeastern border ending at Hainan island and neither Xisha nor Nansha islands are seen on these maps nor is there evidence of any similar islands that China is conjuring up

For example, "**<u>Dư địa đồ</u>**" [Geographical map], made by Chu Tư Bản during the Nguyên (Yuan) Era, printed in "**Quảng Dư đồ**", Vol. 1, **by La Hồng Tiên,** published in 1561, showed the southernmost end of Chinese territory is Hải Nam (Hainan) island [58], (figure 2.36).

- "**<u>Thiên Hạ Thống Nhất Chi Đồ</u>**" [United Country Map] in Đại Minh Nhất Thống Chí [Book of the United Great Ming], Vol. 1, published in 1461, during the Minh (Ming) Era showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.37).

- "**<u>Hoàng Minh Đại Thống Nhất Tổng Đồ</u>**" [General Maps of the Great United Royal Ming], made by Trần Tổ Thụ, printed in Hoàng Minh Chức Phương Địa Đồ, Vol. 1, published in 1635, during the Minh (Ming) Era, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.38).

- "**<u>Lộ Phủ, Châu Huyện Đồ</u>**" [Map of Localities], edited by Nguyễn Quốc Phụ, printed in Kim Cổ Dư Đồ [Modern and Ancient Maps], last volume, published in 1638, during the Minh (Ming) Era, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.39).

- "**<u>Hoàng Triều Phủ Sảnh, Châu, Huyện Toàn Đồ</u>**" [Royal Court Map of Localities], made by an anonymous author, a copy of "Nội Phủ Địa Đồ" and consisted of 26 pieces labelled "Đại Thanh Trực Tỉnh Toàn Đồ," published in 1862, during the Chinese Thanh (Qing) Era, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.40).

- "**<u>Hoàng Triều Nhất Thống Dư Địa Tổng Đồ</u>**" [Royal Court General United Geographical Map]*,* made by an anonymous author, printed in Hoàng Triều Nhất Thống Dư Địa Tổng Đồ published in1894, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.41).

- "**<u>Quảng Đông Tỉnh Đồ</u>**" [Guangdong Province Map], compiled by the mandarins of Quảng Đông (Guangdong) in 1897, prefaced by Governor Trương Nhân Tuấn, printed in **Quảng Đông Dư Địa Tổng Đồ**, showed no archipelago in the South China Sea [58], (figure 2.42).

- "**Đại Thanh Đế Quốc**" [The Great Qing Empire], printed **in "Đại Thanh Đế Quốc Toàn Đồ,"** published by Shanghai Commercial Press in 1905, fourth edition in 1910, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.43).

- "**Đại Thanh Đế Quốc Vị Trí Khu Hoạch Đồ" (1909)**, like the above maps, showed the southernmost end of China is Hải Nam (Hainan) Island [58], (figure 2.44).

After 1909, many Chinese maps drew Nansha and Xisha into Chinese territory. Of these maps, the "Trung Quốc Cương Giới Biến Thiên Đồ" [Chinese Border Changing Map] in 1939, drew the Qing empire borders all the way to near Indonesia, including Korea [58] (figure 2.45).

In addition, some ancient documents that China has presented to prove early discoveries by the Chinese (but these are in fact only conjectures without any solid basis to substantiate the claim of Chinese sovereignty) were all written about foreign countries, such as Giao Châu Dị Vật Chí [Book of Strange Things in Giao Châu] by Dương Phù. Giao Châu was Vietnam and "North's colony" for a time. Those authors quoted Chư Phiên Chí [Book About Vassal States] by Triệu Nhữ Quát (not Triệu Nhữ Thích), from the Nam Tống (Southern Song) dynasty (1225) and mentioned Thiên Lý Trường Sa, Vạn Lý Thạch Đường in Phiên Quốc (Vassal State), i.e. another country and not China. Chinese ancient documents also quoted *Phù Nam Truyện* by Khang Thái (Ngô Tam Quốc era) [Wu dynasty in the era of Three Kingdoms], *Nam Châu Dị Vật Chí* by Vạn Chấn (Wu dynasty). *Chư Phiên Đồ* in the Song dynasty showed Chinese bordered other countries at Giao Dương [Sea of Giao] or Giao Chỉ Dương. Giao Chỉ Dương or Giao Chỉ Sea is the Gulf of Tonkin whereas Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa are much farther away from the Gulf of Tonki.... Therefore, the above ancient documents indirectly prove that Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa, which are called Xisha, Nansha by China, do not belong to China but are part of other countries that China called Phiên Quốc, or Giao Châu, Nam Châu.

After China used force to seize and occupy Hoàng Sa in January 1974, many Chinese archaeological missions have come to the islands in this archipelago and "discovered" many antiquities such as ancient money, ceramic objects, and sculpted stone objects on these islands. These objects, however, are not proof of Chinese sovereignty because Roman coins have been also found in Óc Eo (An Giang) in the South of Vietnam but that doesn't mean Óc Eo (An Giang) was under Roman sovereignty. Chinese archaeologists also found 14 desolate and homeless spirit temples and declared that they had existed since the Minh Thanh (Ming Qing) dynasties. Of those temples, two are on Vĩnh Hưng (Yongxing) island, or Phú Lâm (Île Boisée – Woody Island). The Hàn Chấn Hoa group re-edited the newspaper article "Back from Xisha Islands" published in Đại Công Báo Hong Kong (Takungpao) on March 31, 1957 and described these two temples as follows:

"On Vĩnh Hưng Island, there are 2 temples built by fishermen. The one on the south side is called "desolate-and-homeless-spirit temple" and the one on the north side is called "Hoàng Sa Tự" [Hoàng Sa Pagoda]" (Hàn Chấn Hoa, Lâm Kim Chi, Ngô Phượng Bân, *Ngã Quốc Nam Hải Chư Đảo Sử Liệu Hội Biên,* Chapter 1, page 115)

"Hoàng Sa Tự" is the clear proof that Vietnamese kings and lords established Vietnam's sovereignty, especially during Minh Mạng's rule, by sending the navy to Hoàng Sa to build temples and pagodas as presented in this chapter.

* Western documents substantiated Vietnam's sovereignty over Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa archipelagoes.

In 1494, Pope Alexandre VI used his spiritual authority to divide influences in the world between the two countries of Spain and Portugal. This division was made official by the treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. As a result, Portuguese merchant fleets sailed to the East, i.e.   India

and China. Portugal opened a merchant station in Macao (China) in 1511 and colonized Macao in 1557. Since then, many merchant ships have been using the East Sea (South China Sea) and Portuguese navigators explored the East Sea and Hoàng Sa.

A Portuguese Jesuit, Fernão Mendes Pinto, wrote the voyage journal **Peragrinacão** (translated into French as *Pérégrination*) about his voyage in 1545, published in Lisbon in 1614, in which F.M. Pinto described Hoàng Sa Islands, which he called Pulo Pracela (In Portuguese, Pracela means coral, Pulo means island, islet). During this time, the missionaries followed merchant ships to promote evangelism in Đàng Ngoài of Vietnam (the Northern part of Vietnam) in 1533. The sea route from Malacca to Macao in early 16th century was difficult because merchant ships collided with underwater reefs in the East Sea (South China Sea). Many voyage journals of Portuguese explorers in the second half of the 16th century recorded a high reef called Pullo Sissir (Baixos de Pullo Sissir), (parallel 10) that was considered very dangerous. This reef was found to be more and more expansive, covering the whole of Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa Islands today, similar to what the contemporary Vietnamese geographers found at the time. More information emerged but it was only vaguely learned that there are many shoals just about a head above the waterline and they are always covered by the waves. At night, ships had to come very close before those shoals could be seen. A number of islands were covered with grass and salt, others with sand. Those sea-lanes that are clear of reefs usually are very narrow and sailors could only pass through with God's blessings. These authors advised the sailors not to venture far away from Champa coast.

Like those voyage journals, nautical charts of Portuguese explorers in the second half of the 16th century reflected a common perspective and knowledge of an archipelago that they

called Pracel as a long "ribbon" or a unbroken curved knife blade running parallel to the shore of Đàng Trong [the Southern part of Vietnam] at the time. The rarest and most ancient maps of the Portuguese explorers that recorded Hoàng Sa (Parcel) Islands are still maps from mid-16th century. Those were the Bartholomen Velho map (1560) (figure 2.46) reproduced in P.Y. Manguin's works and an anonymous map in Livro da Marinharia, reproduced on Peregrination by F.M. Pinto (figure 2.47). These two relatively similar maps of 1560 reflected accurately the Western knowledge of Hoàng Sa at the time. In general, the West, typically the Portuguese, had not known much about Hoàng Sa or any country's sovereignty over these islands. The shape of Hoàng Sa that the Portuguese called J Do Pracel above is also a long strip of small dots extending from about Chàm Island off Hội An coast, called Pulo Campello, to Thu Island (Phú Quý Island), recorded as Pulo Sissir, off the Phan Thiết coast today. The long and wide strip and the dark dots in the North become narrower in the South and ends with a small dot like a pointed "ribbon" at the bottom. That Pracel "ribbon" in "Livro da Marinharia" by F.M. Pinto consists of more dots, darker in the north and the width of the lower part is much narrower.

Towards the end of 16th century, the Fernao Vaz Dourado map (1590) (figure 2.48) showed that the Portuguese were still not much wiser. However, the Dutch had become very active in this area as evidenced by the more complete Van Langren map of 1595 (figure 2.49) with a lot of details, especially in the Central Region. It also contained many clearer details, especially the Hồng (Red) river was drawn to have originated from Vân Nam (Yunnan), recorded then as Suinam. To the Northwest of Parcel is Hải Nam (Hainan)   Island,   which   was

recorded as I Ainam. To the Northeast and East, no name was mentioned but unbroken dark dots were drawn in that area. The Van Langren map (1595) specially recorded not only a cape of Varella but also a coast called Costa da Pracel on the opposite side of Pulo Canton (Ré Island) within the boundaries of Quảng Ngãi province.

In the 17th century, due to various reasons, the Portuguese lost their monopoly in the East Sea (South China Sea). Other countries had become more powerful and increased their presence in this body of water, around Hoàng Sa Islands. The Portuguese's most powerful competitor at this time was the Dutch. Then came the British and French. Unlike the business model of the Portuguese in the previous century, Dutch, British, and French maritime activities in this century were mainly engaged by international commercial companies, authorized and sponsored by those governments, i.e. the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C. [*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*]) founded in 1602 and the British East India Company founded in 1600. Hoàng Sa was on the international trading route at the time and considered by the Westerners as a vital strategic position.

In the 18th century, the East Indian Companies surveyed the East Sea thoroughly. From the survey expedition of the Kergariou–Locmacria in 1778–1787 in the East Sea, the Westerners could understand it better and more accurately, and they no longer feared or relied on previous myths about the East Sea. Sea-lanes were relatively safer, though they never denied that there were dangers and risks of being wrecked in the Paracels waters.

Through activities of their missionaries and merchants, especially after bishop Pigneau de Béhaine helped Nguyễn Ánh militarily, the French started to pay attention to Vietnam. Learning from the Portuguese and the Dutch, they knew very well about the political

situation in Đàng Trong [the Southern part of Vietnam] and Đàng Ngoài [the Northern part of Vietnam] during the civil war as well as after the unification. It is due to this that the Westerners were well aware of Vietnam's sovereignty over Hoàng Sa.

Therefore, it is the French who started to provide accurate documents on the establishment of Vietnam's sovereignty over Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa Archipelagoes. The following are some of the main documents:

- **Journal on the Amphitrite (1701) confirmed the Paracels belonged to An Nam.**

Papers and journals of the Westerners, including the French, were included in the collection of "Letters Edifiantes et Curieuses" in Archives des Missions Étrangères de Paris, Paris, 1838, 4 vols.

In this collection, the journal on the vessel named Amphitrite transporting French missionaries to the Paracels in 1701 contains the following:

"*The vessel weighed anchor in good wind. After some time, she reached the Paracels ledge. The Paracel is an archipelago belonging to the country of An Nam. That is a group of terrible reefs of hundreds of miles where many shipwrecks had occurred.*" [66]

- **"Le Mémoire sur la Cochinchine" by Jean Baptiste Chaigneau (1769–1825), written during the final years of Gia Long (1816–1819) stated clearly that King Gia Long established Vietnam's sovereignty over the Paracels.**

Jean Baptiste Chaigneau (1769–1825) was named Nguyễn Văn Thắng and conferred the title of Thắng Toàn Hầu by King Gia Long for helping Nguyễn Ánh in the struggle against Tây Sơn. He replaced J.M. Dayot at the end of 1796 to be in charge of the Phi Long vessel and participated in the battle of Thị Nại in 1801. He was based in Quảng Nam–Huế and in charge of supplies for the troops in Phú Xuân (edict of March 16, 1802).

He wrote "Le mémoire sur la Cochinchine" and A. Salles, a colonial inspector, published this memoir in the *Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Huế,* No. 2, April–June 1923, in which the following quotation is found:

"The country of Cochinchine where the current king proclaimed himself emperor consists of Đàng Trong (Cochichine proprement dite), Đông Kinh (Tonquin), part of Cambodia, a number of inhabited islands not far from the coast and the Paracel Islands of many uninhabited islets, underwater reefs and rocks. Not until 1816 did the current emperor assert sovereignty over that archipelago" [36, 13] [177]

- **"Univers, histoire et description de tous les peuples, de leurs religions, mœurs et coutumes" published in 1833 by Bishop Taberd stated that Emperor Gia Long officially asserted sovereignty over the Paracel Islands in 1816.**

Bishop Jean Louis Taberd wrote in the *"Univers, histoire et description de tous les peuples, de leurs religions, mœurs et coutumes"* published in 1833, about the Paracels as follows:

"We are not listing the main islands of Cochinchine. We only want to note that for more than 34 years, the Paracel Archipelago, called Cát Vàng or Hoàng Sa (meaning Golden Sand) by the Vietnamese, consisting of so many islands, rocky sandy beaches creating fear in seafarers, had been occupied by the Vietnamese from Đàng Trong."

"We don't know if they have built any structures there, but we are certain that Emperor Gia Long has purposely added that strange flower to his crown. That is why he found it necessary to personally travel there at the right time to receive the Paracels, and it was in 1816 that he officially raised the flag of Đàng Trong on the island." [66] [186]

- **An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ by Bishop Taberd published in 1838 confirmed that Cát Vàng (Hoàng Sa) is the Paracels and lies within the territorial waters of Vietnam. [27]** (figure 2.50)

This map was appended to the back of the Vietnamese-Latin Dictionary entitled "Latino-Anammiticum" published in 1838 by Bishop Taberd, who had been King Minh Mạng's interpreter since November 1826. The map is 80cm long, 44cm wide and printed on the paper usually used for maps. The map title was printed in three languages: Chinese, Vietnamese and Latin.

An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ [Map of the Great Country of Annam] is a document reflecting the deep and accurate knowledge of the Westerners from the 16th century to early 19th century of the relationship between the Paracels and Đại Việt that the author called An Nam Đại Quốc [the Great Country of Annam]. This is an emphatic proof that clearly shows:

1. Paracels, the name that the Westerners used to call the archipelago in the East Sea [South China Sea] in the period from the 16th century to early 19th century is indeed Cát Vàng or Hoàng Sa of Vietnam. This map noted "Paracels Seu Cát Vàng." In the East Sea, there is no Chinese Hải Nam (Hainan) Island but only Vietnamese islands. The archipelago is at roughly 17 degrees North and 111 degrees East, consisting of a number of islands (depicted as dots) with the caption "Paracels Seu Cát Vàng." The word *Seu* (Latin) = "means," *Cát Vàng* (Nôm [old Vietnamese language]) means "*Hoàng Sa*" [Golden Sand] (Sino-Vietnamese). Paracel = Cát Vàng = Hoàng Sa is a unanimous and clear confirmation and not a conjecture like the Chinese Tây Sa (Xisha).

2. The An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ does not contain Hải Nam (Hainan) Island or any other islands that belong to neighboring countries. It shows only "Paracel Seu Cát Vàng,"

proving Paracel Seu Cát Vàng is within the borders of An Nam Đại Quốc [The Great Country of Annam] or Đại Việt.

3. The name of Paracel written next to the dots representing the islands at approximately 16 degrees North (same latitude as Tư Dung port, Thừa Thiên) to 17 degrees North, about Cửa Tùng [Tung Port] (Quảng Trị) and 111.18 degrees East. This reflects the accurate knowledge of the Westerners about Hoàng Sa and Hoàng Sa was no longer lumped together with Trường Sa Archipelago.

On the land portion of the map is the following long line: "An Nam Quốc Seu Imperum Anamiticum" and "Cocincina interior" seu "An Nam Đàng Trong" and in the South "Lũi Sầy" seu "Murus magnus separans Olim Utrumque regne" and "Cocincina exterior," Đàng Ngoài seu "Tunquinum," which tells us that the map was not drawn in 1838, but before that. But the map contained more recent geographical names such as Bình Định Thành [Bình Định Citadel], Định Tường Thành [Định Tường Citadel]… so, the map of An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ must have been created after Nguyễn Ánh took over Quy Nhơn Citadel.

The map depicted the shore of the South of Central Part very accurately but the Northern Part was not depicted as accurately, especially the area bordering Laos. The Westerners had extensive knowledge of Vietnam. In any case, by early 19th century, Westerners had known Vietnam and Hoàng Sa very well.

- **The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol VI published an article written by Bishop Taberd confirming King Gia Long officially proclaimed sovereignty over the Paracels).**

The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal is the newspaper of the Asiatic Society of the British in Bengal. In issues 6 and 7 of this journal was a long article written in English by Bishop Taberd on Vietnam's Hoàng Sa entitled: Pracel or Paracels (Cồn Vàng), which stated:

"Pracel or Paracels (Cồn Vàng). Though this archipelago has nothing but rocks and some large   *dunes*   *and*

promises more nuisance than benefits, King Gia Long thought about expanding territory by taking this dull land. In 1816, he had personally come here to raise the flag and officially proclaimed sovereignty over these rocks, and it seemed no one else wanted to compete with him" [36, page 11] (in fact <u>this</u> is only one more time Vietnam continued to assert its sovereignty over the Hoàng Sa Archipelago).

- ***"The Journal of the Geographical Society of London"* (1849) GutzLaff noted that the An Nam government established revenue cutters and a small garrison to collect the duty on the Paracels.** GutzLaff wrote the article "Geography of the Cochinchine Empire" published *The Journal of the Geographical Society of London*, vol. 19, in 1849; page 97 has a pretty long paragraph about Hoàng Sa, as follows:

"Here we should not have mentioned the Cát Vàng Islands (Paracels) which are about 15–20 miles to the coast of Annam, and extend between 15 to 17 degrees N. Latitude and 111 to 113 degrees E. Longitude, if the King of Cochin-china had not claimed these as his property with many islands and reefs so dangerous to seafarers. It is not determined whether because of coral or other causes that those rocks are growing bigger but it is clear that those islets rise higher every year and some are now permanently inhabited, whereas a few years earlier they were broken through by strong waves. Those islets would not have been of any value if the fisheries there had not been productive and compensated the adventurers for the risks they took. From ancient time, boats, mostly from Hải Nam (Hainan), have annually visited all these shoals, and continued their voyages as far as the coast of Borneo. Though more than one tenth of them are wrecked each year, the amount of fish caught is so large that not only is their loss compensated for but also a good profit is still left with them. The Annam government, perceiving the potential

advantages if a tax was raised, establishes revenue cutters and a small garrison there to collect the duty on all visitors and to protect its own fishermen. Therefore, business has gradually developed and may grow even more because fish come here in large numbers to spawn. Some islets have scrawny trees but lack fresh water; and those sailors who do not bring enough supply of water often find themselves at great peril.”

The author also wrote, *“If the King of Cochin-China had not claimed these as his property with*

many islands and reefs so dangerous to seafarers, he would not have cared about the Paracels (Cát Vàng) Islands at all” [36, page 12], [157].

Though the author did not estimate accurately the distance of 15–20 miles from the Vietnamese coast, it is fortunate that he calculated the coordinates very accurately to be between 15 to 17 degrees N. Latitude and 111 to 113 degrees E. Longitude.

The author made it clear that the Vietnamese government had indeed exercised its sovereignty by establishing revenue cutters and a small garrison to collect duty and protect Vietnamese fishermen. To cross-refer with the Vietnamese historical records, 1816 was the first year King Gia Long sent the navy to operate in Hoàng Sa instead of the Hoàng Sa fleet. This fact is considered very important by the Westerners, and as a result, they wrote King Gia Long himself, instead of his troops, solemnly established sovereignty over Hoàng Sa.

Upon analyzing Vietnamese records and foreign records as well as those of China's, we can see that most Vietnamese records are state records, showing clearly the establishment and exercise of Vietnam's sovereignty through economic activities. This is evidenced by the operation of the Hoàng Sa and North Sea fleets under state administration, activities of the people in Central provinces such as Quảng Ngãi, Bình Định, Bình Thuận… as well as those of the navy, defense forces, such as building temples, planting trees, laying commemorative stones, landmarks, and surveying sea routes…

Most of foreign records, including Chinese records, on the other hand, are private records. In these records, those missionaries, merchants, and explorers have all confirmed that Cát Vàng (Hoàng Sa) is the Paracels and the Vietnamese government has been exercising its sovereignty through many periods.

[…]

ĐẠI HỌC QUỐC GIA THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC KHOA HỌC XÃ HỘI VÀ NHÂN VĂN

NGUYỄN NHÃ

QUÁ TRÌNH XÁC LẬP CHỦ QUYỀN CỦA VIỆT NAM TẠI QUẦN ĐẢO HOÀNG SA VÀ TRƯỜNG SA

CHUYÊN NGÀNH : LỊCH SỬ VIỆT NAM
MÃ SỐ   : 5.03.15

LUẬN ÁN TIẾN SĨ LỊCH SỬ

Người hướng dẫn khoa học:
1. PGS Huỳnh Lứa
2. PGS, TS Tôn Nữ Quỳnh Trân

THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH
NĂM 2002

tổng quát vẽ các đảo Hoàng Sa thời nhà Nguyễn nhất là thời Vua Minh Mạng do thời tiết khắc nghiệt cũng như chiến tranh tàn phá đã không còn lưu giữ.

2.1.2 Những tư liệu của Trung Quốc và Phương Tây minh chứng chủ quyền Việt Nam tại quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa.

+ Những tư liệu của Trung Quốc minh chứng chủ quyền của Việt Nam tạiquần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa :

Trong thời gian chưa có sự tranh chấp chủ quyền, tức trước năm 1909, rất nhiều tài liệu của Trung Quốc cũng như Phương Tây đều gián tiếp hay trực tiếp xác nhận chủ quyền của Việt Nam tại quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa.

- Trước tiên là **Hải Ngoại Kỷ Sự của Thích Đại Sán (người Trung Quốc) năm 1696** (2.20).

Trong quyển 3 của *Hải Ngoại Kỷ Sự* đã nói đến Vạn Lý Trường Sa tức Hoàng Sa và đã khẳng định Chúa Ngãi đã hành sử chủ quyền của mình trên quần đảo này như sau:

"Bởi vì có những cồn cát nằm thẳng bờ biển, chạy dài từ Đông Bắc qua Tây Nam; động cao dựng đứng như vách tường, bãi thấp cũng ngang mặt nước biển; mặt cát khô rắn như sắt, rủi thuyền chạm phải ắt tan tành; bãi cát rộng cả trăm dặm, chiều dài thăm thẳm chẳng biết bao nhiêu mà kể, gọi là "Vạn Lý Trường Sa" , mù tít chẳng thấy cỏ cây nhà cửa; nếu thuyền bị trái gió trái nước tấp vào dầu không tan nát cũng không gạo không nước, trở thành ma đói mà thôi. Quảng ấy cách Đại Việt bảy ngày đường, chừng bảy trăm dặm. Thời Quốc vương trước, hằng năm sai thuyền đi đánh cá đi dọc theo bãi cát, lượm vàng bạc khí cụ của các thuyền lui tấp vào. Mùa thu nước dâng cạn, chảy rút về hướng Đông bị một ngọn sóng đưa thuyền có thể trôi xa cả trăm dặm; sức gió chẳng mạnh , sợ có hiểm hoạ Trường Sa". [116,125]

48

Thích Đại Sán đã kể lại kinh nghiệm hải trình qua vùng Hoàng Sa tức Vạn Lý Trường Sa và cho biết ước lượng khoảng cách từ vùng Hoàng Sa đến Đại Việt khoảng bảy ngày đường. Những tài liệu của Việt Nam như đã cho biết giữa các đảo phải đi đến mất 1 ngày đường, nên nếu phải trải qua hàng trăm dặm tới Đại Việt đi mất tới 7 ngày đường, trong khi từ bờ biển Việt Nam đi tới đảo gần nhất của quần đảo Hoàng Sa chỉ mất 3 ngày 3 đêm là hợp lý.

Thích Đại Sán viết "Thời Quốc Vương trước , ở đây hàng năm sai thuyền đi đánh cá đi dọc theo bãi cát, lượm vàng bạc, khí cụ của các thuyền bị đắm ở Hoàng Sa" cũng phù hợp với các tài liệu Việt Nam về hoạt động đội Hoàng Sa, song rõ hơn là xác định thời gian trước thời Quốc Vương Nguyễn Phúc Chu (1691 - 1725), có nghĩa là ít ra cũng ở thời Nguyễn Phúc Trăn (1687 - 1691) hoặc các Chúa Nguyễn khác. Trong thời gian này, chưa có tranh chấp nên Thích Đại Sán là người Trung Quốc đã có thái độ khách quan ghi nhận chủ quyền của Đại Việt đối với Hoàng Sa như trình bày ở trên. Cũng như các phần lãnh thổ khác của Đại Việt, chẳng bao giờ có các văn bản của triều đình Trung Quốc xác nhận. Truyền thống chiếm hữu lãnh thổ của Phương Tây cũng chẳng bao giờ công bố cho các nước khác được biết. Chỉ có thực tế lịch sử xảy ra như thế nào thì những người am hiểu tường tận như Thích Đại Sán biết rõ sự việc xảy ra ở Đại Việt xứ Đàng Trong đã ghi nhận như thế.

- **Các bản đồ cổ Trung quốc do chính người Trung quốc vẽ từ năm 1909 trở về trước đều minh chứng Tây Sa và Nam Sa chưa thuộc về Trung quốc.**

Khảo sát tất cả các bản đồ cổ của Trung quốc từ năm 1909 trở về trước, người ta thấy tất cả các bản đồ cổ nước Trung quốc do người Trung quốc vẽ không có bản đồ nào có ghi các quần đảo Tây Sa, Nam Sa hay bất cứ các đảo nào mà Trung quốc suy diễn là Tây Sa và Nam Sa có nằm trong các bản đồ cổ

ấy. <u>Tất cả các bản đồ cổ ấy đều xác định đảo Hải Nam là cực Nam của biên giới phía Nam của Trung quốc.</u>

Chẳng hạn như **"<u>Dư địa đồ</u>" đời Nguyên của Chu Tư Bản** được vẽ thu nhỏ lại trong sách **"Quảng Dư đồ" của La Hồng Tiên quyển 1**, thực hiện năm 1561, phần cực Nam lãnh thổ Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2. 36).

- **"<u>Thiên Hạ Thống Nhất Chi Đồ</u>" đời Minh** trong Đại Minh Nhất Thống Chí, năm 1461, quyển đầu, đã vẽ cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.37)

-**"<u>Hoàng Minh Đại Thống Nhất Tổng Đồ</u>" đời Minh**, trong Hoàng Minh Chức Phương Địa Đồ của Trần Tổ Thụ, 1635, quyển thượng đã vẽ phần cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.38).

-**"<u>Lộ Phủ, Châu Huyện Đồ</u>" đời Nguyên** vẽ lại trong Kim Cổ Dư Đồ của Nguyễn Quốc Phụ đời Minh, năm 1638, quyển hạ đã vẽ phần cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.39)

- **"<u>Hoàng Triều Phủ Sảnh, Châu , Huyện Toàn Đồ</u>" đời Thanh**, khuyết danh, năm 1862, vẽ theo "Nội Phủ Địa Đồ" gồm 26 mảnh mang tên "Đại Thanh Trực Tỉnh Toàn Đồ" đã vẽ phần cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.40)

- **"<u>Hoàng Triều Nhất Thống Dư Địa Tổng Đồ</u>"** trong tập Hoàng Triều Nhất Thống Dư Địa Tổng Đồ (khuyết danh), năm 1894, đã vẽ phần cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.41)

- **"<u>Quảng Đông Tỉnh Đồ</u>"** trong Quảng Đông Dư Địa Toàn Đồ, do quan chức tỉnh Quảng Đông soạn năm 1897, có lời tựa của tổng đốc Trương Nhân Tuấn đều không thấy bất kỳ quần đảo nào ở biển Nam Trung Hoa [58] (hình 2.42).

50

- **"Đại Thanh Đế Quốc"**, trong tập "Đại Thanh Đế Quốc Toàn Đồ" do Thường Vụ Ấn Thư Quán Thượng Hải, 1905, tái bản lần thứ 4 năm 1910, đã vẽ phần cực Nam lãnh thổ Trung quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.43)

- **"Đại Thanh Đế Quốc Vị Trí Khu Hoạch Đồ "** (1909), cũng như bản đồ trên đã vẽ phần cực nam Trung Quốc là đảo Hải Nam [58], (hình 2.44)

Sau năm 1909, nhiều bản đồ Trung Quốc đã vẽ Tây Sa, Nam Sa trong lãnh thổ của Trung Quốc, trong đó có "Trung Quốc Cương Giới Biến Thiên Đồ" năm 1939, đã vẽ ranh giới thuộc quốc đời Thanh xuống tận gần Indonesia, gồm cả Triều Tiên [58] (hình 2.45).

Ngoài ra, một số tư liệu cổ mà Trung Quốc trưng ra để chứng minh sự phát hiện sớm của người Trung Quốc (mà thực ra chỉ là suy diễn không có cơ sở vững chắc để chứng minh chủ quyền của Trung Quốc) lại đều là các tài liệu viết về nước ngoài như Giao Châu Dị Vật Chí của Dương Phù. Xứ Giao Châu là Việt Nam cũng chỉ "Bắc thuộc" một thời gian nhất định. Cũng thế các tác giả trên đã dẫn Chư Phiên Chí của Triệu Nhữ Quát (chứ không phải Triệu Nhữ Thích), đời Nam Tống (1225) có nhắc đến Thiên Lý Trường Sa, Vạn Lý Thạch Đường ở Phiên Quốc , có nghĩa nước khác chứ không phải Trung Quốc. Tư liệu cổ Trung quốc cũng dẫn *Phù Nam Truyện* của Khang Thái (đời Ngô Tam Quốc), *Nam Châu Dị Vật Chí* của Vạn Chấn (đời Ngô). *Chư Phiên Đồ* đời Tống lại xác định giới hạn của Trung Quốc với các nước khác ở Giao Dương tức Giao Chỉ Dương. Giao Chỉ Dương hay Biển Giao Chỉ lại là Vịnh Bắc Bộ trong khi Hoàng Sa, Trường Sa lại cách xa Vịnh Bắc Bộ... Như thế các tài liệu cổ trên đã gián tiếp chứng minh Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa mà Trung Quốc gọi là Tây Sa, Nam Sa không thuộc về Trung Quốc mà thuộc các nước khác mà Trung Quốc gọi là Phiên Quốc, hay Giao Châu , Nam Châu.

Sau khi Trung Quốc dùng vũ lực chiếm đóng Hoàng Sa tháng 1 năm 1974, nhiều đoàn khảo cổ Trung Quốc đến các đảo thuộc quần đảo này và gọi là "phát hiện" nhằm nhiều cổ vật như tiền cổ, đồ sứ, đồ đá chạm trổ trên các hòn đảo này, song đều không có giá trị gì để minh xác chủ quyền Trung Quốc bởi đồng tiền La Mã đã từng được phát hiện ở Óc Eo (An Giang), ở miền Nam Việt Nam nhưng không thể chứng minh rằng Óc Eo (An Giang) thuộc chủ quyền La Mã. Các nhân viên khảo cổ Trung Quốc còn phát hiện được 14 ngôi miếu cô hồn và cho rằng chúng có từ thời Minh Thanh. Trong các ngôi miếu cô hồn ấy lại có 2 ngôi miếu ở đảo Vĩnh Hưng, tức đảo Phú Lâm (Île Boisée) đã được nhóm Hàn Chấn Hoa biên chép lại từ bài báo "Từ quần đảo Tây Sa trở về" trên Đại Công Báo Hương Cảng , ngày 31 tháng 3 năm 1957, ghi rõ :

"Trên đảo Vĩnh Hưng hiện nay có 2 ngôi miếu mà ngư dân tự xây dựng nên. Miếu mặt Nam gọi là "Cô hồn miếu", miếu ở mặt Bắc gọi là "Hoàng Sa Tự" (Hàn Chấn Hoa, Lâm Kim Chi, Ngô Phượng Bân, *Ngã Quốc Nam Hải Chư Đảo Sử Liệu Hội Biên*, thiên thứ 1, trang 115)

"Hoàng Sa Tự" là bằng chứng hiển nhiên vết tích của việc xác lập chủ quyền của Việt Nam mà các vua chúa Việt Nam, trong có thời Minh Mạng sai thủy quân ra Hoàng Sa xây dựng miếu, chùa như đã trình bày trong chương này.

* Tư liệu Phương Tây xác nhận về chủ quyền của Việt Nam trên quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa.

Năm 1494, Giáo Hoàng Alexandre VI đã dùng quyền lực tinh thần để phân các vùng ảnh hưởng trên thế giới cho hai nước Tây Ban Nha và Bồ Đào Nha. Sự phân chia này được chính thức hoá trong hiệp ước Tordesillas 1494. Do đấy, các đội thương thuyền của Bồ Đào Nha đã đi về phương Đông tức Ấn Độ và Trung Quốc. Bồ Đào Nha đã thiết lập một thương điểm ở Ma Cao (Trung Quốc) từ

52

năm 1511 và biến Ma Cao thành thuộc địa từ 1557. Từ đó các thương thuyền qua lại Biển Đông và có những nhà hàng hải Bồ Đào Nha thám hiểm vùng Biển Đông trong đó có đảo Hoàng Sa.

Nhà hàng hải Bồ Đào Nha Fernão Mendes Pinto, một giáo sĩ Dòng Tên đã viết cuốn sách du ký **Peragrinacão** (dịch ra tiếng Pháp là Pérégrination nói về chuyến du hành năm 1545, được xuất bản tại Lisbonne năm 1614.trong đó FM., Pinto đã mô tả về quần đảo Hoàng Sa mà ông gọi là Pulo Pracela (Pracela tiếng Bồ Đào Nha có nghĩa là san hô, Pulo có nghĩa là đảo, cù lao). Cũng trong thời gian này, các nhà truyền giáo đi theo các thương thuyền đã đến truyền đạo vào Đàng Ngoài của Việt Nam vào 1533. Con đường hàng hải vào đầu thế kỷ XVI từ Malacca đến Macao đã bắt đầu gặp trở ngại, các thương thuyền bị đụng vào các bãi đá ngầm ở Biển Đông. Qua những cuộc khảo sát với rất nhiều nhật ký hải trình của các nhà thám hiểm Bồ Đào Nha trong nửa sau thế kỷ XVI đã nói về một dải cao tầng bãi đá ngầm Pullo Sissir (Baixos de Pullo Sissir), (vĩ độ 10) mà người ta thấy rất nguy hiểm, càng ngày người ta càng thấy rất rộng, bao quát cả một vùng đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa ngày nay, tương tự như những hiểu biết của các nhà địa lý của Việt Nam cùng thời. Càng ngày người ta càng có nhiều thông tin song chỉ lờ mờ rằng có rất nhiều những bãi đá ngầm nổi lập lờ trên mặt nước chỉ cao khoảng chừng một đầu người, luôn luôn bị sóng biển che lấp. Ban đêm, có khi tàu thuyền đi đến sát mũi nó mới nhận ra được. Có một số đảo phủ cỏ và muối, một số bãi cát. Những hải trình không gặp đá ngầm thường rất hẹp và nếu người ta đi qua được yên lành thì chỉ nhờ có Chúa phù hộ cho mà thôi. Các tác giả khuyên các nhà hàng hải chớ bao giờ rời xa bờ biển Champa.

Cũng giống như các nhật ký hải trình, các tấm hải đồ của các nhà hàng hải Bồ Đào Nha trong nửa sau thế kỷ XVI phản ánh một quan niệm, hiểu biết chung về

một quần đảo mà họ gọi là Pracel giống như một dải "ruban" dài hay như một lưỡi dao dài cong chứ không gãy khúc, kéo dọc suốt ngoài khơi với bờ biển Đàng Trong lúc bấy giờ. Những tấm bản đồ hiếm có tìm thấy xưa nhất có ghi nhận quần đảo Hoàng Sa (Parcel) của người Bồ Đào Nha còn là những bản đồ vào giữa thế kỷ XVI. Đó là bản đồ Bartholomen Velho(1560) (hình 2.46) được ghi lại trong sách của P.Y. Manguin và bản đồ khuyết danh trong cuốn Livro da Marinharia, ghi lại trong cuốn Peregrination của F.M. Pinto.(hình 2.47). Hai tấm bản đồ có ghi niên đại 1560 tương đối giống nhau đã phản ánh trung thực sự hiểu biết lúc bấy giờ của người Phương Tây về Hoàng Sa. Nói chung người Phương Tây lúc bấy giờ mà tiêu biểu là người Bồ Đào Nha chưa hiểu biết rõ về Hoàng Sa cũng chưa biết các đảo này thuộc về chủ quyền của nước nào. Hình dáng Hoàng Sa mà người Bồ ghi hàng chữ J Do Pracel trên cũng ở phía Bắc một dải dài những chấm nhỏ chạy từ khoảng Cù Lao Chàm ở ngoài khơi Hội An, được gọi là Pulo Campello tới Cù Lao Thu (đảo Phú Qúi) được ghi bằng Pulo Sissir, ngoài khơi Phan Thiết ngày nay. Cái dải dài rộng và những chấm đậm ở phiá Bắc, càng về phía Nam càng hẹp lại và tận cùng bằng cái chấm nhỏ giống như một dải "ruban" nhọn phía dưới. Dải "ruban" Pracel ấy trong "Livro da Marinharia" của FM Pinto được ghi nhiều chấm hơn, phía Bắc đậm hơn, bề ngang phần dưới hẹp hẳn.

Đến cuối thế kỷ XVI, bản đồ Fernao Vaz Dourado (1590) (hình 2.48) cho thấy người Bồ Đào Nha cũng chưa tăng sự hiểu biết gì thêm. Song người Hà Lan đã bắt đầu hoạt động rất mạnh ở vùng này với bằng chứng là bản đồ của Van - Langren năm 1595 (hình 2.49) hết sức phong phú, rất nhiều chi tiết nhất là tại vùng Trung Bộ. Tại Bắc Bộ cũng có nhiều chi tiết rõ hơn nhất là sông Hồng đã được vẽ bắt nguồn từ Vân Nam ghi là Suinam. Ở phía Tây Bắc Pracel có đảo

54

Hải Nam được ghi là I Ainam. Ở phía Đông Bắc và Đông thì không có ghi địa danh nào cả, song lại được vẽ bởi những chấm đậm và liền nhau. Điều đặc biệt ở bản đồ Van - Langren (1595) trên phần đất liền, ngoài địa danh rất đáng lưu ý là mũi Varella còn có bờ biển ghi là Costa da Pracel ở đối diện với Pulo Canton (Cù Lao Ré) thuộc địa phận tỉnh Quảng Ngãi.

Bước qua thế kỷ XVII, do nhiều nguyên nhân, người Bồ Đào Nha đã mất thế độc quyền ở Biển Đông. Một số quốc gia khác đã vượt trội, tăng cường sự có mặt của mình ở vùng biển này, đi lại ngày càng nhiều chung quanh quần đảo Hoàng Sa. Địch thủ có thế lực lớn mạnh nhất của Bồ Đào Nha lúc này là Hà Lan. Tiếp theo là Anh và Pháp. Khác với phương thức kinh doanh của người Bồ Đào Nha trong thế kỷ trước, các hoạt động hàng hải của Hà Lan, Anh và Pháp trong thế kỷ này chủ yếu dựa vào những công ty thương mại quốc tế, được các chính quyền nhà nước ấy ủy quyền và bảo trợ, điển hình là các công ty Đông Ấn - Hà Lan (V.O.C.) thành lập năm 1602 và các công ty Đông Ấn Anh (East India Company) thành lập năm 1600. Hoàng Sa nằm trên các tuyến đường giao thương quốc tế lúc bấy giờ đã được người Tây Phương coi là một vị trí chiến lược trọng yếu.

Sang thế kỷ XVIII, những cuộc khảo sát Biển Đông của các công ty Đông Ấn rất kỹ càng. Từ cuộc thám hiểm đo đạc của phái bộ Kergariou - Locmacria vào những năm 1778 - 1787 ở Biển Đông đã giúp cho người Phương Tây hiểu biết rõ hơn, trung thực hơn, không còn lờ mờ và sợ hãi như những huyền thoại trước đây về Biển Đông. Các hải trình tương đối an toàn hơn, tuy họ không hề phủ nhận sự nguy hiểm và họa đắm tàu ở khu vực quần đảo Paracels.

Người Pháp qua các hoạt động của các giáo sĩ, thương gia nhất là từ khi giám mục Pigneau de Béhaine giúp Nguyễn Ánh về quân sự, đã bắt đầu quan tâm đến Việt Nam và kế thừa những hiểu biết của người Bồ Đào Nha, Hà Lan, đã

biết rất rõ về nội tình chính trị Đàng Trong cũng như Đàng Ngoài thời phân tranh cũng như khi thống nhất. Từ đó, người Phương Tây mới biết rõ chủ quyền của Việt Nam ở Hoàng Sa.

Như thế, chính người Pháp mới bắt đầu cung cấp những tài liệu xác thực về sự xác lập chủ quyền của Việt Nam trên quần đảo Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa, Sau đây là những tài liệu chủ yếu :

- **Nhật Ký trên tàu Amphitrite (năm 1701) xác nhận Paracels là một quần đảo thuộc về nước An Nam.**

Các thư từ nhật ký của người Tây Phương, trong đó có người Pháp, đã được tập hợp thành bộ "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses" của Archives des Missions Étrangères de Paris, Paris , 1838, 4 vols.

Trong tài liệu này, có nhật ký của chiếc tàu Amphitrite chở các giáo sĩ Pháp qua quần đảo Paracels vào năm 1701 ghi như sau:

"Người ta cho tàu nhổ neo, gió rất tốt. Và sau đó một thời gian đi đến mỏm đá Paracels. Paracels là một quần đảo thuộc về nước An Nam. Đó là một bãi đá ngầm khủng khiếp có đến hàng trăm dặm, rất nhiều lần đã xảy ra các nạn đắm tàu ở đó". [66]

- **" Le Mémoire sur la Cochinchine " của Jean Baptiste Chaigneau (1769 - 1825), viết vào những năm cuối đời Gia Long (1816 - 1819) đã khẳng định năm 1816 vua Gia Long đã xác lập chủ quyền Việt Nam trên quần đảo Paracels.**

Jean Baptiste Chaigneau (1769 - 1825) được vua Gia Long đặt tên là Nguyễn Văn Thắng, phong là Thắng Toàn Hầu, từng theo giúp Nguyễn Ánh chống Tây Sơn, đã thay J. M. Dayot vào cuối năm 1796 trông coi tàu Phi Long, có dự trận Thị Nại 1801, hoạt động ở Quảng Nam - Huế. Ông trông coi việc tiếp tế cho quân đội ở Phú Xuân (sắc ngày 16 -3 - 1802).

56

Ông viết hồi ký nhan đề "Le mémoire sur la Cochinchine" được A. Salles, một viên chức thanh tra thuộc địa công bố trên *Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Huế*, n⁰2, Avril - Juin 1923, trong đó có đoạn viết :

"Nước Cochinchine mà vua bây giờ xưng đế hiệu (Hoàng đế) gồm xứ Đàng Trong (Cochinchine proprement dite), xứ Đông Kinh (Tonquin), một phần xứ Cao Miên, một vài đảo có dân cư không xa bờ bể và quần đảo Paracels hợp thành bởi những đảo nhỏ, đá ngầm và mỏm đá không dân cư. Chỉ đến năm 1816 đương kim hoàng đế mới lấy chủ quyền trên quần đảo ấy" [36, 13] [177]

- **"Univers, histoire et description de tous les peuples, de leurs religions, mœurs et coutumes" của giám mục Taberd xuất bản năm 1833 cho rằng hoàng đế Gia Long chính thức khẳng định chủ quyền trên quần đảo Hoàng Sa năm 1816.**

Giám mục Jean Louis Taberd trong cuốn *"Univers, histoire et description de tous les peuples, de leurs religions, mœurs et coutumes"*, xuất bản năm 1833 viết về Paracels như sau:

"Chúng tôi không đi vào việc kê khai những hòn đảo chính yếu của xứ Cochinchine. Chúng tôi chỉ xin lưu ý rằng từ hơn 34 năm nay, quần đảo Paracels, mà người Việt gọi là Cát Vàng hay Hoàng Sa (có nghĩa là Cát Vàng) gồm rất nhiều hòn đảo chằng chịt với nhau, lởm chởm những đá nhô lên giữa những bãi cát, làm cho những kẻ đi biển rất e ngại, đã được chiếm cứ bởi người Việt xứ Đàng Trong".

"Chúng tôi không rõ họ có thiết lập một cơ sở nào tại đó không; nhưng có điều chúng tôi biết chắc là hoàng đế Gia Long đã chủ tâm thêm cái đoá hoa kỳ lạ đó vào vương miện của ông, vì vậy mà ông xét thấy đúng lúc phải thân chinh vượt biển để tiếp thâu quần đảo Hoàng Sa, và chính là vào năm 1816 mà Ngài đã long trọng treo tại đó lá cờ của xứ Đàng Trong". [66] [186]

- **An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ của giám mục Taberd xuất bản năm 1838 khẳng định Cát Vàng (Hoàng Sa) là Paracels và nằm trong lãnh hải Việt Nam. [27]** (hình 2.50)

Bản đồ này được đính sau cuốn Tự Điển Việt - La Tinh nhan đề "Latino - Anamiticum" của giám mục Taberd từng làm thông dịch cho vua Minh Mạng từ tháng 11 năm 1826, xuất bản năm 1838. Bản đồ có chiều dài 80cm, ngang 44cm in trên loại giấy thường để in hoạ đồ. Nhan đề bản đồ được in bằng ba thứ tiếng: chữ Hán, chữ Quốc Ngữ và chữ La Tinh.

An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ là một tài liệu phản ảnh sự tổng kết những hiểu biết sâu sắc và chính xác của người Phương Tây từ thế kỷ XVI đến đầu thế kỷ XIX về mối quan hệ giữa quần đảo Hoàng Sa và nước Đại Việt mà tác giả gọi là An Nam Đại Quốc. An Nam Đại Quốc Họa Đồ là một minh chứng rất hùng hồn khẳng định một cách rõ ràng :

1. Paracels là địa danh mà người Phương Tây chỉ quần đảo ở Biển Đông suốt thế kỷ XVI đến đầu thế kỷ XIX chính là Cát Vàng hay Hoàng Sa của Việt Nam. Trong bản đồ này có ghi chú "Paracels Seu Cát Vàng" . Tại Biển Đông không có đảo Hải Nam của Trung Quốc mà chỉ có đảo của Việt . Đảo ở khoảng vĩ độ 17^0 Bắc và kinh độ hơn 111^0 Đông, có vẽ một số đảo (bằng một số dấu chấm) và ghi hàng chữ "Paracel Seu Cát Vàng". Từ Seu (tiếng La Tinh) = " có nghĩa là", Cát Vàng (tiếng Nôm) tức là "Hoàng Sa" (tiếng Hán Việt). Paracel = Cát Vàng = Hoàng Sa, là một khẳng định rõ ràng nhất quán chứ không phải suy diễn như Tây Sa của Trung Quốc.

2. Trong bản đồ An Nam Đại Quốc Hoạ Đồ không ghi đảo Hải Nam hay bất cứ đảo nào của các nước láng giềng và chỉ ghi "Paracel Seu Cát Vàng" mà thôi,

58

chứng tỏ Paracel Seu Cát Vàng nằm trong lãnh thổ của An Nam Đại Quốc hay Đại Việt.

3. Địa danh Paracel ghi bên cạnh những chấm đánh dấu các đảo ở khoảng vĩ độ 16^0 Bắc (ngang vĩ độ cửa Tư Dung , Thừa Thiên) lên đến vĩ độ 17^0 Bắc khoảng Cửa Tùng (Quảng Trị) và kinh độ 111,^{0}18 Đông. Điều này đã phản ảnh sự hiểu biết về Hoàng Sa của người Phương Tây đã rất chính xác và Hoàng Sa không còn chung với quần đảo Trường Sa nữa.

Trên phần đất liền ghi hàng chữ dài: "An Nam Quốc Seu Imperium Anamiticum" cùng hàng chữ "Cocincina interior" seu "An Nam Đàng Trong", ở phía Nam "Lũi Sầy" seu "Murus magnus separans Olim Utrumque regne " và "Cocincina exterior", Đàng Ngoài seu "Tunquinum", chứng tỏ nội dung bản đồ được vẽ không phải ở thời điểm 1838, mà đã được vẽ từ trước đó. Song bản đồ lại ghi các địa danh mới ra đời sau này như Bình Định Thành, Định Tường Thành... nên năm vẽ An Nam Đại Quốc Hoạ Đồ phải sau khi Nguyễn Ánh đã chiếm thành Qui Nhơn.

Bản đồ vẽ bờ biển miền Nam Trung Bộ rất chính xác, còn miền Bắc, nhất là giáp ranh với Lào chưa thật chính xác. Sự hiểu biết của người Tây Phương về Việt Nam rất phong phú. Dù sao cho tới đầu thế kỷ XIX, người Phương Tây đã biết rất rõ về Việt Nam và Hoàng Sa.

- **The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal , Vol VI đã đăng bài của giám mục Taberd xác nhận vua Gia Long chính thức giữ chủ quyền quần đảo Paracels) .**

The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal là tờ báo của Hội Á Châu của người Anh ở xứ Bengal. Trong số báo 6 và 7 của báo này đã có đăng bài viết dài về Hoàng Sa của Việt Nam bằng Anh ngữ của giám mục Taberd với tiêu đề : Pracel or Paracels (Cồn Vàng) có nội dung như sau: *"Pracel hoặc Paracels (Cồn*

Vàng). Tuy rằng cái thứ quần đảo này không có gì ngoài đá tảng và những cồn lớn, nó hứa hẹn nhiều bất tiện hơn lợi, vua Gia long đã nghĩ tăng lãnh thổ bằng cách chiếm thêm cái đất buồn bã này. Năm 1816, ông đã tới long trọng cắm cờ và chính thức giữ chủ quyền các hòn đá này, mà hình như không một ai tranh giành với ông"[36, trg 11] (thực ra <u>đây</u> chỉ là một lần nữa Việt Nam lại tiếp tục tự khẳng định chủ quyền của mình ở quần đảo Hoàng Sa mà thôi).

- **"The Journal of the Geographycal Society of London" (năm 1849) GutzLaff ghi nhận chính quyền An Nam lập ra những trưng thuyền và một trại quân nhỏ để thu thuế ở Paracels.** GutzLaff đã viết bài báo "Geography of the Cochinchine Empire" đăng trong *The Journal of the Geographical Society of London*, trong vol. the 19th năm 1849, trang 97 có đoạn khá dài về Hoàng Sa như sau:

"Đây chúng tôi đáng lẽ không kể đến quần-đảo Cát Vàng nó ở gần bờ bể An-nam 15 đến 20 dặm và lan giữa các vĩ-tuyến 15 và 17 độ Bắc, và các kinh tuyến 111 và 113 độ Đông, nếu Vua xứ Cochin-china đã không đòi quần-đảo ấy là của mình, với nhiều đảo và ghềnh rất nguy-hiểm cho người hàng-hải. Không biết vì san hô hay vì lẽ khác mà các ghềnh đá ấy lớn dần; nhưng rõ-ràng nhận thấy rằng các đảo nhỏ ấy càng năm càng cao, và một vài cái bây giờ đã có người ở vĩnh-viễn, thế mà chỉ mấy năm trước sóng đã vỗ mạnh dập qua. Những đảo ấy đáng lẽ không giá-trị nếu nghề chài ở đó không phồn-thịnh và không bù hết mọi nguy-nan cho kẻ phiêu lưu. Từ lâu đời, những thuyền, phần lớn từ Hải-Nam tới, đã hằng năm đến thăm các bãi nổi nầy và tiến-hành cuộc viễn-du xa xa đến tận bờ đảo Bornéo. Tuy rằng hằng năm hơn phần mười bị đắm, nhưng cá đánh được rất nhiều, đến đỗi không những bù hết mọi thiệt thời, mà còn để lại món lợi rất to. Chính-phủ An-Nam thấy những lợi có thể mang lại nếu một ngạch thuế đã đặt ra, bèn lập ra những trưng-thuyền và một trại quân nhỏ ở chỗ này để thu thuế mà

60

mọi người ngoài tới đây đều phải trả, và để bảo-trợ người đánh cá bản-quốc. Vậy nên một cuộc giao-dịch lớn được dần dà gây nên và có cơ bành-trướng nhờ sự có rất nhiều cá tới trên các bãi nầy để trứng. Một vài đảo có cây-cối cằn-cỗi, nhưng thiếu nước ngọt ; và những thủy-thủ nào quên mang theo nước trữ đầy đủ, thường bị lâm vào cơn khốn-đốn lớn".

Tác giả còn viết rằng "*Nếu vua xứ Cochinchina đã không đòi quần đảo ấy là của mình với nhiều đảo và ghềnh nguy hiểm cho ngành hàng hải, thì ông đã chẳng kể đến quần đảo Paracels (Cát Vàng) làm gì*" [36,trg 12],[157].

Tuy tác giả ước lượng không chính xác khoảng cách từ bờ biển Việt Nam 15 - 20 dặm (Anh), song điều may mắn là tác giả lại định tọa độ rất chính xác giữa 15^0-17^0 vĩ độ Bắc và 111^0- 113^0 kinh độ Đông.

Như vậy, tác giả đã cho biết rõ rằng chính phủ Việt Nam đã thực thi chủ quyền của mình qua việc lập ra những trưng thuyền và thành lập một trại quân nhỏ để thu thuế và bảo trợ người đánh cá Việt Nam. Đối chiếu với sử liệu Việt Nam, năm 1816 là năm đầu tiên vua Gia Long sai thủy quân thay vì đội Hoàng Sa hoạt động ở Hoàng Sa. Chính sự kiện này mà người Phương Tây cho rằng rất quan trọng, đáng lẽ phải viết năm 1816 quân của vua Gia Long, lại viết chính vua Gia Long long trọng xác lập chủ quyền ở Hoàng Sa.

Khi phân tích các tư liệu Việt Nam và các tư liệu nước ngoài cũng như của Trung Quốc, chúng ta thấy rất rõ hầu hết tư liệu Việt Nam đều là tư liệu của nhà nước, minh xác rất rõ việc xác lập và thực thi chủ quyền Việt Nam qua các hoạt động khai thác kinh tế, cụ thể hoạt động của đội Hoàng Sa, đội Bắc Hải do nhà nước quản lý, các hoạt động của dân các tỉnh miền Trung như Quảng ngãi, Bình Định, Bình Thuận... cùng các hoạt động của thủy quân, giám thành như xây dựng miếu, trồng cây, dựng bia, đặt cột mốc, đo đạc thủy trình ...

Còn tài liệu nước ngoài trong đó có cả tài liệu Trung Quốc, phần lớn là nguồn tư nhân. Theo đó các nhà tu, nhà buôn, thám hiểm cũng đều khẳng định Cát Vàng (Hoàng Sa) là Paracel và chính quyền Việt Nam đã thực thi chủ quyền của mình qua các thời đại.

2.2 SỰ KHẲNG ĐỊNH CHỦ QUYỀN VÀ NHỮNG HOẠT ĐỘNG XÁC LẬP CHỦ QUYỀN CỦA CÁC NHÀ NƯỚC Ở VIỆT NAM.

2.2.1 Sự khẳng định chủ quyền Hoàng Sa, Trường Sa của vua chúa, triều đình Việt Nam.

Trong khi tại Trung Quốc chưa có tài liệu nào nói rõ vua, triều đình Trung Quốc khẳng định chủ quyền của mình ở Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa, thì tài liệu chính sử của Việt Nam cho thấy vua và triều đình Việt Nam đã nhiều lần khẳng định Hoàng Sa và Trường Sa là thuộc lãnh hải Việt Nam. Các tài liệu chính thức của nhà nước Việt Nam, của triều đình Việt Nam như *Đại Nam Thực Lục Chinh Biên, Đại Nam Hội Điển Sự Lệ, Châu Bản Triều Nguyễn, Đại Nam Nhất Thống Chí* đã ghi nhận rất rõ ràng rằng hoàng đế Việt Nam, triều đình Việt Nam luôn khẳng định Hoàng Sa thuộc về cương vực mặt biển Việt Nam.

Tỷ như tháng 8 mùa thu năm Qúi Ty Minh Mạng thứ 14 (1833), vua Minh Mạng bảo Bộ Công rằng: "Dải Hoàng Sa trong vùng biển Quảng Ngãi..." (*Đại Nam Thực Lục Chinh Biên*, đệ nhị kỷ, quyển 104). Năm Bính Thân, niên hiệu Minh Mạng thứ 17 (1836) (năm Đạo Quang thứ 16 đời Nhà Thanh) Bộ Công tâu lên vua : "Xứ Hoàng Sa thuộc cương vực mặt biển nước ta rất là hiểm yếu (*Đại Nam Thực Lục Chính Biên*, đệ nhị kỷ, quyển 165). Ngày 20 tháng 12 năm Thiệu Trị thứ 7 (1847) phúc tấu của Bộ Công cũng đã khẳng định : "Hàng năm, vào mùa xuân, theo lệ phái binh thuyền vãng thám Hoàng Sa thuộc hải cương nước nhà ..." (tập Châu Bản Thiệu Trị tập 51, trang 235). Sách *Đại Nam Nhất Thống*

Annex 534

Pierre-Yves Manguin, "The Archaeology of Early Maritime Polities of Southeast Asia" in *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History* (I. Glover & P. Bellwood eds., 2004)

SOUTHEAST ASIA

This comprehensive and absorbing book traces the cultural history of both Mainland and Island Southeast Asia from 3000 BC to around AD 1300, across an extensive region that extends from Burma in the west to the eastern regions of Indonesia. It commences with Neolithic and Bronze–Iron Age prehistoric cultures and continues through to the major Hindu and Buddhist civilizations and burgeoning international contacts of the early Christian Era. Southeast Asia incorporated the region of origin for the Austronesian population dispersal across Indonesia and the Pacific, commencing about 5,000 years ago, and was an arena for the development of many archaeologically rich Neolithic and metal-using communities, especially in Thailand and Vietnam. It served as the backdrop for several unique and strikingly monumental Indic civilizations; such as the Khmer civilization centred around Angkor and the Cham kingdoms of coastal Vietnam. This book will be invaluable to anyone interested in the full history of the region.

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Peter Bellwood is Professor of Archaeology at the Australian National University in Canberra. He has carried out field research since 1967 in Southeast Asia (Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines) and numerous Polynesian islands. He has a special interest in archaeological and linguistic aspects of Austronesian prehistory in both Southeast Asia and Oceania, and in the prehistories of early farming populations in all parts of the world.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

From prehistory to history

Edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood

12

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY MARITIME POLITIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Pierre-Yves Manguin

Introduction

During the first century of archaeological research in Southeast Asia, orientalist scholars, initially trained in the study of neighbouring Indian or Chinese cultures, chronically disregarded the millennium–long period that led from late prehistory to the emergence, around the fifth century AD, of those civilizations that could be studied with the tools with which they were familiar: philology, epigraphy, art history and monumental archaeology. This disregard for the proto-historical phase of Southeast Asian archaeology, and a focus on little else but monumental archaeology and art history for the historical phase, led to profound misrepresentations of the crucial early developments in state formation and urbanization, best summarized in a blunt statement in George Cœdès' pioneering synthesis on *The Indianised States of Southeast Asia*:

> In most cases, one moves without transition from Late Neolithic to the early Hindu vestiges. . . . One may therefore say, without undue exaggeration, that the peoples of Further India shared a late Neolithic civilisation when the Brahmano-Buddhist culture of India was first brought into contact with them.[1]

For long, the enduring controversies over the processes of "Indianization" (and "Sinicization") of Southeast Asia, while gradually returning responsibility for some of the cultural dynamics to the local people, did not bring about real progress because of lack of solid data to substantiate the various interpretations at hand.

Oliver Wolters' ground-breaking historical study on *Early Indonesian Commerce*,[2] based on textual sources alone, was the first to take into serious consideration the crucial first seven centuries of the first millennium AD in order to understand the economic and political background to the emergence in the seventh century of Srivijaya, the first major state of Insular Southeast Asia. It brought to light the entrepreneurship of the early coastal polities of western Southeast Asia that thrived first on commerce with India, and only later, after the fifth century AD, on direct exchange with China. Another major achievement of the past two decades has been the concentration by archaeologists and historians on sites, many coastal, in both Continental and Insular Southeast Asia with chronological phases bridging the periods between the third century BC and the fifth to seventh centuries AD.

The artefacts brought to light clearly indicate that regular exchange with the Indian subcontinent and, to a lesser degree, with China, had become the rule long before inscriptions, monuments and statuary inspired by India started appearing in Southeast Asian sites, therefore conclusively contradicting earlier assumptions on an abrupt "civilizing" process driven from overseas. These recent finds were reinforced when it was proven that large trading ships built in Southeast Asia using local techniques, distinct from those of the Indian Ocean and China, plied Asian waters during this same period.[3] The passage into Dravidian languages and literature, as early as the first centuries AD, of Austronesian nautical terms (such as *perahu* or *wangkang*, both generic words for "boat") brings further proof of the active participation of Austronesian speakers in Indian Ocean networks in the early centuries of the first millennium AD. One could also argue that the linguistic evidence does not in any way suggest that the Indians taught the Southeast Asian peoples how to trade or sail. Finally, recent progress in the archaeology of early historical sites is now also closing the long-standing gap between prehistory and "classical" Southeast Asia.[4]

As a consequence of the epistemological and methodological leap forward brought about by protohistorical and early historical studies, the emergence of complex polities on the shores of western Southeast Asia during the early first millennium AD can now be firmly associated with regional and long-distance maritime trade networks. Most relevant sites lie along the shores of western Southeast Asia, thus defining a string of favoured coasts astride what was then becoming the enduring trans-Asian maritime route. Due to their exceptional geographical position, the Southeast Asian Mainland peninsulas and the straits that separate them from the neighbouring archipelago soon became an inescapable crossroads between three crucial regions: the two economically and culturally commanding continental masses of China and India, and the multitude of Mainland and Insular Southeast Asian coastal ecosystems, harbouring peoples of various origins, most of them sharing technologically advanced shipping skills and control over valuable and often irreplaceable commodities.[5]

The early coastal polities (*c.* second century BC – third century AD)

Other chapters in this volume take into consideration the archaeological data available from a variety of early Metal Age sites of coastal Southeast Asia that have provided proof of overseas exchange networks. Intra- and inter-regional exchange patterns were solidly established in the late centuries BC (Figure 12.1). Pottery, nephrite ornaments, glass and semiprecious stone beads, bronze bowls and urns, as well as bronze kettledrums, bells and ceremonial weapons from the Dông Son culture in Vietnam help archaeologists to identify these early regional networks. They appear to have carried artefacts a great distance away from their manufacturing sites, probably not in any direct way, but via interconnected local networks. Some artefacts produced beyond Southeast Asia have also been found in a variety of sites strewn along the early Southeast Asian maritime trade routes, clearly indicating regular contacts with Indian Ocean shores. Beads of Indian manufacture made of semi-precious stones and glass became a major trade item in most Southeast Asian sites from the fourth century BC onwards, as best documented at coastal Malay sites and at Ban Don Ta Phet in west-central Thailand.[6] The latter is not a port site but must have been in regular contact with overseas trade, from the west via the Three Pagodas Pass or from the south, via the lower Chao Phraya river basin. Other rare, valuable goods no doubt obtained through trade, especially high-tin bronze knobbed

PIERRE-YVES MANGUIN
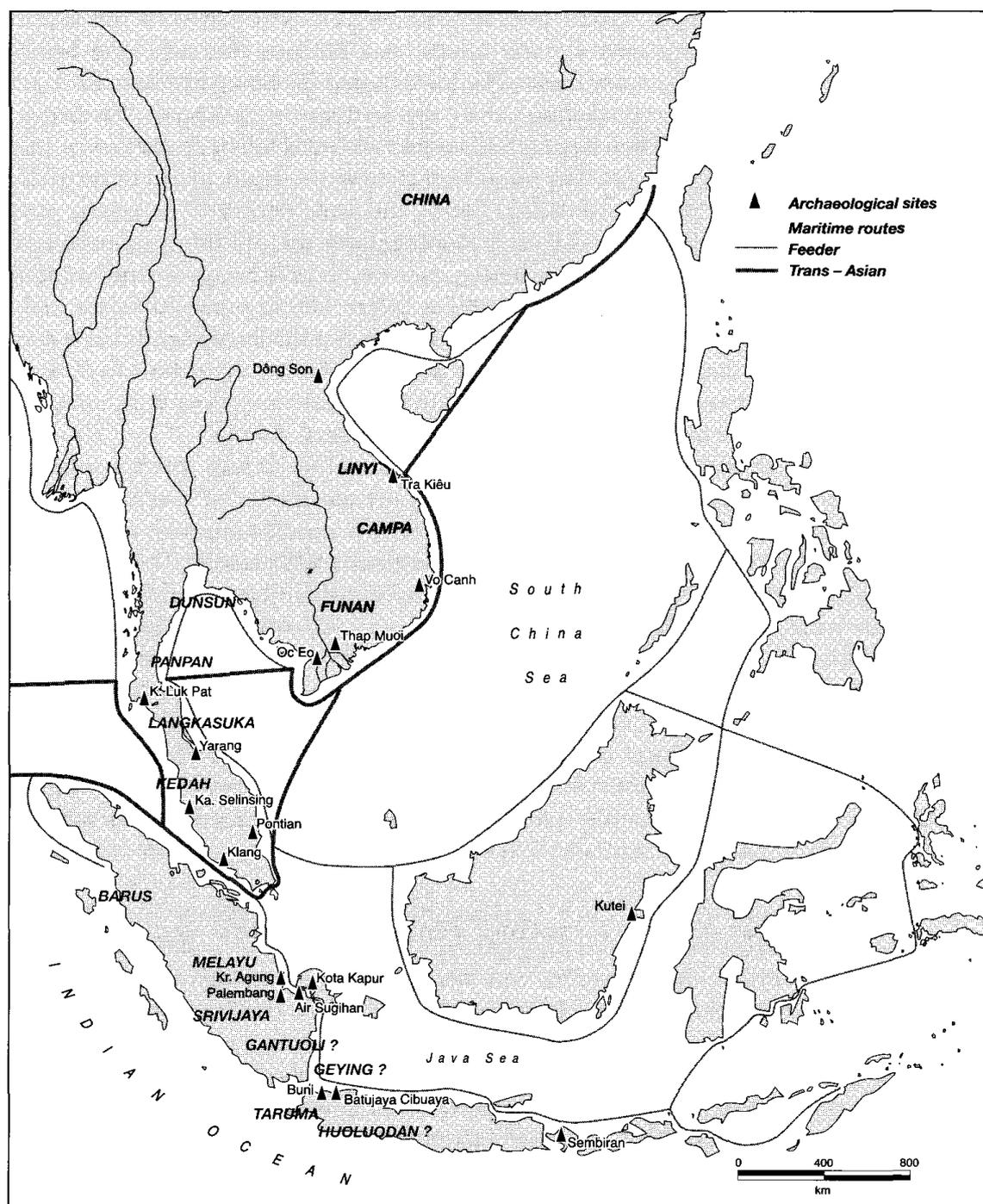
Figure 12.1 Maritime Southeast Asia locating the main known polities (in bold capitals) and major archaeological sites mentioned in the text.

bowls (see chapter 4), also indicate long-distance trade across the Indian Ocean. Such prestige artefacts have been found in burial sites and bear proof of the higher social status of the deceased, therefore also manifesting increasingly ranked societies.

Whatever the original significance of such objects in their foreign place of manufacture, they cannot as yet be used to attest to the adoption of imported religious

284

or political practices in Southeast Asia, although indigenous or foreign merchants as well as indigenous elites could have been aware of such alien thought systems. Much later in the history of Southeast Asia it is well known that it took centuries of contact with foreign Muslim merchant communities before Islam became adopted as a state religion.

The Melaka and Bangka Straits settlements

Some of the first coastal communities of Southeast Asia actively engaged in long-distance maritime trade are located in the Strait of Melaka. Wisseman Christie[7] first brought into clear historical perspective those sites on the west coast of Malaysia, mainly in the Klang and Langat river basins of Selangor, that had attracted only occasional attention in earlier decades.[8] In what appear to have been mound and boat burials dating from the very last centuries BC, she emphasized archaeological assemblages of local and imported artefacts, including an indigenous industry of iron and bronze socketed tools, beads and pottery of Indian origin, cast bronze bells and kettledrums from Dông Son, Vietnam. The sophistication of these burials, their density, and the fact that they provide a richer array of imported goods than the contemporary slab burial sites found further inland in the Malay Peninsula, indicates that they were left by distinctly ranked societies. As these coastal sites are located close to abundant alluvial tin ore deposits, and further had access to upriver sources of alluvial gold, it is surmised that they thrived on the export of these two metals, in high demand in India.

Settlement sites belonging to these early societies have so far never been investigated. However, it is most probable that, to achieve their economic goals, they must already have commanded some sort of symbiotic relationship with the gold-producing inland societies, including those that constructed the slab graves.[9] This in turn implies that these coastal societies belonged to already complex political systems, not far removed from the states that would coalesce in the Straits area later in the first millennium AD, and whose prosperity was also clearly based, among other factors, on the exploitation of a rich hinterland, as will be seen below. This, if confirmed by further archaeological research, would constitute proof of early indigenous entrepreneurship in long distance trade networks.

The earliest coastal settlements with access to overseas trade artefacts date from a slightly later phase of Southeast Asian history (see chapter 3). Some, briefly described below, have long chronological sequences encompassing much of the first millennium AD, but all appear to have been born during the economic boom at the turn of the first millennium, when Roman trade with India was at its peak. The earliest chronological phase is usually dated to the first–third centuries AD – and may date back a century or two earlier depending on the dating of such diagnostic artefacts as the Indian rouletted ware. Much of the information on such coastal sites has been gathered from loosely controlled excavations or chance finds from as early as the 1920s; it has only recently been brought together in order to infuse some meaning into hitherto scattered data.

Systematic excavations of a few of these sites with early phases clearly bridging the late prehistoric and historical periods have been carried out in both Malaysia and Indonesia. Other sites, such as those situated on the South Sumatra coastline, were surveyed and tested in 2001; conclusions reached by these ongoing research programmes must be considered as preliminary.[10] The coherence of the data gathered so far is nevertheless encouraging.

Due to extensive looting, we lack data on the settlement that no doubt would have been found at the site of Khuan Luk Pad ("Bead Mound") in Krabi Province on the

PIERRE-YVES MANGUIN

south-western coast of Peninsular Thailand. Excavations by Thai archaeologists have nevertheless proved that this large glass and stone bead-producing site was active during the first half of the first millennium AD.[11] The shift of part of the bead production from India to Southeast Asian coastal sites during this period is indicative of the growing dynamics of regional trade. Artefacts other than beads found at Khuan Luk Pad also provide evidence for long-distance trade: Roman intaglios and glass ware, as well as Indian coins from across the Bay of Bengal, and locally smelted tin for export to tin-hungry India (Figure 12.2). Another early bead-making site at Khao Sam Kaeo on the east coast of the Peninsula, about which little is

Figure 12.2 Indian (possibly Satavahana) coin with a ship design found at Khuan Luk Pad, Krabi, Peninsular Thailand. (Photograph courtesy of Wat Khlong Thom collection.)

yet known, appears to parallel the activities of the earliest phase at Khlong Thom and further confirms the economic importance of bead-trading activities in Southeast Asian waters during the early first millennium AD.[12]

Pulau Kelumpang, first excavated by Evans in the early 1930s, lies in mangrove forest at the mouth of the Selinsing River on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula.[13] Malaysian archaeologists have intensively investigated it again in recent years.[14] Settlements were built here on wooden piles. Subsistence was clearly marine oriented, with molluscs and fish providing most of the food, but rice also appears to have been part of the diet. The burials, apparently in lashed-plank boats, contained imported beads. Tin rings and ear pendants as well as gold, bronze and iron artefacts are part of the assemblage. People continued to live on this site until the early second millennium AD with access to foreign goods, including pottery and an engraved gemstone matching finds in Funan (in present-day southwestern Vietnam and southern Cambodia), together with Chinese ceramics when these became available after the eighth century. But whereas neighbouring groups in the Sungei Bujang and Sungei Mas sites of Kedah had adopted an Indianised way of life starting around the fourth or fifth century, it is interesting to note that the people of Kuala Selinsing chose not to abandon their indigenous beliefs, practising the same type of burial rituals until the settlement was abandoned some time around the tenth century.

The discovery of comparable coastal sites in Indonesia, spread along the major maritime route passing through the Strait of Bangka and following the northern coasts of Java and Bali, brings the Malaysian sites into a broader perspective. The latter were situated along the Strait of Melaka, on the major thoroughfare between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. The Indonesian sites are located not only on the coasts of Sumatra (Karang Agung, Air Sugihan) and West Java (Buni), where much of the economic and political development of the following centuries would take place, but also further east at Sembiran on the northern coast of Bali.[15] Considering the limited economic importance of the Balinese hinterland, one is entitled to interpret the latter as a staging point on the route to Eastern Indonesia, with its renowned spices and precious woods. By then, cloves, which were exclusively cultivated in the Moluccas, were already known as far as Europe and

China and must therefore have transited via such trading sites.

During the 1980s and 1990s extensive areas of freshwater swamp forest along the east coast of South Sumatra, settled only by Kubu hunter-gatherers until the middle of the twentieth century, were cleared to make way for transmigration settlements. The forest was burnt, canals were dug on a geometrical grid and bulldozers created new fields, levelling mounds and filling in old meandering river beds. In the process, many archaeological sites were brought to light. Unfortunately, the first discoverers of these sites, which yielded gold artefacts and beads, were the new settlers who engaged in extensive looting (Figure 12.3).[16]

The area in the vicinity of the Air (river) Sugihan, a few kilometres from the coast, east of the Musi River estuary, was thus brought to the attention of Indonesian archaeologists in the late 1980s. But all that could by then be gathered was an array of artefacts lacking context, roughly dating from late prehistoric to early historic times: coarse pottery, rather crude gold ornaments, large glass and bronze bangles, a

Figure 12.3 Gold ornaments from the site of Air Sugihan (South Sumatra). Identical circular ear rings (top of photograph) and moulds for casting them were found at Oc Eo. (Photograph courtesy of Kanwil Dept. Pendidikan collection, Palembang.)

quantity of glass and stone beads of various forms and colours, and two whole Chinese ewers dated to the sixth century AD. The area from which settlers excavated these artefacts was vast, and no specific sites were then identified. However, remains found at a new transmigration settlement cleared in the same fashion during the 1990s, northwest of the Musi and Banyu Asin estuaries, have recently been brought to the attention of Indonesian archaeologists. Despite substantial damage to the sites, both by the land-clearing process and by looting, their prompt intervention in 2001 with immediate test excavations allowed for a much better picture of this site complex, known as Karang Agung, to be drawn. Again, as in Air Sugihan, finds of local pottery were scattered over an area some 5 kilometres square, predominantly near old river beds. Much of this area contains large wooden poles, 30 centimetres in diameter, some 2.50 vertical metres of which remained in place under the layers that produced the archaeological finds. One such large house pole has been radiocarbon dated to between AD 220 and 440. Tin net sinkers point to fishing activities and fragments of boat timbers and a rudder, belonging to the ancient "stitched plank and lashed lug" tradition common in Southeast Asia during the whole of the first millennium AD, were also recovered. Gold ornaments with practically no decoration and gold leaf are frequently found and unverified information indicates that a gold leaf eye-cover was found in a burial together with beads, bones and teeth.

At Karang Agung, these indigenous artefacts are accompanied by a broad variety of foreign objects. Again, as in Air Sugihan, bronze and glass bangles are often found. Two

small metal pendants are either of Indian manufacture or come from Oc Eo in southern Vietnam, where many comparable ornaments made of bronze or tin have been excavated. Some polished black sherds with a pinkish-grey paste also appear to have been imported from India (though no rouletted ware has so far been identified), as does much of the abundant array of high-quality beads of all sizes and qualities, made of stone or glass. The local pottery assemblage, like that of many other comparable sites of coastal Indonesia, comprised both the coarser cord-impressed type and some finer ware with incised or punctate decoration, including tall-necked *kendis* with a red polished slip.

One other riverine site a dozen kilometres upstream from Karang Agung yielded an archaeological assemblage of large tall-necked carinated pots with geometric punctate decoration, simple socketed iron tools similar to those found in the Klang-Langat sites of Malaysia, and trade beads. All these finds in South Sumatra are clearly indicative of large, well-populated settlements dating back to the first half of the first millennium AD, and possibly starting as early as the last century BC. At Air Sugihan, occupation continued into the historical period. It is too early to ascertain in any detail the part played by such settlements within the trade networks leading further east into Java and Eastern Indonesia. It is manifest, though, that these people were in close contact with foreign traders. Their key location near the estuary of the Musi River, astride the sailing lane passing through the Strait of Bangka, appears to have provided these settlements with the opportunity to act as intermediaries between sea-trading groups and the contemporary societies of the upper valleys of the extensive Musi River basin. Indian beads, Dông Son artefacts and red polished tall-necked *kendis* have been found in the Pasemah megalithic sites (Figure 12.4) and in the Ulu Musi jar burial complexes. These coastal sites, located in an area still rich in natural commodities only a few decades ago (elephant tusks, deer antlers, tortoiseshell, tiger skins, valuable timber and possibly also rhinoceros horns) may have also controlled the flow of alluvial gold and forest products from the upstream valleys.

Figure 12.4 Batu Gaja (Elephant stone) from the Pasemah megalithic site, South Sumatra. It depicts a warrior carrying a Heger I type drum, a sword and leg bands all typical of the Vietnamese Dông Son culture. (Photograph courtesy of Museum Balaputradewe, Palembang.)

Java and Bali

Further east along the maritime route, the complex of sites known collectively as Buni, a few kilometres inland in West Java, gained deserved fame when it yielded the first Indian rouletted wares to be identified in a Southeast Asian context.[17] Judging from a large collection of sherds and whole pots in museum collections, the local pottery assemblage is similar to that of the South Sumatran sites described above. Context-less finds of polished stones, bronze artefacts and rouletted ware suggest a date in the last centuries BC or the early centuries AD. There is also a distinct possibility that this site complex might be identified as the powerful and densely populated polity known from Chinese sources

as Geying (Ko-ying), which was still active in the third century AD and was one of the Southeast Asian gates for the India trade.[18] This extended group of sites was not systematically investigated when discovered in the 1960s and most of it is now lost for further research. It was extensively looted for its gold, beads and precious ninth-century Chinese ceramics, and is now situated in a quickly growing urban zone at the eastern edge of Jakarta. It appears, however, to have extended further west along the coast, into the area of Batujaya, where Indonesian archaeologists digging under somewhat later Buddhist structures have identified occupational layers dated to the second–fourth centuries AD and have brought to light Indian rouletted ware.

So far, no sites of this early phase that show clear links with India have been identified on the central and eastern coasts of Java. The National Museum at Jakarta does hold one gold seal of Indian or

Figure 12.5 Gold seal of Indian or Hellenistic influence, from Pekalongan, north coast of Central Java. (Photograph courtesy of National Museum, Jakarta.)

Hellenistic influence, acquired in 1917 at the port city of Pekalongan in Central Java (Figure 12.5). It has affinities with pieces found at Oc Eo and Khuan Luk Pad and may have belonged to an assemblage comparable to those of other early first millennium AD sites.[19] The coastal burial sites of Plawangan and Lamongan, in East Java, probably date back to the first centuries AD: they however yielded early metal age assemblages comprising Dông Son bronze artefacts, shell, glass and semi-precious stone beads and local pottery, and do not appear to have been in direct contact with overseas trade networks.[20]

Of all the Indonesian coastal sites that show direct links to long-distance trade networks, only Sembiran, on the north coast of Bali, has so far been systematically excavated, starting in 1987. It is situated near the harbour mentioned in the tenth century AD Julah inscription. A remarkable quantity of Indian pottery (mainly rouletted ware) with striking similarities in shapes and paste composition with those excavated at the South Indian site of Arikamedu was found in the lower archaeological levels. One sherd had characters in Brahmi or Kharoshthi characters inscribed on its surface. This pottery occurred in association with fragments of a volcanic tuff mould for casting a Pejeng-type kettledrum and numerous monochrome glass beads. The appearance of glass beads and semi-precious stones in the well-known burial site of Gilimanuk confirms that they had become a common prestige commodity in Bali by the turn of the Christian era.[21]

The coasts of the Indochinese Peninsula

Sailing northeast from the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, across the Gulf of Siam, one soon reaches the largest reported group of sites – some 350 so far – many of them coastal and riverine, that have been clearly dated to the first half of the first millennium AD.

Vietnamese archaeologists group the sites in the lower Mekong Basin into what they call the "Oc Eo Culture", after the eponymous site which lies in Vietnamese territory some 20 kilometres east of the present-day coastline of the Gulf of Siam.[22] Oc Eo became famous when Louis Malleret revealed its existence in the early 1940s, suggesting that it had been one major settlement of the polity then known from Chinese sources alone as Funan (first–seventh century AD). Malleret carried out one single but intensive archaeological campaign in 1944.[23] Warfare prevented any further research in the Mekong Delta until 1979. Malleret nevertheless managed to publish, and acquire for what is now the Museum of History of Hô Chi Minh City, an impressive collection of some 10,000 archaeological artefacts (including beads, but excluding pottery), some ninety percent of which came from the Oc Eo area (Figure 12.6). This makes the site one of the richest of Southeast Asia in terms of variety of forms and materials. The largest part of this assemblage is unfortunately

Figure 12.6 Glass and stone beads from Oc Eo. (École Française d'Extrême-Orient photograph from Malleret 1959–63.)

disconnected from its original context and, with few exceptions, it is of little use in dating Funanese sites and determining chronological sequences among them with any precision.

A few years after the reunification of Vietnam, Vietnamese archaeologists resumed investigation of a variety of sites in the Mekong Delta. An ongoing Franco-Vietnamese archaeological programme, started in 1997, concentrates on the sites in the floodplain of Oc Eo and on the slopes of neighbouring Mount Ba Thê.[24] Another archaeological programme is presently investigating the site of Angkor Borei in Khmer territory (see chapter 5). The latter is not technically a coastal site, but it should be remembered that it was linked by a 70 kilometre-long canal to Oc Eo (and therefore to the sea), at least in its later phases.

Preliminary results of recent research at the Oc Eo / Ba Thê complex reveal early Phase I settlements with radiocarbon dates providing a mid-first to mid-third century AD range (Figures 12.7 and 12.8). Remains from the earliest phase are found only on higher ground which floods nowadays only in exceptional circumstances, particularly on the small mounds in the floodplain and at the interface between the floodplain and the lower slopes of Mount Ba Thê. No trace of Phase 1 settlement has been found so far in the annually inundated plain of Oc Eo. Houses in these early settlement sites were built on wooden piles (many of them very large) and some were covered with roofs made of flat terracotta grooved tiles (Figure 12.9) of a type never so far reported for such early sites in Southeast Asia, which may indicate a foreign origin for this technique – possibly Indian.[25]

A jar burial excavated on the slopes of Ba Thê that contained gold foil and carnelian beads probably also dates back to Phase I (Figure 12.10). Apart from beads, the excavations have revealed for Funan Phase I a rich assemblage of locally made pottery, much of it belonging to a category of buff, "fine paste ware". This pottery includes a
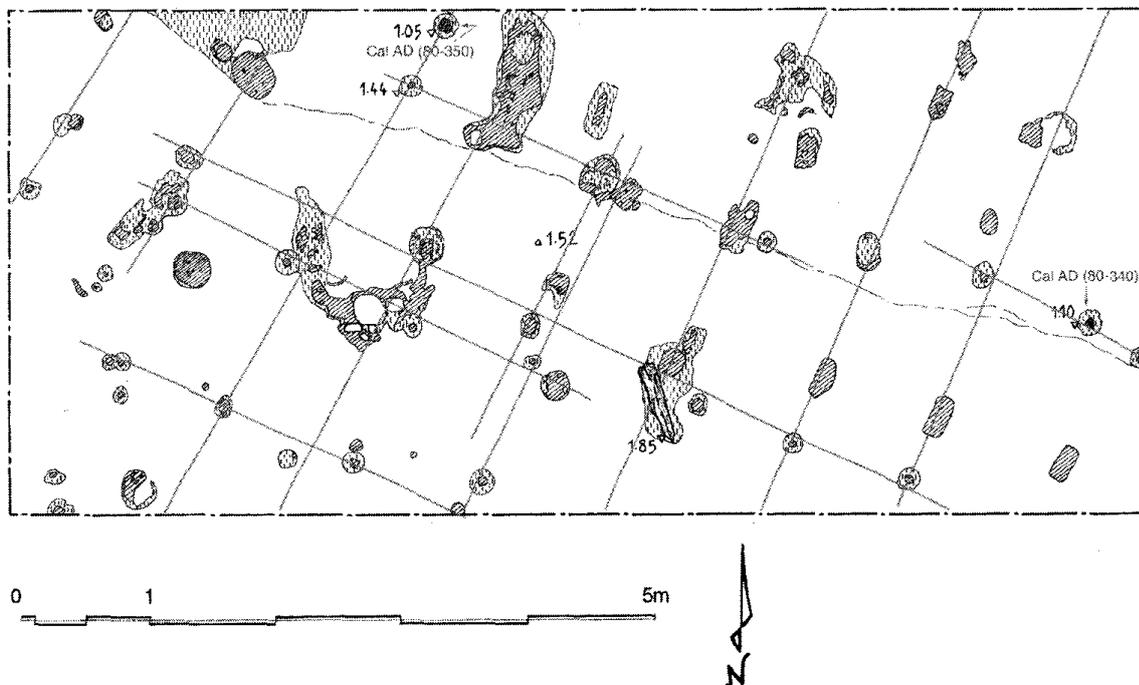
Figure 12.7 Wooden pole pattern from Phase I (first to third century AD) at Go Oc Eo (2001). (Drawing courtesy of EFEO.)

variety of shapes unknown so far in contemporary or later Southeast Asian sites. Many, such as the *kendis*, were clearly influenced by Indian shapes and some sherds of black polished pottery can be counted as direct imports from India. However, no rouletted ware has so far been found, probably because the first settlements at Oc Eo date to the mid-first century AD at the earliest, while the Indian pottery comes from a level dated to AD 50–250. Other ceramic wares, such as Phimai black, attest to exchange with sites further upstream on the Mekong and its tributaries.

So far, no remains of any brick buildings or religious statuary have been found in Phase I levels in any of the excavated sites at Oc Eo, or apparently anywhere else in the Mekong Delta. It appears, therefore, that Phase I, despite significant differences in the pottery assemblage, may be considered as equivalent to contemporary phases of the coastal sites of Insular Southeast Asia described above, again bearing witness to extensive economic and cultural contacts with overseas markets. On-going environmental studies may determine if Oc Eo had access to the sea via now-vanished natural channels, or a manmade canal.

As in contemporary sites in Southeast Asia, artefacts from across the Bay of Bengal that may belong to Phase I of Oc Eo, such as Roman and Middle Eastern medals and intaglios, inscribed Indian gems, beads and ceramics, do not demonstrate any Indianization of Funanese society at this time – just its remarkably cosmopolitan nature. But these remarks are so far valid only for Oc Eo and may not hold true for other parts of the lower Indochinese Peninsula. If the third century AD date for the isolated Vo Canh inscription recovered

Figure 12.8 Wooden pole from Phase I (first to third century AD) at Go Oc Eo (2001). (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)
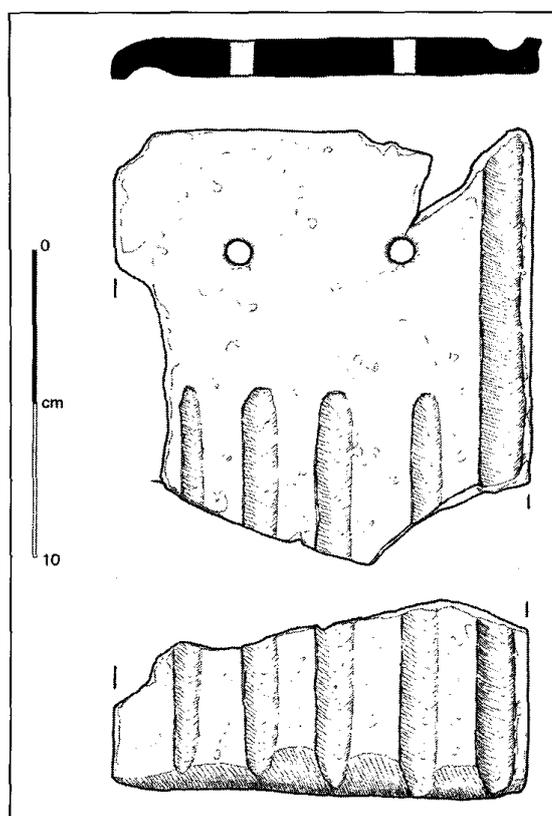
Figure 12.9 Terracotta tile from Phase I (first to third century AD) at Go Oc Eo (2001). (Drawing courtesy of V. Bernard.)

much further north near modern Nha Trang can be accepted, one has to acknowledge the existence there of a local political power, familiar with Indianized state concepts and contemporary with the end of Phase I at Oc Eo (See chapter 9).

The northern areas of most of present-day Vietnam were under Chinese domination throughout the first millennium AD, but the commandery on their southern borders split

off in about AD 192 to become known to the Chinese as Linyi. Here, excavations from 1990 onwards at Buu Câu Hill, Tra Kiêu, also yielded two small rouletted ware sherds in Phase 1 of the Tra Kieu sequence.[26] The early levels there, and the nearby location at Go Cam, provide an "interface between the prehistoric Sa Huynh Culture, early "Indian" contacts, the Han expansion into Central Vietnam, and the early Cham state of Linyi".[27] Together with the riverine sites of the Viêt polities from which the Dông Son bronzes must have been exported, this riverine site most probably constituted the northern limits of those exchange net-

Figure 12.10 Large burial jar with lid and small adjoining jarlet from Linh Son, Oc Eo, Vietnam (1998). (Drawing courtesy of V. Bernard.)

works that we have seen at work between the third to second centuries BC and the second to third centuries AD in Peninsular and Insular Southeast Asia. Cham polities at Tra Kiêu and nearby areas remained significant powers in international trade during the following centuries and the Cham capitals of Simhapura and Indrapura developed there later in the first millennium AD (see chapter 9 here).

The transition to history

Between the third and fifth centuries AD, the appearance of foreign textual sources with specific information on Southeast Asia brings about a momentous change in our perception of the region. We now progressively enter the historical phase, and historiography will soon be reinforced by the first locally written sources. The earliest of these inscriptions are written in Indian scripts and their language is exclusively Sanskrit. With one debatable exception dated on palaeographic grounds alone to the third century AD – the Vo Canh inscription, possibly engraved for a ruler of Funan – Southeast Asian epigraphs do not appear before the end of the fourth century AD. Starting from then, the corpus of inscriptions grows steadily in size, later switching from Sanskrit to local languages.

The only known Chinese texts describing this early historical period are fragments from lost third to sixth century books, compiled and published centuries later, mainly in official court records, but also in *materia medica*, compendia rich in botanical and pharmacological data. All these texts, despite their limitations, reflect a trading situation outlined above. Early first millennium AD Indian literary or religious sources, albeit less specific than Chinese ones, also reflect the well-established reputation of Southeast Asia as an important source of wealth. The Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Archipelago were referred to as Swarnadvipa, the "Islands of Gold", and the mainland possibly as Swarnabhumi, "Land of Gold", and the region gained its position in literature as a metaphor for lands where fortunes can be made. Apart from gold, in such great demand in India that its constant flow towards the East alarmed a first century AD Roman emperor, sandalwood, *gharu* wood, cardamoms, camphor and cloves are mentioned among other commodities in early first millennium Indian sources as coming from Island Southeast Asia.[28]

During the first half of the twentieth century, basing themselves largely on this body of foreign and local textual sources, orientalist historians built up, practically from scratch, an impressive reconstruction of Southeast Asian history, culminating in 1944 in Cœdès' first edition of the commanding work subsequently published as *Les États hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*.[29] This immediately became and still remains an indispensable reference work for Southeast Asian ancient history. It has to be considered, however, as a product typical of its time. The discourse of Cœdès and his fellow orientalists was twice biased. It was a prisoner as much of the representations conveyed by foreign sources on Southeast Asia as of their own perception of the world in which those scholars lived – colonial and Eurocentric – in which Southeast Asia could only be perceived from the perspective of the "greater civilizations" of Europe and then India or China. It was difficult for European and Indian historians of the time to understand the local factors that provided Southeast Asia with its cultural, economic, and political autonomy and dynamics, and to free its history from the exclusive grip of the two imposing cultural and economic masses of China and India. As noted above, this was never as obvious as in the neglect of the growing body of data that one now ascribes to the early historical period under consideration in this chapter.

The first coastal city-states (*c.* third century–sixth century AD)

Only recently have archaeologists started to consider the early historical period as worthy of attention. The little that remained of monuments of the period, built for the most part in easy-to-reuse bricks, were no match for the temples of later, "classical" ages. The large brick structures brought to light in 1944 by Louis Malleret in the Mekong Delta were seldom discussed until recent archaeological research concentrated again on the Funan sites. And it took until the 1990s to see in print suggestions that the brick monuments of coastal West Java that were being progressively brought to light could have belonged to the fifth–seventh centuries state of Taruma(nagara), long known from inscriptions.[30] Similarly, many an art historian, when confronted with early statues, failed to recognise their antiquity and tended to reject them as either aberrant or degenerate forms, relegating them to an uncharted chronological limbo around the seventh–eighth century (early Buddhist statues somehow managed to escape this curse).[31]

The Malay Peninsula: a stepping-stone

The information gathered from Asian sources and from rare western texts such as the *Periplus of the Erythrean Seas* or Ptolemy's *Geography* all point to the outstanding role played during the early centuries of the Christian era by the isthmian tracts of the Thai-Malay Peninsula, on both sides of the present international border. Their geographical position, facing the Indian coast or the South China Sea, provided convenient harbours for those ships that waited for the monsoon to enter the Strait of Melaka or that wished to connect with the overland portage routes. These harbours were natural havens for merchant communities with close economic ties with India.

Possibly as early as the third century AD, we can recognize on the international scene a group of small coastal polities that are said to have been focused on urban centres enclosed in palisades or walls, with rulers living in palaces. These communities knew writing, practised agriculture and patronized excellent craftsmen. Some of these harbour

cities are said to have been host to hundreds of Brahmins and to large merchant communities from India and the Iranian world. Buddhist communities were also active. Some of these polities carried Indian-sounding names such as Takkola, probably on the northwest coast of the peninsula near Takuapa, or Langkasuka, a prosperous and long-lived polity centred on Pattani-Yarang which emerged in the third century AD and survived into the second millennium. Others are only known by the name given them in Chinese records. Panpan (P'an-p'an) was probably on the Bay of Bandon, near modern Chaiya (Figure 12.11), and after its foundation in the third century it seems to have survived for many centuries, well into the "classical" period. Dunsun (Tun-sun), possibly the transcript of a Mon name meaning "five cities", was situated further north on the peninsula and was probably short-lived, around the third century. Jiecha (Chieh-ch'a) appeared in fifth century sources and should be located in South Kedah. Chitu (Ch'ih-t'u, meaning "Red Earth"), possibly south of Langkasuka, was known in Chinese sources only after the seventh century but was probably the same as the Raktamrtikka (with the same meaning) mentioned on a fifth-century Buddhist Sanskrit inscription found in Kedah.[32]

With the exception of Kedah and, possibly, of the ill-studied Takkola/Takuapa sites, larger polities in positions to partici-

Figure 12.11 Fifth-century mitred Vishnu from Chaiya Peninsular, Thailand, possibly the oldest in Southeast Asia. (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

pate in the various trans-peninsular routes that allowed quick communications between the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Siam appear to have been primarily located on the eastern shores of the Thai-Malay peninsula, facing contemporary Funan. Most trade commodities, however, particularly the bulkier ones, would have been shipped around the peninsula. The harbours of these east coast polities would therefore appear to have acted as mediators between Funan and the Indian Ocean trade. Funan was by then the dominant economic power in Southeast Asia and, together with the early Cham polities, the gate to the Chinese market. Peninsular sites on both the east and west coasts such as Sathingpra, Pontian (associated with third–fifth-century boat remains) and Kuala Selinsing have yielded sherds of large decorated jars of a type commonly found at Oc Eo. The key position of these peninsular polities in the regional economy is emphasized by the fact that, during the third century, they were "conquered" by Funan as reported by

295

Chinese sources, or at least integrated into its social space. Nevertheless, they continued to send embassies to China under their own names.[33]

Despite the wealth of archaeological finds gathered during the twentieth century from these isthmian sites, most date to after the fourth century AD. It should be emphasized that no contemporary settlements or religious structures dating to the third–fifth centuries, either Buddhist or Brahmanical, have yet been brought to light in the region. This limits conclusions as to the exact political status of these cosmopolitan settlements. Some seals inscribed with Indian terms may be as old as the third century, but such easily movable objects lack context and tell us nothing about the religious or socio-political circumstances of the sites. We thus have to rely almost solely on Chinese sources for this early period. These texts, compiled in the following period, appear to describe these early polities as city-state-like systems, each centred on a major urban settlement, which acted vis-à-vis the outside world as true states. Whether the Chinese authors who first wrote these accounts (or those who later compiled them) were prejudiced by their own perception of what a state should be, or whether these polities had by then developed from chiefdoms to true city-states, will have to remain a matter of conjecture.

Only when Buddhist and Brahmanical inscriptions become relatively common during the fifth century AD, together with a few contemporary statues, can we infer that the polities in question had significantly moved forward in the process commonly referred to as "Indianization". Indian-inspired political and religious strategies clearly began to be adopted between the third and fourth centuries. By the fifth century, most peninsular polities appear to have become full-fledged city-states, regularly sending and receiving embassies to and from China or India.

The corresponding urban and trading settlements have yet to be identified by excavation. Only in Yarang do we now have evidence, mostly from remote sensing, for the construction of a dense network of (so-far undated) canals linking moated sites to the estuary of the Pattani River, and possibly also to harbour sites. Only religious structures have been brought to light so far. Most of the small brick sanctuaries associated with Visnu statues around Chaiya and Nakhon Si Thammarat that were described in a summary fashion in the early twentieth century – even by then in a sorry state – have now been destroyed. Recent archaeological work by Thai archaeologists at the Khao Sivichai hill site, near Chaiya, has nevertheless revealed a smallish Vaishnava complex dated on stylistic grounds to the sixth century. Further south, larger-scale archaeological research in the vast Yarang complex has brought to light a variety of much larger Buddhist monuments, also said to date back to the sixth–seventh centuries.[34]

The role played by the peninsular city-states in the transformation of Southeast Asia in the very early centuries of the present era is emphasized by recent studies in art history. These confirm that they provided the first impulse for the diffusion of those earliest Indian artistic forms, Vaishnava as well as Buddhist, which rapidly spread to other fast-developing areas such as Funan, Tarumanagara in West Java, and possibly also polities in Eastern and Western Borneo.[35]

The Indochinese Peninsula

Starting in the second century AD, and for the next two to three centuries, Linyi and Funan acted as the gateway to Southeast Asia for those Chinese who grew more and more inquisitive about their southern neighbours and their economic potential. Their

interest in the southern maritime routes became particularly acute when overland access to West Asia was made uncertain by instability in Central Asia in the second half of the second century. Access to the overland routes was closed to the Wu government after the partition of China at the fall of the Han, early in the third century. Funan and Linyi are the earliest Southeast Asian polities to enter the system that would provide over the next centuries one general pattern of trade in the South China Sea. Between AD 226 and 231 their ambassadors first presented to the court of China what the Chinese always considered as their "tribute".

Chinese sources provide rather little information on developments during the first half of the first millennium AD in what is now central Vietnam. How Linyi gave place to the Indianized states that are regrouped under the name of Champa remains unclear. The earliest Sanskrit inscriptions by a ruler called Bhadravarman date to the late or mid-fifth century and appear in both Quang Nam and much further south in Phu Yên, indicating that this ruler's political reach was by then already outstanding.[36] The earliest inscription written in an Austronesian language (Dông Yên Châu), in a script of Indian origin, is probably rather later than these early Sanskrit inscriptions: it shows nevertheless that the ancestral Cham language was then used in central Vietnam. This is also when the earlier Saivaite sanctuaries were built in Mi Son, Quang Nam Province. The inscriptions, of which only a few have been translated, together with the temples and statuary – both Saivaite and Buddhist – bear testimony to economic and political developments in Champa during the first millennium AD, and to their already uneasy relation with their powerful Sino-Vietnamese neighbours from the north. Except at Tra Kiêu (see Chapter 9), no systematic archaeological work has been carried out on settlements contemporary with these sites.

Funan soon grew into the privileged partner of the Chinese in Southeast Asia and remained so until the fourth or fifth century. It is from Chinese sources that we learn that the ruler of Funan, during the third century, expanded its power towards the Malay Peninsula, bringing most of the east coast city-states into its sphere of influence. The ports of this enlarged Funanese economic sphere remained for long the terminal of Chinese mercantile activities in Southeast Asian waters. However, it was not the local produce, but trade goods from India and Western Asia, reshipped through the peninsular harbours controlled by Funan, that interested the Chinese government most. In these harbour centres, Chinese merchants also acquired products gathered from the trading polities of Insular Southeast Asia to which they still had no direct access.

In the early centuries of the first millennium AD, the major role of merchants from Central Asia (Sogdania and Bactria) has to be emphasized. Many were stated by Chinese sources to reside in the harbour of Dunsun during the 3rd century. One most probably has to credit these merchant communities with a role in the introduction of the array of precious Indian Ocean and Mediterranean artefacts, such as gems and jewellery, recovered during the past century – the vast majority without archaeological contexts. The numbers of these items is small if compared, say, with indigenous pottery or locally made beads, but their dispersal all over the region is remarkable. The economic importance of Western and Central Asia also finds its reflection in the religious and artistic spheres. Art historians and philologists have for long been aware of marked influence from the Iranian world, as expressed in artistic styles of the fifth to seventh centuries Vaishnava statuary, the associated cult of Surya and the garments worn by Surya statues. Some funerary practices of Funan, attested by both texts and archaeology, may also have been introduced by such contacts.

PIERRE-YVES MANGUIN

Whether these influences can be directly attributed to merchants from Western and Central Asia or to indirect contact via northwestern India, remains to be ascertained.

Recent archaeological excavations in the Oc Eo/Ba Thê complex of Funan sites have identified, based on radiocarbon dates, an abandonment phase of marked, if undetermined, length between the late third and the fourth centuries. After this, some two centuries of building activity (Phase II) occurred prior to 650. Many brick temples and burial sites were then built on the lower slopes of Mount Ba Thê and on small, non-floodable mounds in the flood plain of Oc Eo, on which pile dwellings had been constructed during the earlier Phase I (Figures 12.12 and 12.13). At Linh Son, a large religious complex appears to have been inaugurated during this period. However, archaeologists can only excavate its periphery as the centre of the site is occupied by a modern Buddhist sanctuary.[37]

Judging from the statuary from Oc Eo, which is rarely found in context (as elsewhere in the Mekong Delta), and from the few Sanskrit inscriptions available, both Brahmanism and Buddhism were practised during Phase II. The fifth century K5 inscription at Thap Muoi, another important Funan site, bears witness to a Vaishnava cult, which explains the predominance of Vishnu statues in the Mekong Delta. Vishnu statues were recently found close to the large brick temple uncovered at Thap Muoi. A single gold foil Buddhist inscription recently found in a foundation deposit from a temple in the plain of Oc Eo also dates from Phase II.

During Phase II at Oc Eo the archaeological finds are concentrated in two areas separated by approximately two kilometres of low lying floodplain: on the slopes of Mount Ba Thê and, in the plain, on and around a series of higher mounds rising some

Figure 12.12 Brick structure at Go Cây Thi (1999), dating from Oc Eo Phase II (fourth to sixth century AD). (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

298
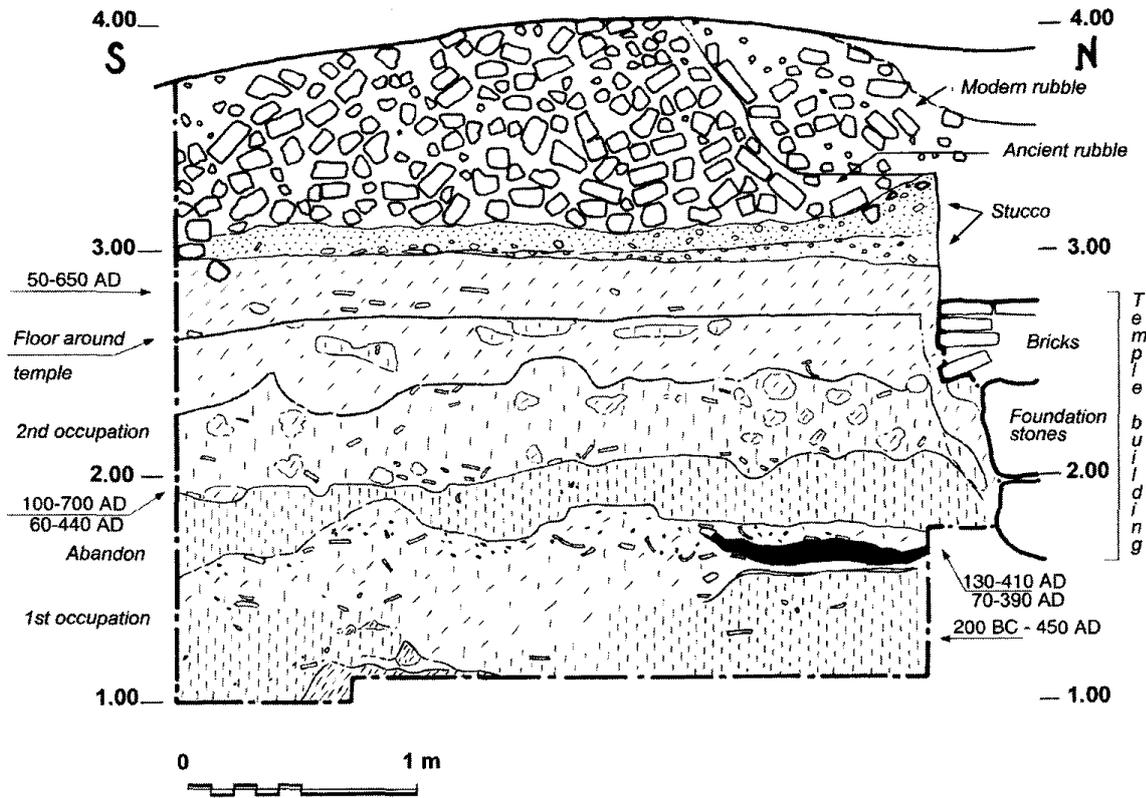
Figure 12.13 Stratigraphical section, Go Cây Thi (1999), showing brick structure and settlement chronology (Oc Eo Phases I and II). (Drawing courtesy of V. Bernard.)

two metres above the mean altitude of the plain. The latter include the eponymous site of Oc Eo (Figure 12.14). As demonstrated by Malleret in his *Archéologie du delta du Mékong*, and verified by recent fieldwork, Oc Eo falls within the limits of a set of parallel moats, visible only on older aerial photographs taken in the 1950s or earlier before intensive paddy cultivation profoundly transformed the local landscape. They mark the rectangular boundaries of a settlement that would have covered the best part of 300–500 hectares of low-lying ground. The northern side of the rectangle is not clearly visible on aerial photographs and the northern limits of the site must therefore remain uncertain. This moated site also appears to have been crisscrossed by a grid of small canals. A larger

Figure 12.14 Glass effigy of an Iranian-looking man, Oc Eo. (Historical Museum, Ho Chi Minh City.) (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

canal ran precisely across the longest axis of the moated settlement in a north–northeast, south–southwest direction, dividing it into symmetrical halves. In the northeast this main

canal joined with another canal that ran in an almost straight line for about 70 kilometres to Angkor Borei in present-day Cambodia (Plate 15). To the southwest, it ran for 16 kilometres towards the former coastline. Towards the southern end of the canal, an important site was found by Malleret, known today as Nên Chua, where remains of a temple and a group of burials have been excavated by Vietnamese archaeologists.

The Phase I settlements at Oc Eo do not appear to have extended into the floodplain since, one may imagine, the flow of flood water had not yet been brought under control. During Phase II, control of the annual floods by the canals would have allowed settlement on the lower ground, leaving the slightly higher mounds for the brick religious monuments. The apparent abandonment of the floodplain sites at the end of Phase II, and the transformation of the sites on the Ba Thê slopes into a largely religious complex during the subsequent pre-Angkorian and Angkorian periods, support the argument that the hydraulic system at Oc Eo and elsewhere in the Mekong Delta had been completed by Phase II.

Due to extensive looting since the early 1940s and intense disturbance for agricultural development since the 1960s, the sites at Oc Eo and Ba Thê may keep forever many of their secrets. Few statues have been found *in situ*, and only a handful of the scores of smaller but precious artefacts thought to have been manufactured locally that were recovered in Malleret's time, or more recently from controlled excavations, have good contexts. However, the information painstakingly gathered by Louis Malleret for the origin and distribution of the extraordinary array of artefacts – most of them coming from the Oc Eo area – does confirm that Oc Eo thrived on maritime trade. Considering the abundant archaeological evidence for local manufacturing of a variety of artefacts (gold, tin and bronze ornaments, beads, pottery, etc), it is quite possible that the urban centre at Oc Eo would have been progressively transformed into a kind of "industrial" site geared towards the production and exportation – inland and overseas – of superbly crafted objects. The commodities obtained must, in their turn, have been fed into the Funanese hinterland via the canal and river network. Ongoing research may also help document other functions of the extensive canal network: it is quite possible that drainage of the floodplain and the newly acquired irrigation control helped open up new tracts of land for rice growing. Rice chaff is commonly found in pottery and bricks at Oc Eo.

The seemingly sudden abandonment, in the mid-seventh century at the latest, of the urban floodplain site of Oc Eo – as opposed to those religious sites on the Ba Thê slopes that survived for five or six more centuries – raises many unanswered questions. What were the shares of environmental, economic or political factors in such radical changes in settlement patterns? Did the digging of the canals put into motion a silting process uncontrollable with the hydraulic technology of the time? The maintenance of the modern hydraulic system, developed after the eighteenth century, often using ancient canal beds, is uncommonly difficult and costly and can only be economically justified by the high yields in rice production of the Mekong Delta. Or, as has been recently suggested,[38] was there an even more radical natural phenomenon, such as a large volcanic explosion inducing a severe change in climate that could have triggered such an irreversible process? We note that the climatic extremes of the late 1990s put considerable pressure on the modern hydraulic system, provoking the longest and highest recorded flood around Oc Eo. Did the growth of agriculture in the interior plains of present-day Cambodia and the progressive shift inland of the political centres of the southern Indochinese peninsula lead to abandonment of the larger coastal centres? It has been

argued that, in the face of increasing competition from the Austronesian-speaking states that were fast developing in Insular Southeast Asia in the fifth century, the maritime trade revenues of Funan fell sharply, bringing about the end of its control over trade with China. This, together with internal political strife, could have prompted a shift towards inland agriculture under the pre-Angkorian (Zhenla) and Angkorian Khmer states.

The shift to Insular Southeast Asia

The reorganization of maritime trade networks between the fifth and the seventh centuries appears indeed as a major historical event of Southeast Asian history, as suggested by Oliver Wolters.[39] Until then, the Chinese only had access to the avidly sought Western Asian products and a few pricey Southeast Asian commodities via Funan and Champa and their trade networks. Starting in the third century, indirect information on countries situated further south became available to Chinese writers. These sources suggest that direct and regular contacts with those Malay world polities that had for long entertained trading relations with India and the Indian Ocean were not established before the early fifth century. Overall growth in the South China Sea maritime trade was then encouraged by the disturbances in Northern China and the subsequent movement of Chinese elites towards the southern provinces, fostering a new emerging market that was cut off from its traditional overland access to Western Asia. Those communities in Insular Southeast Asia that had earlier been active in the development of the Indian Ocean trade networks now turned such circumstances to advantage. People of the Malay world were given another chance to show their ability to expand economically and politically, proving their seamanship and commercial acumen, and confirming the fact that commerce played a prominent role in the early formative stages of coastal, harbour-centred political systems.

During the fifth century, written sources, mainly Chinese, bear witness to the political consolidation of a variety of coastal states in Insular Southeast Asia which were sending embassies to China on a regular basis. The most prominent transformation was the progressive introduction and imposition on the Chinese market, between the fifth and the seventh centuries, of Southeast Asian products that acted as substitutes for Western Asian commodities such as frankincense and myrrh which they had helped ship to China in earlier times. Oleoresins from pine trees, benzoin (gum benjamin) and first-grade camphor were common in a variety of Southeast Asian environments, particularly in Sumatra. First traded as by-products of "Persian" aromatics, these new products appeared by the sixth century in Chinese texts as distinct, precious commodities of the Southern Seas.[40]

Not all of the polities that are mentioned in Chinese sources have yet been identified through archaeology. Some of them are only known by the Chinese transcription of their names, and their precise geographical position remains in doubt. For a few others, some of the archaeological proof rests only in the form of Sanskrit inscriptions found on sites that have so far yielded no further reliable data. Such is the case of the polity at Kutei in East Kalimantan that was ruled c. AD 400 by a third-generation ruler named Mulavarman. His existence is revealed by a set of pillar inscriptions, dated by palaeography alone, which commemorate a series of lavish cattle donations by the king to Brahmin-like priests.[41] The exploitation of alluvial gold, known to have been abundant in the Mahakam river basin, must have lain at the origin of this coastal state. However, with the

PIERRE-YVES MANGUIN

single exception of a small Buddha statue in Gupta style, none of the many Indianized remains gathered over the years from Kutei can be dated to such an early period. Buddhist votive rock inscriptions akin to those of the Malay Peninsula were also found in West Kalimantan (Kampung Pahit) and Brunei; they probably also date from the fifth to the seventh centuries and may correspond to an hypothetical polity of Jinlipishi (Chin-li-p'i-shih, Vijayapura?).[42]

So far, only one large site complex, in West Java, can be said to bring together two connected data sets: a corpus of inscriptions dated on palaeographic grounds to the mid-fifth century mentioning a state (*nagara*) named Taruma, and an urban coastal settlement indicated by a growing body of archaeological evidence around the river of Tarum (an Austronesian term for "indigo", sanskritized as Taruma). Fieldwork by Indonesian archaeologists has started to fill in some of the gaps in this early historical period. We have already mentioned the existence, in the same area, of the early first millennium AD Buni complex, and the fact that evidence points to continuity of its occupation until the end of the millennium. It appears that Tarumanagara represents a further progress in local state formation. By the fifth century, Purnavarman, the ruler mentioned in five Sanskrit inscriptions, had clearly adopted Indian stately behaviour (Figure 12.15). He had taken up Brahmanical religious customs and state conceptions: his own footprints were said to represent those of the god Visnu, a divinity closely associated with kingship and political power. According to one inscription found near the coast at Tugu,

Figure 12.15 Vaishnava inscription of Purnavarman, king of Tarumanagara, at Ci Aruteun, West Java (fifth-century AD). (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

in what is now East Jakarta, Brahmins were associated with a ritual consecrating a new waterway meant to protect an urban settlement from flooding. Unfortunately this location is today situated in a densely urbanised area of the modern city.[43]

At Cibuaya, a coastal site near an ancient bed of the Tarum River, a group of small temples has recently been investigated. The site has been associated with three Visnu statues, probably imported from India, stylistically close to those found in both the Malay Peninsula and the Mekong Delta and believed to date from the fifth century. One small brick platform has been excavated and reveals a building technique that is strikingly similar to that in use in larger brick temples of the fifth–sixth centuries excavated at Oc Eo or at Thap Muoi, in Funan. Another brick temple complex in the same coastal area of West Java, at Batujaya, is tentatively associated with a later phase of Taruma: those structures that have been excavated are in the shape of Buddhist stupas, and small clay votive tablets representing a Bodhisattva indicate that Mahayana Buddhism was practised. Their style could be as late as the seventh or eighth century, but these Buddhist sanctuaries were clearly built on top of earlier settlements: Indian pottery has been excavated and one lower level has been recently radiocarbon dated to the mid-second to fourth centuries.

THE EARLY MARITIME POLITIES

The coexistence in the Taruma complex of Buddhism and of a Vaishnava form of Brahmanism is worth noting, as this situation appears to be constant in the early phase of Indianization of Southeast Asia, both continental and insular. With the exception of Champa, where early forms of Shaivism appear to have been adopted, data available for this fifth to seventh centuries period overwhelmingly indicate that both Vaisnavism and Buddhism played prominent roles in the early phases of the Indianization process of coastal polities. The corpus of inscriptions and statues found in Funan, in pre-Angkorian Cambodia, along the Malay Peninsula, in Sumatra (as discussed below), in Borneo and in Java is overwhelmingly either Vaishnava or Buddhist. The role of Buddhism in the propagation of Indian civilization in Southeast Asia has long been acknowledged: its universalist doctrines made it a convenient means of proselytizing among foreign people who did not belong to the rigid cast system of India.[44] However, such universalist conceptions were shared with devotional (*bhakti*) sects of Vaisnavism that are also known to have been active in Southeast Asia: one such sect is mentioned in a mid-fifth century inscription of Funan (K5 at Thap Muoi). Shaivaite lingas found in association with such cults appear to have represented a lesser divinity in this period.[45]

Ironically, considering the amount of research that has gone into the later periods of Javanese history, the northern coast of Central and Eastern Java has so far yielded no archaeological remains that can be with any certainty attributed to an Indianized, pre-"classic" chronological phase comparable to that of West Java. One group of statues was reported near Pekalongan in the 1970s, among them a Visnu, which did not appear to fit any "classical" scheme. These reminded one archaeologist of the Cibuaya Visnus, but no further research was carried out and their present location is unknown. The Musée Guimet holds another "un-classical" Surya statue from Java, unfortunately of unknown provenance.[46] Testimonies from Chinese and Indian Buddhist monks sailing into undetermined harbour(s) on the island of Java (Shepo/Shê-p'o), in the first quarter of the fifth century, are conclusive about the progress of their religion among the local people.[47] By 433 and 435, the polity named Shepo was sending embassies to China. Between 430 and 452, however, the rulers of Huoluodan (Ho-lo-tan), a place said to be part of the same island of Java and perhaps located in West Java, were also sending ambassadors to the Middle Kingdom, offering "tribute" comprising Middle Eastern commodities, which probably indicates that their harbour polity was a terminal for Indian Ocean trade. But there is no mention of the name Taruma(nagara) in contemporary Chinese sources, so one cannot be more specific about the social and economic situation on the coasts of central or eastern Java before the trading state named Heling (Ho-ling) appeared in Chinese records in 640 as a steadfast member of the cosmopolitan Buddhist community.[48] Once again, however, the lack of solid contemporary archaeological evidence for the northern coast of Java forbids any reliable assumption regarding the precise situation of the latter coastal state, and one can only surmise that it became incorporated into the growing power of the "classical" inland state of Mataram, some time during the eighth century.[49]

During the fifth and sixth centuries, as mentioned earlier, textual sources bear evidence to the growing control by incipient states of Sumatra over the Chinese market for local forest products such as resins and aromatics. Chinese records mention a variety of polities that engaged in active trade with China, some of them sending embassies bearing "tribute". Unfortunately, with few exceptions, interpretations of these textual sources remain difficult when it comes to precise locations as the Chinese were still unfamiliar with these regions. One prominent such polity was Gantuoli (Kan-to-li), most

probably situated on the southeastern coast of Sumatra. This appeared in Chinese records in the mid-fifth century and was still active in 519, by which date a Buddhist king had replaced an earlier Hindu ruler. A Buddhist monk's advice to one ruler of Gantuoli was to "send envoys with tribute [to China]" so that his land would become "rich and happy and travellers would multiply a hundredfold".[50]

Apart from this emphasis on the South China Sea trade, we learn little else from these sources about the internal situation of such polities. By the end of the sixth century, a temporary slump in the Chinese market appears to have provoked their downfall. When the Chinese market recuperated under the Tang dynasty, in the early seventh century, a set of polities quickly rematerialized under different names to take control of local exports and of shipping along the Strait of Melaka. Like Heling in Java, they established themselves as centres of Buddhist scholarship: Chinese pilgrims of the second half of the century spent years in them learning Sanskrit and translating canonical literature into Chinese, before visiting India. Most prominent was the prolific Chinese writer and monk Ijing (I-tsing), whose works provided much of the information on which the history of the region was written until recent archaeological work was carried out. Kedah, Malayu (near Jambi) and Barus (the camphor-exporting centre on the northwest coast of Sumatra) all appear to have shared in the international trade before they were absorbed in the 670s, practically under the eyes of Ijing, into the much broader economic sphere of the political entity known as Srivijaya.[51]

One founding inscription engraved at Palembang by the ruler of Srivijaya in the 680s refers to the outlying polities called *mandala* that he claimed to have brought under his control. It portrays their rulers as powerful local magnates who had to be brought to order as they only uneasily recognized the authority of the new central power.[52] A set of four similar inscriptions, set up by the same expansionist ruler at the periphery of the region under his newly imposed control, draws an almost perfect arc of circle encompassing the south-eastern part of Sumatra, indirectly confirming the fuzzy geographical outline pulled together from Chinese sources. Archaeologists have so far brought to light only one of the four potential sites: a Franco-Indonesian team excavated in 1994 and 1996 the site of Kota Kapur, which appears to have been one of these smaller pre-Srivijaya polities.[53]

The site of Kota Kapur, on the Island of Bangka, facing the straits of the same name and the estuary of the Musi River, was a smallish sixth–seventh centuries coastal settlement with two diminutive Hindu temples complete with their statuary, a 1.5 kilometres-long earthen wall protecting it from outside attacks, and a gathering of riparian settlements. It was built on top of an earlier iron-working site dated to the third–fifth centuries AD. The two temples are simple stone platforms (respectively 5.6 metres and 2.8 metres square) on which, in all probability, wooden structures would have been erected to provide shelter to the images. Statues found in the main sanctuary belong to the Vaishnava cult encountered in most coastal states, starting in the early fifth century AD as described above. These were dated to the late sixth or early seventh century, based on both stylistic considerations and radiocarbon dates (Figure 12.16). The secondary temple contained a coarse *lingga* made of an uncarved natural stone. This coastal settlement was therefore one small link in a long chain of Vaishnava settlements, a merchant network that ran parallel to the similarly widespread Buddhist network.[54] The inscription erected in 686 at Kota Kapur by the Buddhist ruler of Srivijaya, after he gained control of the small polity, also mentions the onset of an attack on neighbouring Java. The state that

came under attack from Srivijaya may have been a successor of fifth-century Taruma-nagara, in West Java, the ruler of which was Vaishnava, like the people of Kota Kapur more than a century later. There is indeed an isolated mention in Chinese sources of a seventh-century Javanese state named Duoluomo (To-lo-mo), a slightly irregular rendition of Taruma. If confirmed, this could be indicative of severe competition between the Buddhist and Vaishnava trading networks of western Southeast Asia.

The founding of Srivijaya

A momentous event in the 670s was the birth of the state of Srivijaya.[55] We have seen how it came into being by consolidating the activities of smaller polities scattered along the Strait of Melaka. It is the first known large-scale state, clearly of world economic stature, to have prospered in Insular Southeast Asia. In the ninth and tenth centuries, the wealth and prestige of its ruler, the regional eminence of its capital and harbour-cities, and its role as a centre for the diffusion of Buddhism were acknowledged by other world economies, from Baghdad to China. For the first time, a state of Southeast Asia was in a position to concentrate a large measure of control – geographical as well as political – over most of the flow of international trade for several centuries, providing a focal point for the Indian Ocean, South China Sea,

Figure 12.16 Vishnu statue from a late sixth- to early seventh-century temple at Kota Kapur, Bangka, South Sumatra (1996). (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

and Southeast Asian maritime networks. The fluctuating fortunes of Srivijaya over the next six centuries clearly demonstrate that economic competition was strong. Those regional powers in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, and possibly also in West Java and West Kalimantan that came directly into its sphere of political and economic influence were always quick to regain their autonomy when they sensed a weakness at the centre.

For lack of sufficient archaeological data, we are far from understanding all the details of Srivijaya's long history and of its seeming hegemony over part of Insular and Peninsular Southeast Asia. What is clear is that, as an active participant in a growing world economy, Srivijaya always remained dependent on developments taking place in the markets of its two major neighbours, India and China. When these were at peace and domestic demand was on the rise, at foundation times in the late seventh century or

PIERRE-YVES MANGUIN

during the economic boom of the ninth and tenth centuries, Srivijaya noticeably enjoyed a strong economic and political position. However, during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, when India and China themselves became major operators in these trade networks – under the Colas in India and the Song in China – Srivijaya progressively lost its commercial importance and foremost stand on the international scene. It was replaced, for a brief period in the fifteenth century, by the Malay city-state of Melaka, its only true successor in the Strait of Melaka.

After decades of controversies following the identification of Srivijaya by George Cœdès in 1918 on textual evidence alone, its physical location in the provinces of South Sumatra, and later in Jambi, where its capital was transferred towards the end of the eleventh century, has now been established beyond doubt. The state of Srivijaya, between the seventh and the thirteenth centuries, produced relatively few inscriptions and practically all of them come from the very first phase, in the 680s. These inscriptions were the first ever to be written in a vernacular language of Insular Southeast Asia, this being Old Malay with a strong Sanskrit lexical input. Because of the paucity of epigraphic evidence, unusual for a "historical" state, only systematic archaeological research in Sumatra can provide some of the answers to the myriad of questions raised by the existence of Srivijaya. A 10-year Franco–Indonesian programme started in the late 1980s has helped to fill some of this gap,[56] and continuing research by Indonesian archaeologists keeps updating the evidence.

The large and still growing body of evidence now proves that the modern city of Palembang in southeastern Sumatra was the political, religious and economic centre of Srivijaya between the seventh and the eleventh centuries. Only the earliest phase of its history (seventh–eighth centuries) is of interest to us here, although no data from controlled excavation has yet been gathered in Palembang city for this early phase. Pre-ninth-century sites without Chinese ceramics produce practically no surface finds, and the little that may have been left to study in the middle of the bustling modern city of Palembang has been heavily looted. The overall picture now gathered at Palembang for the long-lived polity of Srivijaya does, however, help understand the tenuous, context-less archaeological evidence available for foundation times, consisting primarily of late seventh-century inscriptions and statues that are dated on stylistic grounds to the seventh or eighth centuries. Altogether, however, sites in and around the modern city have yielded archaeological evidence for settlement, manufacturing, commercial, religious and political activity at a level that can only be reconciled with it being the capital city of an early Malay state. A riverine pattern, as
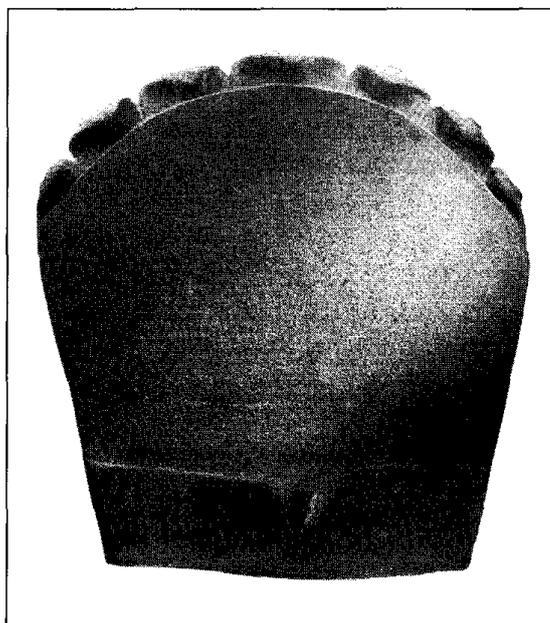
Figure 12.17 Late seventh-century Old Malay 'oath drinking' inscription from Sebokingking, Palembang, South Sumatra. It marked the political centre of the early polity of Srivijaya. (National Museum, Jakarta.) (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

expected, is by now clearly discernible. All centres of activity were situated either on the Musi riverbanks or clearly within reach, by water, from the main river and thus from the sea, downstream from Palembang. Many of these finds indicate active, long-distance trade networks and the role of merchants and shipmasters is underscored in local inscriptions. Though no ruler's residence has been located so far, the Sebokingking inscription in East Palembang must have been found close to the political centre of the 680s (Figure 12.17). The politically ominous declaration it contains indicates it was erected at the centre of the polity, at the *kadatuan*, literally the place of the ruler (*datu*), as referred to in the inscription itself.[57]

The picture obtained at Palembang is far removed from the "imperial" state implied by some earlier historians. Careful re-reading of the small corpus of Old Malay inscriptions produced by this polity and of the Chinese sources, in the light of the data produced by recent excavations, allows a scaled-down image to be reconstructed.[58] The structure of the Srivijayan polity was in fact akin to that of later city-states of the Straits area or the Java Sea, these being the Sultanates and harbour-cities of the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries' age of commerce.

Srivijaya, however, was more than just a harbour polity. It was a true city-state in the sense that, immediately after foundation times, it extended its sphere of influence far upstream into one of the largest river basins of Insular Southeast Asia, no doubt allowing it to control the flow of gold and forest products from its hinterland.[59] Brick temple sites situated upstream on the banks of the Musi River or its tributaries have yielded Buddhist statues that can be unmistakably associated with the earliest phase of its history. No

Figure 12.18 A Malay-world sailing vessel depicted on the eighth-century reliefs at Borobudur, Central Java. (Photograph courtesy of EFEO.)

systematic excavations have been carried out yet around these religious sites to investigate the kind of settlement with which they were associated.

After less than a century of intense activity, this first Srivijayan polity appears to have come to a standstill. The last embassy was sent to China in 742. For a while, there are no archaeological or textual data that may be clearly associated with the city-state centred at Palembang. Only on the Malay Peninsula near Chaiya is there a single inscription, dated to the late eighth century, that mentions the name of a ruler of Srivijaya and associates him with the Buddhist Sailendra dynasty known in Java as the builders, among other monuments, of Borobudur (Figure 12.18). Economic activities picked up again in ninth and tenth-century sites at Palembang and upstream in the Musi River Basin, as evidenced by the considerable quantity of Chinese ceramics brought to light. By this time, the Chinese started to give Srivijaya a slightly different name (Sanfoqi/San-fo-ch'i instead of the earlier, more regular transcription Shilifoshih/Shih-li-fo-shih), but they did consider their revived trading partner to be an extension of the earlier polity. By then, however, the ruler was most probably a scion of the Sailendra family, a prince defeated in Java in the 850s, going by the name of Balaputradewa. Srivijaya was by then part of a newly established Southeast Asian "classical" age when powerful states with an agricultural basis, such as Mataram or Angkor, came to dominate much of Southeast Asia. Srivijaya, however, appears to have retained much of its earlier political and economic structure, keeping alive the tradition of the earlier coastal polities.

Notes

1 Coedès 1964.
2 Wolters 1967.
3 Manguin 1980, 1996.
4 Manguin 1992, 1993.
5 Ray 1989; Glover 1990.
6 Glover 1991; Veraprasert 1992.
7 Wisseman Christie 1990.
8 These sites were discovered mainly as a consequence of industrial tin mining.
9 Leong Sau Heng 1990; Wisseman Christie 1990.
10 Tri Manhaeni 2002.
11 Veraprasert 1992.
12 Srisuchat 1996.
13 Evans 1932.
14 Shuhaimi and Arifin 1988; Shuhaimi 1991.
15 Ardika and Bellwood 1991; Ardika 1994; Ardika et al. 1997.
16 Lucas, Manguin and Soeroso 1998.
17 Walker and Santoso 1977.
18 Wolters 1967; Wolters 1983.
19 Malleret 1963.
20 Santoso 1990.
21 Ardika and Bellwood 1991; Ardika et al. 1997, Ardika 1998.
22 Lê Xuân Diêm et al. 1995.
23 Malleret 1959–63.
24 Manguin and Vo Si Khai 2000.
25 Contemporary terracotta tiles, but semi-cylindrical and with decorated end tiles have been excavated at Tra Kieu in Central Vietnam (see chapter 9). These seem to be copied from Chinese roofing materials.
26 Prior 2000; Glover, Nguyen Kim Dung and Prior (in press).
27 Glover and Yamagata 1998.

28 Ray 1989, 1994.
29 Coedès 1964 (last revised French edition in 1964, with an English translation of 1968).
30 McKinnon, Djafar and Soeroso 1998.
31 Dalsheimer and Manguin 1998.
32 Wheatley 1961, Wheatley 1983, Jacq-Hergoulac'h 2002.
33 Wheatley 1961, Wheatley 1983.
34 Jacq-Hergoualc'h 2002.
35 Dalsheimer and Manguin 1998; Dalsheimer 2001.
36 Schweyer 2000.
37 Manguin and Vo Si Khai 2000.
38 Keys 2000.
39 Wolters 1967.
40 Wolters 1967.
41 Casparis 1986.
42 Wolters 1967; Wisseman Christie 1990a; Kartoatmodjo 1994.
43 Vogel 1925; Noordhuyn and Verstappen 1972; McKinnon, Djafar and Soeroso 1998.
44 Ray 1994.
45 Dalsheimer and Manguin 1998.
46 Dalsheimer and Manguin 1998.
47 Damais 1957.
48 Damais 1964.
49 Wisseman Christie 2001.
50 Wolters 1967.
51 Wolters 1967.
52 Kulke 1993.
53 Lucas *et al.* 1998.
54 Dalsheimer and Manguin 1998.
55 Wolters 1967.
56 Manguin 1987; Manguin 1992; Manguin 1993.
57 Kulke 1993; Manguin 2000.
58 Kulke 1991; Kulke 1993.
59 Manguin 2000.

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310

THE EARLY MARITIME POLITIES

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Annex 535

Ulises Granados, "As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making, 1902-1937", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (2005)

As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making, 1902-1937[1]

Ulises Granados

Introduction

The South China Sea, currently traversed by more than half of the world's supertankers, is a three-million-square-kilometre semi-enclosed sea scattered with barren islands and reefs, some of them partly submerged at high tide. There is no consensus as to exactly how many features are involved or the extent of the archipelagos, but it can be said that the area hosts four clusters: the Macclesfield Bank (claimed by China and Taiwan, with some parts also claimed by the Philippines); the Pratas Islands (claimed by China and Taiwan and occupied by the latter); the Paracel Islands (claimed by China, Taiwan and Vietnam but occupied by China since 1974); and the Spratly Islands (claimed entirely or partly by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei.)

Since two armed skirmishes occurred in 1974 and 1988 between Vietnamese and Chinese naval forces, the whole area has proven to be a regional flashpoint, a stage for brief naval encounters and, since the 1990s, for the arrest of fishermen from the countries involved, most notably in 1995 at Mischief Reef and in 2000-2001 at Scarborough Shoal between the Philippines and China.

Besides the geographical importance of the whole area for global seaborne trade, the Spratly area is believed to contain huge quantities of oil and gas beneath the sea floor (even though this claim has not been fully proven through prospective drilling). As a result, hydrocarbons have become a main incentive for the countries involved in the dispute to pursue their sovereignty claims, while international maritime norms, as established in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), have given all claimant states some legal arguments with which to support their case. However, of all the players, China, Taiwan and Vietnam have relied the most heavily on historical arguments to legitimize their own uncompromising

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[1] A previous draft was presented at the conference "As China Meets the World: China's Changing Position in the International Community: 1840-2000," held in Vienna, Austria, 17-19 May 2004. The views expressed in this article are the author's own.

443

postures on the conflict. For these countries, history plays an especially significant role in illuminating the root causes of the current situation.[2]

Particularly in the case of China, one of the issues that best describes how it has dealt with relevant issues in international politics during the twentieth century, from the late Qing period to the current era of globalization, is its defense of the "maritime frontier," including the protection of self-recognized sovereignty rights over the South China Sea archipelagos. Studying an extended period of Chinese history allows us to see how China started to build the foundations of its current policy of defending maritime space and the insular features of the Southern Sea, no doubt one of the most complex international issues affecting Beijing's current foreign policy.

By examining archival and secondary sources, this article intends to show that throughout the unsettled period encompassing the fall of the Qing dynasty and the consolidation of power by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government, and up to just before the Pacific War, the idea of a "maritime frontier," as applied to the South China Sea, did not play a prominent role. The concept was deeply subordinated to the political needs that defined the power struggle within China, and to the precarious position of the country vis-à-vis Japan and European powers. During the first three decades of the republic, the defense of China's maritime frontier and the protection of unilaterally recognized rights over the Spratly and Paracel Islands were definitely not the top priority on the foreign policy agenda.

Historical sources shed light on some important issues, namely, that amidst the power struggle between the northern and southern governments, it is highly probable that Sun Yat-sen's involvement with Japanese nationals in the early 1920s, intended to open up south China maritime space and islands for exploitation, was particularly deep and compromising. However, starting in 1928, the Nanjing government's policy of maritime frontier defense in Guangdong province showed an about-face from the position of the southern government, marking the first precedent in China's self-definition as a modern oceanic nation-state, asserting its own maritime-territorial rights against world powers that had interests vested in the region. And yet, during this brief period prior to the Pacific War, China's extension of its self-recognized maritime frontier was essentially an arbitrary, unilateral action, regarded mainly as a reaction to the Japanese and European presence. Given the growing concern in the region over China's increasingly assertive policy, it is imperative to dig into the history of how China became a player in the

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2   As for China, immediate postwar actions in the area also contributed to how the country formulated its current claim. For a detailed study of China's postwar ocean policy, with a focus on this area, see Ulises Granados, "Chinese Ocean Policy in a Transitional Period, 1946-1952," paper presented at the conference "Human and Regional Security around the South China Sea," held in Oslo, Norway, 2-4 June 2000.

As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making

South China Sea so as to properly understand the origins of the current imbroglio and of Beijing's stance.

Defending the maritime frontier: an outline of events

During the Republican era before the Pacific War, China defended its self-recognized rights over the South China Sea by claiming sovereignty over the four archipelagos now known as the Pratas, Paracel and Spratly Islands, and Macclesfield Bank[3] (see map). From the last years of the Manchu dynasty, some important interests in the area were at stake. First, at the central level, it was necessary to show some degree of strength against a foreign presence by putting on a unified front regarding the defense of sovereignty claims. Second, China needed to fuel a nationalistic and irredentist spirit that legitimized the authority of the government and demonstrated the state's commitment to defend China's claim over the disputed territories. Third, at the regional (Guangdong province) level, there was a permanent need for fostering and regulating economic activities in the maritime coastal and offshore region, which also helped stabilize overall central and provincial relations. However, since the relationship between China and the region was not as hierarchical as one might have assumed, these interests took centre stage depending on the prevailing circumstances at a particular time.

The years between 1902 and 1937 can be roughly divided into three periods: namely, a stage of initial claims dating back to the late Qing period; followed by a period of economic planning from the mid-1910s onward; and culminating in a total lack of leverage by the Chinese central government against the interference of world powers in this maritime area during the 1930s.

The first period goes back to the last years of the nineteenth century. On 26 June 1887, the *Convention relative à la délimitation de la frontière entre la Chine et le Tonkin* was signed, delimiting the common frontier between China and French Indochina in Tonkin.[4] An analysis of the document reveals that beyond those islands adjacent to the Sino-Vietnamese coast, there was indeed no agreement in the convention as to the delimitation of the maritime frontier farther south in the Gulf of Tonkin. And yet, it can still be thought that amidst the presence and ambitions of Japan and the Western powers over the Chinese coastal region, the Qing government decided that at least

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3   The islands are known in Chinese as Dongsha, Xisha, Nansha and Zhongsha, respectively.

4   "Convention relative à la délimitation de la frontière entre la Chine et le Tonkin, signeè à Pékin le 26 juin 1887," in Clive Parry, ed., *The Consolidated Treaty Series* (Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publications Inc., 1978), vol. 169 (1887), p. 345. For the Chinese version see Ye Hanming and Wu Ruiqing, "Conglishi zaiji ji yutu kan nanhaizhudao de zhuquan guishu wenti" [the issue of sovereignty rights over the islands in the Southern Sea as seen from historical records and maps], *Mingpao Yuekan*, May 1974, pp. 18-19.

445

Annex 535

The South China Sea islands

446

the Pratas and the Paracel Islands should be placed under direct Guangdong province administration and supervision. Thus, after Japan's absorption of Taiwan in 1895, and taking into consideration emerging French interest over the Paracel group—as envisioned in a 1899 plan by the French Indochinese colonial government to build a lighthouse on one of those islands—the Qing government ordered the regional authorities in Guangdong to organize the first patrol to those two archipelagos.

Above all, China anticipated the most serious danger in the area as coming from the Japanese, rather than the French side. In 1902 (Meiji 35), a ship belonging to Yoshiji Nishizawa reached Pratas Island, leading to the first Japanese survey of the island group. Later in 1907 (Meiji 40), Nishizawa led that first survey of the archipelago on board the ship *Shikoku maru* and named the main feature Nishizawa Island.[5] In reaction to this, that same year (Guangxu 33) the viceroy of the Liang Guang, Zhang Renjun, ordered Guangdong Fleet Admiral Li Zhun to patrol the area and to land forces at the Paracels. A one-month survey in 1909 (Xuantong 1) and the hoisting of the flag in Woody Island completed the mission[6] (it is known that a similar circuit was carried out to the Pratas the same year.) After returning to Canton, Admiral Li Zhun submitted an eight-point proposal to develop the Paracels, later to be approved by the Qing Court.[7] According to Chinese sources, as early as 1883 (Guangxu 9), China had denounced the presence of a German vessel surveying the area (in the Paracel Islands and the Spratly Islands, farther south), apparently persuading the activities to be stopped, and thus allowing the Qing Court to reaffirm rights over both groups.[8] In 1908, the government issued a permit to a Chinese individual to engage in several activities,

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[5] In the interim, in 1905 (year Meiji 38) the Japanese ship *Nagakaze maru* from the Tsunenobu Trading Co. sailed to the Pratas, which later led the same company to a formal claim with the Japanese government two years later. For details see Tatsuo Urano, "Nankai shoto kokusai funso shi. Kenkyu, shiryo, nenpyo," [International conflict over the South China Sea—The history, analysis and documents] (Tokyo: Tosui shobo, 1997), p. 148.

[6] Li Zhun, *Xunhai ji* [On the Sea Circuit] reprinted in *Zhongguo nanhai zhuqundao wenxian huibian*, vol. 8 [Collected works on the archipelagos of the South China Sea, vol. 8] (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1975), p. 1.

[7] Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao baogaoshu* [Report on the Paracel Islands survey] reprinted in *Zhongguo nanhai zhuqundao wenxian huibian*, vol. 8, p. 23. There remains, however, some discrepancy as to the dates of Li Zhun's naval circuit to the Paracels. According to Marwyn Samuels' *Contest for the South China Sea* (New York: Methuen, 1982, pp. 53 and 71), a 1979 People's Liberation Army Navy patrol rediscovered a stele at Hokudo Island (North Island, in the Paracels) that signalled Li Zhun's first circuit as taking place in 1902. Samuels affirms that the second circuit was in 1908. See Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, p. 9; Lin Jinzhi, "Xishaqundao he nanshaqundao zigu yilai juishi zhongguo lingtu" [the Nansha and Xisha islands have since ancient times been Chinese territory], *Renmin Ribao*, 7 April 1980, p. 4. See also "Zhongguo dui xishaqundao he nanshaqundao de zhuquan wuke zhengbian," [the Chinese sovereignty over the Xisha and Nansha islands can not be contested-White Paper of the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China], *Renmin Ribao*, 31 January 1980, p. 1.

[8] Lin Jinzhi, "Xisha qundao he nansha qundao zigu yilai jiushi zhongguo lingtu," p. 1.

including the development of the Paracels.[9] In the following year, the Paracels were placed under the administration of a county belonging to Hainan Island (Qiong Ya),[10] thus making apparent a clear delegation of authority from the central to the provincial government, with the role played by the Guangdong authorities increasingly becoming more important in the defense of self-proclaimed territorial rights over the Southern Sea islands.

Starting in the mid-1910s, the Chinese began making economic plans for the islands. At the time the Manchu dynasty was about to fall, and all Chinese naval patrols on the northern side of the South China Sea were stopped. Thus, the authorities were unable to protect the recently proclaimed rights over those islands, even though some rights seemed to have been protected anyway. In the Pratas group, the Japanese government decided to guarantee the investment of Nishizawa's enterprise, and eventually ordered its general consul in Canton to negotiate a settlement with Viceroy Zhang Renjun (and later with his successor, Ai Shuxun) over the ownership of those small landmasses and reefs. In 1909, Japan recognized the Pratas as Chinese territory in exchange for 130,000 Canton silver dollars.[11] However, it is known that even after this agreement was reached, Japanese fishing activities continued in the vicinity.

In the Paracels, a 1909 petition by Admiral Li Zhun to the Qing Court to further inspect and develop the group was approved, but nonetheless after initial preparations, the whole project was abandoned during the administration of Zhang Renjun's successor.[12] It was only a few years later that the first permits to exploit natural marine resources were given to Chinese nationals, thus allowing the new Republic of China to project some sense of control over matters related to the islands in that area. And yet, the real power for approving permits was ultimately vested in the Guangdong authorities, without an apparent link in policies between central and provincial governments. This loophole in the decision-making process descending from the central government probably resulted from, as will be explained later, the southern government in Canton carrying out its own designs for the Guangdong littorals, largely independent from any consolidated national authority.

Until 1921, some Chinese petitioned the Guangdong provincial government for exclusive permits to exploit the Paracel Islands' natural resources, such as guano bird manure for fertilizer, and sea products (for

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9   Li Zhun, "Guangdong shuishi guofang yaosai tushuo," [detailed plan on naval defense fortresses in Guangdong] (1910), in Lin Jinzhi, "Xisha qundao he nansha qundao zigu yilai jiushi zhongguo lingtu," p. 1.

10   See "Zhongguo dui xishaqundao he nanshaqundao de zhuquan wuke zhengbian" [the Chinese sovereignty over the Xisha and Nansha islands can not be contested-White Paper of the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China], *Renmin Ribao*, 31 January 1980, p. 1

11   Samuels, *Contest*, p. 53, Urano, *Nankai shoto*, pp. 150-152.

12   Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, p. 10.

448

example, He Cheng'en, through his company Haili Gongsi in 1917, and Deng Shiying in 1919).[13] Eventually, the Guangdong government granted permits in favour of Liang Guozhi and He Ruinian who, under the new Paracels Archipelago Industries Co. Ltd (Xishaqundao Shiye Wuxian Gongsi), eagerly started guano extraction in August 1921.

However, during the 1920s, suspicions of foul play quickly led to a severe conflict between local authorities in Hainan and the Guangdong government regarding this permit. Partly as a result of protests raised by local businessmen to the authorities of Hainan, where the Paracel Islands were supposed to be administered, it became apparent that He Ruinian's development rights in the islands were monopolistic in nature. Moreover, rumours quickly spread in Canton, Macau and Hainan that the Paracels Archipelago Industries Co. Ltd was only a cover for another company controlled by several Japanese entrepreneurs. In order to investigate the issue, Yaxian County Magistrate Sun Yubin made a request in April 1922 to the Guangdong government that a naval mission be sent to the Paracels to make an *in situ* inspection of the company. Circuits were sent in 1923 and 1926, and they discovered that activities in the islands were indeed carried out by the Southern Prosperity Industries Co. (Nanyo Jiggyo Koshi), an enterprise controlled by the Japanese national Saito Shiro, in possible cooperation with another Japanese national, Hirata Sueji. Eventually, the provincial government rescinded He Ruinian's permit and transferred it to a Chinese individual in 1927.[14]

Nonetheless, at the end of the 1920s, several nationals continued to exploit fishery and guano products in the Paracel group, and beginning in 1926 the French government, through the Indochina colonial government, started surveying the guano potential of the islands. French teams expanded their activities in 1928 by commencing guano extraction, thus prompting the newly established Nanjing government, through a conference of a Guangdong provincial committee in February, to prepare a detailed plan for resources development in the islands. The newly unified Chinese central government, finally establishing a vertical decision-making hierarchy that placed Nanjing at the top, put the area, interestingly enough, under the supervision of the Sun Yat-sen University in Canton, and ordered Professor Shen Pengfei to lead a civil-military mission to the islands. At the same time, the provincial government also ordered the Security Bureau of Canton City to investigate the activities engaged in by He Ruinian. Professor Shen Pengfei soon submitted his report on the naval circuit to the Paracels, covering a range of issues from the description of the islands and their marine environment, to

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13 Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, pp. 11-12.

14 Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, pp. 12-18. See also "Zhongguo dui xishaqundao he nanshaqundao de zhuquan wuke zhengbian" [the Chinese sovereignty over the Xisha and Nansha islands cannot be contested-White Paper of the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China], *Renmin Ribao*, 31 January 1980, p. 1.

449

a chemical analysis of guano reservoirs, as well as the activities engaged in by the Japanese, the Taiwanese, the French and even the Brits near and on the islands. The report even offered policy proposals for consideration.[15]

As a result of Shen Pengfei's mission, further crucial information about foreign activities in the area came to light. Through his field inspection, the Chinese authorities discovered that most workers were Taiwanese and Japanese nationals from Ryukyu; that, as mentioned above, Saito Shiro's Southern Prosperity Industries Co. had engaged in activities on Lindao Island (now Woody Island); that during 1925-1926 a French navy vessel transported an Indochinese survey team led by Nha Trang Oceanographic Institute chief A. Krempf; and that, presumably during the same decade, a British steamship approached some islands which belonged to the archipelago.[16] Eventually, it was through this circuit that Nanjing renewed its claim over the Paracels, underlining the importance of Shen Pengfei's visit to the Chinese narrative. And yet, it seems that China's claims did not include all islands in the South China Sea, particularly the Spratlys (then called Tuansha Qundao, and located south of the Paracels). In fact, Shen's report claimed that the team had reached, and established, the Paracel Islands as the *southernmost point of the country*.[17]

Nonetheless, it was around this time that the Nanjing government also started to confirm an increasing and continuously active French and British presence in its southern maritime frontier, even though, during the following decade, there was little China could do against such a superior naval presence.

After the September 1931 Manchurian Incident, which marked the beginning of a 15-year-long war between China and Japan, China decided, due to its lack of military leverage, to diplomatically challenge the claims of France, the UK and Japan over the area, and to continue issuing unilateral administrative ordinances, both at national and provincial levels. Regarding the Pratas group, early in February 1929 the Guangdong government issued a Provisional Regulation to Attract Investment to Undertake Marine Production. Later in 1935, the same province set up an office for marine production control, and in April-May of the same year, the provincial Office of Agriculture, Forestry and Construction, and the Department of Construction, organized a circuit to the Pratas group to survey its natural resources.[18] Yet these administrative decisions had no influence whatsoever over the fishing activities of Japan. Japanese and Taiwanese sailors increased their movements nearby, even though Chinese police arrested some of

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15 Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, pp. 22-84.

16 Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, pp. 36-51.

17 Shen Pengfei, *Diaocha xishaqundao*, p. 1. Even if it is true that neither a military commander nor a civil servant made such an assertion, its mention might well be nonetheless considered as accepted by that time, at least by officials at the working level.

18 In Chen Keqin, ed., Zhongguo nanhai zhudao [China's Southern Sea islands] (Haikou: Hainan guojixinwen chubanshe, 1996), p. 294.

them.[19] In 1931 negotiations were conducted between Chinese provincial bureaucrats and the Japanese General Consulate in Canton to solve such frequent incidents, but they did not meet with any success.[20]

On the Paracel Islands, the Chinese government refuted France's own sovereignty claims over the area. The French authorities, as a colonizing power, continued surveying the area even after Than Trong Hue, war minister of the Hue Court, officially claimed the islands as part of the territory of Annam in 1925. A. Krempf, director of the Nha Trang Oceanographic Institute, set off for the islands aboard the gunship *De Lanessan* in 1925, 1926 and 1927. Further visits were paid in March 1931 by the vessels *De Lanessan* and the *Inconstant*, and in May 1932 by the *Alerte*. Eventually, the Quai D'Orsay sent a diplomatic note to the Chinese embassy in Paris, with a reminder that France possessed rights over the group. Amid such activities, both governments exchanged notes in December 1931, July and September 1932, September 1933, March 1934 and February 1937, with no agreement reached on the sovereignty issue.[21]

The problem on the Spratly Islands became much more complicated for China because France, the UK and Japan had raised their own sovereignty claims over all or parts of the archipelago (Japanese claims are mentioned in the next section). In 1927 the French Indochina authorities sent the ship *De Lanessan* to the islands (called Truong Sa in Vietnamese), and later in 1929 the ship *La Malicieuse* anchored in those waters and surveyed Triton Island, North Reef, Lincoln Island and Bombay Island.[22] One year later on April 13, Indochinese and French marines landed on some islands. Furthermore, in 1933 the ships *Astrolabe*, *De Lanessan* and the *Alerte* disembarked marines on several islands; eventually, on July 26 in the *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, Paris announced the occupation of several islands,[23] while on December 21 these and other minor features were incorporated into the Ba Ria province.[24] Despite no official exchange of notes in reaction to the French decree issued in July, the Chinese side seemed

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19 Urano, *Nankai shoto*, pp. 157-158.

20 Chen Keqin, *Zhongguo nanhai zhudao*, p. 298.

21 In contrast, in an effort to stop Japan's own claims over that area, Paris successfully engaged in similar negotiations with Tokyo. As a result, both parties agreed to temporarily maintain the *status quo* by describing the Paracel Islands issue as a "solved matter" (désormais classée). See Ministere des Affaires Etrangeres, *Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1932-1939* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1963), 1er. Série (1932-1935), Tome VI, p. 121.

22 Luu Van Loi, *The Sino-Vietnamese Difference on the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes* (Hanoi: The Gioi Publishers, 1996), p. 56.

23 Thanh Thuy, "The Hoang Sa and the Truong Sa Archipelagoes are Vietnamese Territories," in *The Hoang Sa and Troung Sa Archipelagoes (Paracels and Spratly)*, Dossier I (Hanoi: Vietnam Courier, 1981), p. 24. Those insular features were the Spratly Island, Amboyna Cay, Itu Aba Island, the *Deux Iles* group, Loaita Reef and Thi Tu Island.

24 Luu Van Loi, *The Sino-Vietnamese Difference*, p. 150.

to have opposed the French declaration over the Spratlys,[25] as did the British government, which quickly challenged the French claim. In the end, the Guangdong provincial government sent the first naval circuit to the Spratlys in August, in order to inspect several islands.[26]

Due to the Chinese central government's evident lack of military leverage to carry out a naval occupation of the group (or of those features that lay above sea level at high tide, anyway), the Chinese were limited largely to the issuing of administrative ordinances to protect self-recognized rights in the Spratlys, Paracels, Pratas and Macclesfield Islands. Eventually, Nanjing decided to set an important precedent, nearly 25 years after the first claim, that expanded the scope of its claim to all the known insular formations of the Southern Sea. On 7 June 1933, before the French proclaimed ownership over the main islands from the Spratly group, officials from the Chinese Interior Ministry summoned officials from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Navy, Education and a Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Committee to set up a Committee for Examination of Sea and Land Maps. During its twenty-fifth session, the committee finally prepared a *List of Place Names On Our Country's Southern Sea*, claiming 132 features (islands, reefs, etc.) from the four groups as Chinese territory, and in April 1935 it published a *Detailed Map of the Southern Sea Islands*, which indicated that all these features belonged to China.[27]

The southern government and its compromise with the maritime frontier: the Japan factor

After this brief overview of events, can we come to the conclusion that there was a concrete, cohesive ocean policy in China during the first three decades of the twentieth century, from the period covering the late Qing to the first years of the republic? In spite of the measures taken by the authorities, as described above, the answer seems to be no, mainly because there was no continuous government, but rather an internal struggle of power broadly expressed in the existence of two de facto regimes, which lasted until the

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25 According to Samuels, the Chinese government did not reject the French declaration claiming sovereign rights over the Spratlys, but according to Li Guoqiang, another specialist, the spokesman of the foreign ministry at the time declared the following: "Our fishermen live in those islands … internationally it is recognized as Chinese territory." In either event, despite not officially contesting the French claim, the Nanjing government was under pressure from several political, labour, farm and trade organizations to take action, and it ordered the first naval circuit to the Spratlys in August 1933. Samuels, *Contest*, p. 64. Li Guoqiang, "Minguo zhengfu yu nanshaqundao" [the Republican government and the Spratlys], in Lu Yiran, ed., *Zhongguo haijiang lishi yu xianzhuang yanjiu* [Research on the current situation and history of China's maritime frontier] (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), pp. 111-112. Han Zhenhua, ed., *Woguo nanhai zhudao shiliao huibian* [Historical sources compilation on our country's Southern Sea islands] (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1988), p. 261.

26 Chen Keqin, *Zhongguo nanhai zhudao*, p. 294.

27 Lu Yiran, *Zhongguo haijiang lishi yu xianzhuang yanjiu*, p. 114.

452

rise of Chiang Kai-shek to power. That is why after the late-Qing circuits to the islands, there was no visible coordination of policies from the central government to the Guangdong province; instead, regional and local authorities sought to reactivate and, if possible, regulate previously existing economic activity in the islands.

there was a pattern of regional and local authorities dealing with the task of reactivating and, if possible, regulating on their own those already existent economic activities in the maritime area.

A brief study of the events, however, does reveal that during the first decades of the twentieth century, a nascent awareness began to develop around this sea, a vast area where, at the time of the famous Admiral Zheng He's voyages during the early Ming dynasty, the Chinese showed naval supremacy. Yet for more than five hundred years, the country suffered from a lack of naval leverage, the result of a closed-door policy and the increasing presence of foreign vessels.

This awareness was clearly evident in the late-Qing activities with regard to the Pratas and Paracels in 1902-1909, but, as discussed above, it was less noticeable during the years of the southern government. What accounted for this difference? In order to answer this question, it is important to point out two issues. First, in reviewing the course of these events as depicted in Chinese and non-Chinese narratives, it is necessary to consider those actions carried out by China within the framework of the internal politics and the international events prevailing at the time. Second, it is necessary to cross-reference the analysis of the Chinese narrative with other sources, particularly those from Japan, the UK and the US.[28]

Regarding China, the most important factor in the analysis of policies concerning this conflict is no doubt the internal power struggle in the political arena. During the first years of the twentieth century, China was in chaos throughout the fall of the dynasty and the subsequent period of turmoil and revolution. Indeed, it seems to be quite surprising that by the end of the last dynasty the Manchu rulers had acted to protect self-recognized sovereign rights in the Paracels and Pratas. Of course, the fact that plans for economic development in the Paracel area did not materialize had to do directly with the severe troubles facing Guangdong province. Regional authorities, as mentioned above, conceded permits for the exploitation of marine resources and guano in the Paracels, but since the founding of the republic, China could not effectively protect its rights, either in the Pratas or in the Paracel Islands.

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28 In spite of not having territorial claims over the South China Sea waters, the US was nonetheless actively monitoring events and gathering information that might eventually have affected the Philippines' boundaries, as agreed to in 1889 and 1900 with Spain, or the boundary delimitation between the Philippines and British Borneo.

453

But above all, the late 1910s and early 1920s was a period defined by the stealthy advance of Japan into the whole South China Sea.

With the help of alternative sources and pondering the possibility of misinformation and false reports over the Japanese nationals' activities in the area, it is over this period in particular that the Chinese narrative of the history of the conflict's is confronted.

As previously noted, in 1921 Liang Guozhi and He Ruinian's *Paracels Archipelago Industries Co. Ltd* received a permit to exploit guano and fishery resources in the Paracels, but when it was later discovered that the capital for this venture had been provided by Japanese interests, the permit was promptly cancelled. The He Ruinian Incident is referred to in several Chinese and non-Chinese sources. Despite the cancellation, a strong suspicion remained that Japanese companies (and/or the Japanese government itself) and the Chinese southern government had colluded in other secret deals.[29]

US State Department secret diplomatic files, published in 1976,[30] shed some light on this issue, as does a collection of declassified diplomatic files from the British Foreign Office, published during the 1990s.[31] On the night of 15 June 1922, the Guangdong military commander Chen Jiongming staged a *coup d'état* against the southern government in Canton, prompting Sun Yat-sen to leave the city. At that time, it was said, a written agreement between the southern government and a so-called Japanese Japan-China Forestry, Mining and Industrial Society was discovered by troops of Chen Jiongming at Sun Yat-sen's office.[32] According to British intelligence—supposedly receiving true information from Chen Jiongming's military men—the agreement was said to have been signed on 5 February 1922 by Sun Yat-sen. It stipulated that in exchange for a large amount of military supplies such as small firearms, munitions, etc., (which in turn violated the arms embargo in force) and five million gold yen, several rights over the South China Sea, mainly along the coast of the Guangdong province, were to be yielded to the company. The main points of the agreement said to be found were as follows:

1. The southern government had to hand over to the company the development rights of Hainan Island and all islands belonging to Guangdong province.

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29 Samuels, *Contest*, p. 56.

30 National Archives Microfilm Publications, *Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations between China and Japan, 1930-1944* (microform) (Washington: National Archives Records Service, 1975), 96 reels. See in particular reels 88 and 96.

31 Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, eds., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1994), part II, series E, Asia 1914-1939 (25 vol.). Relevant information is found from volume 25 to 47.

32 Sir B. Alston (Embassy at Peking) to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (Foreign Office, London), no. 495, secret, 8 July 1922 (doc. 229, vol. 27, p. 27). Consul-General Jamieson (Canton) to Sir B. Alston (Embassy at Peking), no. 42 and enclosure no. 231, secret, 7 November 1922 (doc. 230-231, vol. 27, p. 238-240), quoted in Bourne and Watt, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*.

454

2. The southern government also had to hand over to the company the fishing rights along the maritime area stretching from south of Amoy up to Hainan Island.

3. Besides receiving rights to exploit natural resources of the islands belonging to Guangdong province, the company was to be entitled to change the names of those islands.

4. In order to protect its economic activities, the company was entitled to organize its own police force.

5. The company was to have privileged rights over forestry and mining activities in Guangxi province.

6. If China were to be unified or a conference between North and South was agreed upon, the southern government must press the Northern government for this agreement in the form of a treaty and have it agreed to by the North.

According to the English transcription of the Chinese (reportedly incomplete) original, one million gold yen and one-third of the military supplies were to be given four months after the signing of the agreement, but only if Sun Yat-sen's army occupied at least one province from among Jiangxi, Hunan or Fujian, and captured one of the capital cities as proof of strength. It was believed that such an agreement was verbally reached between Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese Hirata Sueji in November 1921.[33]

While this whole account might represent an elaborate hoax, the name of Hirata Sueji is prominently featured in the affair. The name of this Japanese national in the South China Sea conflict dates back to 1917 (Taisho 6). That year, the Japanese nationals Komatsu Shigetoshi and Ikeda Kinzo claimed to have discovered the Paracels, filing official petitions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to incorporate the territory into the Japanese empire. Two years later, Kamiyama Keiji and Hashimoto Keizaburo referenced Ikeda's discovery and also requested the incorporation of 24 islands that were part of the Paracels as Japanese territory.[34] During the same years, from 1917 to 1919, Hirata Sueji organized three surveys to the group, claiming that the islands remained without ownership. After giving them the name of *Hirata*

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33 Masterton Smith (Colonial Office, London) to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (Foreign Office, London), no. F3164-1292-23, secret, 9 October 1922 (doc. 240, vol. 27, p. 248). Claude Severn (Joint Naval and Military Intelligence Bureau, Hong Kong) to Churchill (Hong Kong), enclosure, secret, 17 August 1922 and June 1922 (docs. 241-242, vol. 27, p. 248-250), quoted in Bourne and Watt, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs.*

34 Gaimusho kiroku, *Kakkoku ryodohakken oyobi kizoku kankeizakken- minamishinakai shoshoto kizoku kankei daiikken* [The Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Miscellaneous documents relating to discovery and attribution of territories of various countries / Attribution of various reefs and islands in South China Sea / Spratly Islands, vol. 1], file A-4-1-0-2-1-1, reel A-0449 (Tokyo: The Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (hereafter referred as Gaimusho document 1) , p. 3. The Gaimusho documents quoted here can also be accessed via the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records Web site, at <www.jacar.go.jp>, even though divisions of the entire files are updated periodically (last accessed 27 October 2005.)

455

Annex 535

Archipelago (Hirata Gunto), he submitted an application for phosphates exploitation on 5 March 1918 and continued activities there until 1920.[35] After a few months had elapsed, Hirata resumed activities in the Paracels in 1921, but at this time he was well aware that the Qing government had advanced claims at the beginning of the century. Therefore, Hirata quickly asked for advice from the Foreign Ministry bureaucrats and Japanese consular officials in Canton.[36] After requesting an exploitation permit from the Japanese consulate on 5 April 1921, he started operations under the "Chinese company" *Paracels Archipelago Industries Co. Ltd*, with Liang Guozhi and He Ruinian.. Furthermore, as contemporary sources reveal, he also devised the *Japan-China Forestry, Mining and Industrial Society*. Hirata had even expanded his activities in the Spratlys since 1917, hoisting the Japanese flag on several islands.[37] Much more research is needed into the links between Sun Yat-sen, Liang Guozhi and He Ruinian; according to Japanese sources, He contributed to Sun's cause during the 1910s.[38]

The secret agreement over the Paracels between the southern government and the Japanese company, if true, represents a clear contrast to the attitude portrayed by the Chinese delegates (both from the north and south) during the Washington Conference held at the same time in the US. During the meetings of the Committee on Pacific and Far Eastern Questions, the Chinese side renewed demands for the end of spheres of influence in the country, reiterated their defense of territorial integrity,[39] and vehemently refused to discuss matters relating to the territory of the Republic of China.[40]

So far, there is no evidence that Sun Yat-sen actually *received* such assistance after June 1922[41] but, according to British sources, in July 1922 and March

[35] Urano, *Nankai shoto*, p. 220.

[36] *Urano, Nankai shoto*, p. 165.

[37] Urano, *Nankai shoto*, p. 200. In the Spratly Islands, besides Hirata there were some other Japanese nationals and companies with interests in their natural resources until 1929, among them Kamoshita Matsujiro, Sakurai Ryosuke, Kamiyama Keiji, Hashimoto Keizaburo and, most prominently, Tsunefuji Noritaka's *Lhasa Phosphates Company*. A detailed account of the Japanese incursion into the South China Sea is in Ulises Granados, "Japanese Expansion into the South China Sea -Colonization and Conflict, 1902-1939," *Journal of Asian History*, forthcoming.

[38] This story of possible collusion between He Ruinian, Hirata Sueji and Sun Yat-sen is corroborated, without referring to the aforementioned agreement said to be found in 1922, in Japanese sources found in Urano, *Nankai shoto*, pp. 160-176.

[39] Committee on Pacific and Far Eastern Questions, 16th meeting, 14 December 1921, at the Conference on the Limitation of Armament. Washington, 12 November 1921-6 February 1922 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), pp. 1150-1160.

[40] Committee on Pacific and Far Eastern Questions, 2nd. meeting, 19 November, at the Conference on the Limitation of Armament, p. 884.

[41] In 1933 the same history emerged in a Japanese newspaper: "...it has been known that such islands were named as Hirata Islands and remuneration given by right of a sales contract with the Southern government in order to help Sun Yat-sen's revolution" (translation mine.) However, these remarks, filtered to the press eleven years later, seem most surely to be referring to the same history of 1921-1922. See *Jiji Shimbun*, 27 August 1933 at Gaimusho kiroku, Kakkoku ryodohakken oyobi kizoku kankeizakken- minamishinakai shoshoto kizoku kankei dainiken [The Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Miscellaneous documents relating to discovery and attribution of

456

As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making

1923 the southern government also negotiated a so-called "Hainan Loan" with a Japanese national (the individual's identity is not known, but speculation points to Hirata) so as to cede all development rights of the island in exchange for an alleged sum of 20 million yen.[42]

The rise of the Nanjing government as a turning point in the defense of the southern maritime frontier

In 1928, in striking contrast with the apparently secretive deals mentioned previously, the newly proclaimed Nanjing government set out a clear position on the defense of the Chinese "maritime frontier," no matter how general and abstract the notion might have been (even though, geographically, by the mid-1930s such a frontier already reached as far south as 4 degrees north latitude at James Shoal—called Zengmu Ansha in Chinese—off the coast of Sarawak). By placing the Paracel Islands under the direct supervision of the Guangdong province and through activities performed by Guangdong's Sun Yat-sen University personnel, the new government's public claim was an about-face from those reportedly secret agreements drawn up by the southern government in 1921-1922.[43]

During the Nanjing era, interest in the maritime frontier quickly focused on the sovereignty of islands (mainly the Paracel and Spratly islands, where the non-Chinese presence was ominous) and in the process the central government again privileged a nationalistic and irredentist attitude, trying to encourage unification of this maritime space into the motherland. The defense of self-proclaimed rights became both a matter of diplomatic negotiations and unilateral administrative ordinances, simply because no other option was available, China possessing neither the military might to patrol nor the capacity to regulate economic activities in the islands.

By 1933, when the Committee for Examination of Sea and Land Maps was set up, the official stance of the Nationalist government had already become apparent. In the case of the Paracels, the main arguments for the

territories of various countries / Attribution of various reefs and islands in South China Sea / Spratly Islands, vol. 2], file A-4-1-0-2-1, reel A-0448 (Tokyo: The Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (hereafter referred as Gaimusho document 2), p. 57.

42 Sir R. Macleay (Embassy at Peking) to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (Foreign Office, London), no. F 2972-1682-23, very confidential, 15 August 1923 and inclosure no. 25, very confidential, 26 March 1923 and memorandum (doc. 21, 22, 23, vol. 28, p. 41-42), quoted in Bourne and Watt, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs.*

43 According to the US State Department records, in June and August 1935 it was rumoured that Japan might have been negotiating with Chinese officials to buy the Pratas Islands, a claim quickly denied by China. See Claude A. Swanson (Secretary of the Navy) to Cordell Hull (Department of State), confidential, 14 June 1935 (793.9414-5, reel 88), Atcheson (Nanking) to Department of State, no. 177, 22 June 1935 (793.9414-7, reel 88), W. H. Standley (Secretary of the Navy) to Cordell Hull (Department of State), confidential 2 August 1935 (793.9414-12, reel 88) in National Archives Microfilm Publications, Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations between China and Japan, 1930-1944.

legitimization of territorial rights were that Chinese individuals had first discovered those islands (and also, by the same argument, the Spratly group) during the Later Han dynasty (25-220 AD),[44] and that recently those rights had been consolidated, under the system of modern nation-states that had emerged in the nineteenth century. This position was supported by the following facts: 1) that in 1876 Guo Songdao[45] defended the notion that the Paracels were Chinese islands belonging to the China Sea (qina xi)[46]; 2) that the imperial government swiftly denounced survey activities engaged in by a German vessel near the Paracels in 1883; 3) that according to the aforementioned 1887 *Convention relative à la délimitation de la frontière entre la Chine et le Tonkin* between the Qing and the French governments, Paris tacitly recognized Chinese sovereignty over the Paracels; and 4) that Li Zhun naval circuits at the beginning of the twentieth century further legitimized China's rights over those islands.

As for the Spratlys, it is important to note that the arguments concerning the legitimization of rights are the result of more contemporary discussions. Besides the reference to historical rights going back to the Later Han Dynasty, the main points are as follows: 1) that Guo Songdao's 1876 reference to the South China Sea as the Chinese Sea also included the Spratly group as China's territory; 2) that the Chinese protest against German survey activities in the South China Sea in 1883 also acted in favour of the Spratlys claim because the German vessels supposedly also reached those waters; and 3) as recognized by France in 1933,[47] and as recorded in the British Admiralty's 1868 *China Sea Directory*,[48] Chinese fishermen had long inhabited some of the islands and made a living from their natural resources. In other words, the Spratly Islands, it can be inferred, had belonged since "ancient times" to a type of traditional sphere of influence and economic activity, or more properly, had been part of the South China Sea as Chinese historical waters.

Thus, some characteristics regarding the Chinese claim over the maritime space and insular features in the South China Sea during the republican period before the Pacific War are now clear.

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44 Lin Jinzhi, "Xishaqundao he nanshaqundao zigu yilai juishi zhongguo lingtu," p. 4. See also Lin Jinzhi, "Zhongguo zuizao faxian, jingying he guanxia nanhaizhudao de lishi" [history of China as the first to discover, administer and control the Southern Sea islands] in Lu Yiran, ed., *Nanhaizhudao-dili, lishi, zhuquan* [The Southern Sea islands—its geography, history and sovereignty] (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992), p. 27.

45 Famous Chinese diplomat who held several high posts, including first envoy to several European countries in the mid-late Qing period.

46 Deng Siyu, "Nanzhonguohai zhudaoyu de zhuquan wenti" [the sovereignty issue over the South China Sea islands], *Mingpao Yuekan*, May 1974, p. 3.

47 Li Guoqiang, "Minguo zhengfu yu nanshaqundao," p. 111.

48 "Lishishang yixie nanhaizhudao waiwen diming de laiyuan" [Origin of some place names of the Southern Sea islands in foreign languages over history] in *Guangdong sheng diming weiyuanhui, Nanhai zhudao diming ziliao huibian* [Sources compilation of place names on the Southern Sea islands] (Guangzhou: Guangdong ditu chubanshe, 1987), p. 313.

458   **<missing footnote #49>**

As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making

1. The Chinese claim has included all four archipelagos (Pratas, Paracel, Spratly and Macclesfield groups) since 1934-1935. However, before then, and according to the survey report prepared in 1928, the Chinese claim seemed to reach only as far as the Pratas and Paracel Islands.
2. The Nanjing government was unable to defend sovereign rights in the South China Sea through effective occupation, and focused instead on legitimizing its claim by several actions, including bilateral negotiations and unilateral administrative ordinances.
3. According to the 1935 *Detailed Map of the Southern Sea Islands* and the *List on Place Names On Our Country Southern Sea*, the Chinese claimed rights over 132 merged and submerged features, covering virtually all of the South China Sea at the time, thus making the claim a zone-based one.[50]

And yet, particularly in the Spratly area, foreigners ruled the seas. In fact, Chinese proclamations of ownership should be considered as a reaction to the presence of European and Japanese nationals, and as a direct consequence of the sense of those waters being indefensible against foreign powers. During the same decade, France's Indochina forces disembarked on Spratly Island in April 1930 and surveyed others in 1933. The French government announced the occupation of the Paracels in 1938 and landed forces on the main island of the Spratlys (Itu Aba Island) in April of that same year. The British government, as part of its Japan containment policy after the failure of the third London Naval Conference in 1935, continued to survey sections of the South China Sea,[51] and in 1936 secretly offered to lease to France an unnamed major island in the Spratlys for use as a French airfield.

But it was Japan that had more ambitious plans for the region. In 1933, through their foreign ministry, Japanese nationals claimed exclusive rights over islands in the same archipelago that reportedly had been exploited for two decades.[52] Hirata Sueji submitted a development plan (with the assistance of Imperial Navy officials) to the colonial general governor of Taiwan in 1935,[53] while *Lhasa Phosphates Industries* continued to press the Japanese government in 1936 and 1937 to grant the company special rights over the group.[54] This company even started a joint venture with Hirata Sueji to develop the Spratlys during the same time period.[55] Eventually, as part of

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[50] By contrast, the British and French claims were insular ones, focusing on particular features. It is interesting to note that now (as then) there is no consensus on exactly where the limits are drawn on each archipelago. In 1930 France also made a reference to a quadrangular area identified by coordinates for the Spratlys at 7-12 degrees north latitude, 111-117 degrees east longitude, the same area later referred to by Japan amid the incorporation of the group as Shinnan Gunto (New South archipelago) into its empire in February 1939.

[51] See David Hancox and David Prescott, *Secret Hydrographic Surveys in the Spratly Islands* (Kuala Lumpur: Maritime Institute of Malaysia, 1997).

[52] Gaimusho document 1, p. 50.

[53] Gaimusho document 1, pp. 36-52.

[54] Gaimusho document 1, pp. 62, 89.

[55] Gaimusho document 1, pp. 125-136.

459

the encirclement of China's coastline after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 1937 and as a preliminary step in its southern advance for the approaching Pacific War, the Imperial Navy occupied Pratas Island on September 3, followed by the landing of naval forces in the Spratlys in December 1938 and the invasion of Hainan Island in February 1939.

Final remarks

During the first decades of the twentieth century, until the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, China's defense of what it considered to be its maritime frontier in the Southern Sea differed sharply depending on the internal situation and the conditions prevailing in the political arena. Before the fall of the dynasty, the Qing government was even able to send patrol circuits to the Paracel and Pratas group; later, amidst the chaos that preceded Nationalist rule. The leaders of the Canton government appealed for foreign assistance, ostensibly to aid the revolution but in reality almost certainly at the expense of China's ability to assert sovereignty over the southern maritime frontier. A fresh offer of compromise came from the Nanjing government, both by consolidating China's official stance through administrative ordinances at the national level, and by simultaneously delegating authority to the Guangdong province in order to issue ordinances on economic development and to patrol the maritime frontier when possible. During the Nanjing decade, it became clear that the Chinese finally considered the whole Southern Sea as their territory, even though unilateral proclamations have since then been subject to criticism and refutations by neighbouring states and world powers with interests in the maritime region (criticisms came from France, the UK, South Vietnam and the Philippines after the Pacific War.) The strong nationalistic and irredentist tone of the Nanjing claims in the South China Sea was directly proportional to the menace felt in China's littorals.

Indeed, the concept of a maritime frontier has itself proved to be an elusive, ill-defined one that, as the course of events made clear, did not always apply to the whole South China Sea. True, the delimitation of linear boundaries or area frontiers in the sea has been an obviously difficult task everywhere in the world. Traditionally, since the Dutchman Cornelius van Bynkershoek first suggested the rule in the eighteenth century, the division of the oceans into territorial and open seas has roughly followed the three-nautical-miles extent principle for the territorial sea. And yet, two centuries later, during the whole interwar period, there was a lack of consensus among nation-states as to the extent of the territorial sea.[56]

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56 Regarding the issue of the extent of the territorial sea concerns, the 1930 Conference for the Codification of International Law at The Hague resulted in a failure to establish consensus among nations. See Shabtai Rosenne, "Geography in International Maritime Boundary-Making," *Political Geography*, vol. 15, no. 3-4 (1996), p. 320.

460

As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making

Moreover, for China the problem not only involved jurisdiction over land and space adjacent to the Mainland coast, but also the challenge of claiming areas far offshore, outside her Mainland territorial sea (a practice, incidentally, quite common by that time among empires.) In other words, for China, the issue of self-recognized sovereignty over the Paracel, Spratly, Pratas and Macclesfield groups meant an international conflict that posed the problem of how to extend its claim on a maritime frontier (insular and maritime space) not adjacent to the continental land, and defend it against European powers (France and Great Britain) and Japan. The challenge of defining its maritime frontier against the foreign powers that ruled the seas occurred at a time when China was undergoing a change, from being a waning empire in East Asia to its status as a nascent, very weak nation-state.

Cartographical works shed light on how this erratic and intermittent process unfolded. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, and particularly from the founding of the republic, this outward expansion process appeared at the level of private maps: a new China boundary line around 1914 extended as far as the Pratas Islands and around 1933 also reached the Paracels.[57] Followed by the naval circuit to the Spratlys that same year, in 1935 another non-official cartographical work moved the maritime frontier far south to James Shoal in the Spratlys, the same limit reconfirmed by the Nationalist government in 1948, when the now famous U-shaped broken line, demarcating virtually the whole South China Sea as Chinese "historical waters," appeared in the first official map of the area.

The Nationalist government's decision to extend the South China Sea claim to cover all its insular features has been the subject of heated argument, both then and now. But it is clear that an awareness of China as a modern oceanic nation-state was developing; this awareness represents a major contribution from that period of Chinese history. The "maritime China" of the 1930s represents the foundation of the current "ocean thinking," as expressed in China's active participation in solving many issues regarding the oceans (including environmental protection, fishery stocks preservation and anti-piracy measures, among others), but this legacy might also be behind Beijing's behaviour in many of the territorial disputes with its neighbours over islands and maritime space in the South and East China seas. History alone cannot offer a solution to this conflict; rather, it offers insight into the uncompromising nature of the claims raised by involved states. History helps us understand why, despite agreeing to set aside the issue for the time being, the current Chinese government (just like in Deng Xiaoping's era) vehemently refuses to compromise on its self-proclaimed rights in the Southern Sea.

Tokyo, Japan, June, 2005

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[57] Zou Keyuan, "The Chinese Traditional Maritime Boundary Line in the South China Sea and Its Legal Consequences for the Resolution of the Dispute over the Spratly Islands," *The International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law*, no. 14-1 (1999), pp. 27-54.

461

Annex 536

Zou Keyuan, "The Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Agreement on Maritime Delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin",
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The Sino-Vietnamese Agreement on Maritime Boundary Delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin

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This article addresses the recently ratified Sino-Vietnamese Boundary Delimitation Agreement in the Gulf of Tonkin and its implications for bilateral cooperation and development of friendly and neighboring relations between China and Vietnam. As the first maritime boundary line for China, the delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin is indicative of China's positive attitude towards the resolution of other maritime issues with Vietnam and other neighboring countries.

Keywords China, fishery management, Gulf of Tonkin, maritime boundary delimitation, Vietnam

The Gulf of Tonkin (Beibu Gulf in Chinese and Bac Bo Gulf in Vietnamese) is a shared water area between China and Vietnam. The size of the Gulf, as agreed by the two countries, is more than 126,000 square kilometers.[1] It contains abundant marine living and nonliving resources. Given the increased pace of global ocean development, China and Vietnam realized the importance and necessity of establishing a maritime boundary in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The process of the negotiation had three stages: brief negotiations in 1974 initiated by Vietnam, negotiations between October 1977 and June 1978, and the negotiations from 1992 to 2000.[2] The first two stages were fruitless primarily because the relationship between the two countries was poor. Only after the normalization of bilateral relations in 1991 did the negotiations enter into a productive stage. In 1993 the two sides reached a general agreement on the basic principles to be applied to settling the disputes relating to the land border and the delimitation of the Gulf of Tonkin. The agreed-upon principles were those of "applying the International Law of the Sea and referring international practices to carry out negotiations on the delimitation of the Tonkin Gulf" and "in line with the principle of equality, taking into consideration all circumstances concerned in the Gulf to reach an equal solution."[3] Seven rounds of negotiation were held between 1992 and 2000 at the governmental level, three meetings between the heads of government-level negotiating teams, 18 rounds of negotiation at the working level, and 49 meetings of the Joint Working Team and the Mapping Team.[4]

On 25 December 2000, the two sides signed the Agreement on the Delimitation of the Territorial Seas, Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelves in the Beibu Gulf (hereinafter referred to as the Boundary Agreement)[5] and the Agreement on Fishery Cooperation in the Beibu Gulf (hereinafter referred to as the Fishery Agreement).[6] On 15 June 2004, the 11th National Assembly of Vietnam ratified the Boundary Agreement and on 25 June, China's 10th National People's Congress also ratified the Agreement. On 30 June 2004, the two countries exchanged their ratification instruments in Hanoi and the Boundary Agreement came into force. As for the Fishery Agreement, the two sides approved it in June 2004 and exchanged instruments of ratification on 30 June 2004. As a result of these agreements a new marine legal order, based on the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOS Convention), has been established in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Main Contents and Implications of the Agreement

The Boundary Agreement is not a complicated legal instrument, but does contain 11 articles. Article 1 defines the area of the Gulf of Tonkin for the purpose of delimitation of the territorial seas, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and continental shelves of the two countries. However, it should be noted that the area defined as the Gulf in the Agreement may differ from other definitions of the Gulf of Tonkin used for other purposes and applying other technical methods. For example, one source refers to the size of the Gulf as being an area of 44,238 square kilometers.[7] In comparison, the Gulf area defined in the Agreement is more than 126,000 square kilometers. This indicates that the two sides preferred to have the maritime delimitation deal with a much broader rather than smaller area.

Article 2 of the Agreement sets out the 21 geographic points that define the maritime boundary in the Gulf of Tonkin. The length of the delimitation line is approximately 500 kilometers. The line connecting Points 1 to 9 is the line dividing the territorial seas of the two countries, whereas the rest of the line, Points 9 to 21, is the line that delimits the EEZs and continental shelves of the two countries in the Gulf of Tonkin. However, since the delimitation line starts from the Beilun (Bac Luan in Vietnamese) River estuary, the boundary may also divide internal waters adjacent to the estuary between the two countries, though these waters appear to have been too small and insignificant to mention in the Boundary Agreement.

Both China and Vietnam have adopted straight baselines from which the breadth of their territorial seas and other maritime zones are measured. China deliberately left the baselines for the Gulf of Tonkin undefined because of the maritime delimitation dispute with Vietnam. Nevertheless, China had publicized its straight lines along its mainland coast as well as for Hainan Island in 1996 when it ratified the LOS Convention. Vietnam lodged official protests with the United Nations respecting China's publicized baselines in 1996[8] and in 1998. The Chinese straight baselines connected by four geographic coordinates from Yingge Zui (Oanh Ca in Vietnamese) to Junbi Jiao along the coast of Hainan Island facing the Gulf of Tonkin have probably affected the delimitation in the Gulf. The discrepancy between the agreed maritime boundary and a delimitation line for China using its straight baselines may be said to be mitigated by the scope of the Gulf having been expanded. It is unknown whether the segments of China's straight baselines within the Gulf of Tonkin have been recognized by Vietnam.

Vietnam adopted straight baselines in its 1982 Statement on the Territorial Sea Baseline of Vietnam.[9] The 1982 Statement provides, however, that the Gulf of Tonkin is

delineated by the 1887 Border Treaty signed between France and China. Moreover, the Statement asserts that as a result of the 1887 Treaty the waters on Vietnam's side "constitutes the historic waters and is subject to the juridical regime of internal waters" of Vietnam.[10] The Vietnamese historic waters claim and the delimitation line in the 1887 Border Treaty were not recognized by China. Vietnamese agreement to negotiate respecting maritime delimitation was an acquiescent abandonment of its former claim. Vietnam had declared a 12 nautical mile territorial sea in September 1964[11] and published a map that included the marking of the territorial sea in the Gulf of Tonkin. It is likely that Vietnam relied on its 1964 position during the negotiations. While it is clear that the delimitation line between China and Vietnam does not track an equidistance line constructed using the straight baselines of China and Vietnam or based on low-water mark baselines,[12] it is unclear the extent to which straight or low-water baselines may have influenced the agreed-upon boundary. A small segment of the agreed-upon boundary appears to have been influenced by straight baselines drawn by China for Hainan Island.

The agreed-upon delimitation is evidence that the line in the Gulf of Tonkin derived from the 1887 French–Chinese agreement,[13] which Vietnam had argued as the demarcation line between the two countries and the basis for Vietnam's historic waters in the Gulf, was discarded. Does this imply that the Vietnamese part of the Gulf of Tonkin is no longer recognized by Vietnam as its historic waters? If so, then Vietnam needs to adjust its legal position and amend the relevant domestic legislation.

Of the area subject to delimitation in the Gulf, Vietnam has obtained 53.23% and China 46.77%, a difference of approximately 8,000 square kilometers.[14] According to the Vietnamese side, Vietnam is entitled to a greater area because Vietnam's coastline is longer and Vietnam has more islands in the Gulf, particularly Bach Long Vi (Bai Long Wei in Chinese) Island, which lies in the center of the Gulf.[15] In China's official explanation of the Boundary Agreement, no specific figures are mentioned, with the only comment being that the sea areas divided between the two sides are "basically equivalent."[16] It is unknown why China used such ambiguous language, although an apparent explanation is to avoid internal dissatisfaction or complaint with the Agreement. During the negotiation, China demanded an equal division of the Gulf. China's original position has not been fulfilled by the negotiated result. Nevertheless, the Chinese government has regarded the delimitation as "a result of equality."[17]

One important circumstance not mentioned in the Boundary Agreement is the effect of islands on the delimitation line. The two parties agreed to give the Bach Long Vi Island a 25% effect, thus this mid-ocean island has a 12 nautical mile territorial sea and a 3 nautical mile EEZ and continental shelf. Another small Vietnamese island, Con Co Island, about 13 nautical miles off the coast of Vietnam at the mouth of the Gulf of Tonkin, was given a 50% effect in the delimitation of the EEZs and continental shelves along the closing line of the Gulf.[18] Full effect for these Vietnamese islands would have moved the boundary line in favor of Vietnam; no effect would have favored China. The final agreement on the effect to be given these two islands is obviously a negotiated compromise.

Fisheries Management

Access to fishery resources and fisheries management was the key issue in the entire negotiation of the boundary. For China, the delimitation of the Beibu Gulf was of direct interest to tens of thousands of Chinese fishermen. Thus, as early as the beginning of

the negotiation, the Chinese side stated expressly that boundary delimitation must be linked to a fishery arrangement, and that an agreement for delimitation and an agreement for fishery cooperation must be simultaneously signed and entered into force.[19] The delayed ratifications by both parties, four years after the conclusion of the Boundary Agreement, is attributable to the negotiation and subsequent resolution of remaining issues respecting fisheries management.

The Boundary Agreement contains only one clause regarding cooperation between the two sides in respect to rational use and sustainable development of living resources in the Gulf of Tonkin (Article 8). The companion Fishery Agreement establishes a Common Fishery Zone, a buffer zone for small fishing boats, and a zone for transitional arrangements. The Common Fishery Zone, about 30,000 square kilometers, covers most of the fishing grounds of high productivity in the Gulf. In comparison with the Joint Fishery Zone established under the Sino–Japanese Fishery Agreement in the East China Sea,[20] the China–Vietnam Common Fishery Zone is considerably larger. A larger joint fishery zone is favorable for China since most of the good fishing grounds are located within Vietnam's EEZ. However, the Fishery Agreement has a termination date: 12 years after entry into force, with extension "to another 3 years automatically afterwards."[21] It is doubtful whether the two sides will retain such a large common fishery zone in the Gulf of Tonkin after the expiry of the Fishery Agreement.

The Fishery Agreement also indicates that there is to be a Transitional Zone that is to last for 4 years.[22] The Transitional Zone is to be defined by a separate protocol to the Fishery Agreement. This special arrangement is to allow Chinese fishermen to have time to adjust their fishing patterns to the new and changed conditions.

There are between 700,000 and 800,000 Chinese fishermen whose living depends on the resources in the Gulf of Tonkin. As a result of the delimitation agreement, the traditional fishing grounds associated with the fishing communities in Hainan Province have decreased more than one third and 12,000 fishermen are expected to abandon fishing and find other livelihoods.[23] China has introduced a lottery method for deciding which fishing vessels can fish first. On 27 June 2004, Guangxi organized a lot-drawing meeting, with owners of 1,000 fishing vessels participating, to determine the order for entry into the Common Fishery Zone.[24]

Overexploitation of fishery resources in the Gulf of Tonkin is evident. According to one scientific estimation, the sustainable catch in the Gulf is 600,000 tonnes per year.[25] In recent years, however, the catch by the two sides has exceeded one million tonnes. If this situation were allowed to continue, the fishery resources in the Gulf would be depleted within a short period. In order to conserve fishery resources, protection measures are necessary. Irrespective of the bilateral Fishery Agreement, China had to consider reducing its fishing capacity in the Gulf of Tonkin in order to attain sustainable use of the fishery resources. Unilateral Chinese fishery conservation measures had not proven to be effective. For example, China had established a closed season system in 1999 for areas within the South China Sea. These Chinese-designated closed areas were challenged by Vietnam and the Philippines, who denied China's right to make such designations applicable to other states. While Chinese fishermen complied with the regulations not to fish during the closed season, the Vietnamese and counterparts from other states continued to fish. As a consequence, China's measures have produced little effect for fishery conservation in the South China Sea. The way forward, in the Gulf of Tonkin at least, was a fishery agreement that should lead to cooperation between China and Vietnam in order to reach the goal of fisheries sustainability in the Gulf.

The Fishery Agreement called on the two states to deal with a number of outstanding

issues. This has led to the two additional agreements: the Supplementary Protocol and the Management Measures for the Conservation of the Resources in the Common Fishery Zone in the Gulf of Tonkin. Agreement was reached on these instruments in February 2004 and the Protocol signed on 29 April 2004. These agreements paved the way for the two countries to be able to ratify the Boundary Agreement and the Fishery Agreement. The entry into force of the Boundary Agreement and the Fishery Agreement has signified the fundamental change in the fishery regime for the Gulf of Tonkin, from the traditional freedom of fishing regime to the EEZ regime based on the LOS Convention.

A number of measures have been adopted pursuant to the Fishery Agreement. For the Chinese fishermen, they must abide by 12 new regulations when they sail to the Gulf of Tonkin for fishing in the Common Fishery Zone or the Transitional Zone. When they want to fish in the Vietnamese part of the Common Fishery Zone or the Transitional Zone, they must apply for and obtain a special permit; fishing boats have to be equipped with adequate communications devices; fishing boats and fishermen must have the fishing permit and other certificates on board; fishing boats are to fly the Chinese flag and have specific marking plates; illegal fishing methods such as use of explosives or poison are prohibited; fishing boats are to operate as allowed by the permit and keep an accurate fishing log; catch of marine mammals or other endangered species is prohibited, and by-catch is to be immediately returned to the sea; fishing boats are to abide by the regulations of collision avoidance and not hamper the normal operation of other vessels or fishing boats; maritime incidents between Chinese and Vietnamese fishing boats are to be submitted to the competent authorities of either country and their settlement is to go through consultation by the two sides or through the Joint Fishery Committee; fishermen are to cooperate with inspectors; fishing boats are to report when they take refuge in a Vietnamese harbor or waters due to bad weather or emergencies; and vessels are to report to the Vietnamese authorities when they depart Vietnamese waters.[26] It is likely that the Vietnamese side has adopted similar regulations since they are based on the Fishery Agreement and the subsequent Protocol and Management Measures.

Nonliving Resources Management

Opposite to the arrangements between China and Vietnam in the Gulf of Tonkin respecting fisheries management, which is very detailed, comprehensive, and an essential part of the package deal between the two countries, China and Vietnam seemed very cool towards substantive cooperation in the area of nonliving resource development in the Gulf of Tonkin. There is only one simple clause in the Boundary Agreement (Article 7) that provides as follows:

> In case any single geophysical structure of oil and gas or other mineral deposits straddles the demarcation line as provided in Article 2 of this Agreement, the Parties shall, through friendly consultation, reach an agreement on developing the structure or deposit in the most effective way as well as on equal sharing of the profits resulting from the development.

This indicates that, at least for the time being, there is no intention of the two sides to pursue any type of joint development of petroleum resources in the Gulf and that the opportunity for such cooperation is to be left to the future. This is interesting because the first stage of negotiations in the 1970s initiated by Vietnam was triggered by the

prospect for oil and gas in the Gulf and the intent by Vietnam to grant exploration rights in the Gulf to an Italian oil company. Moreover, in the 1980s Vietnam proposed that the two countries undertake a joint development program in the Gulf of Tonkin.[27]

On the other hand, unilateral exploration and exploitation of petroleum resources has been undertaken by the two sides in and/or adjacent to the Gulf of Tonkin for many years. The China National Offshore Petroleum Company has predicted that the Gulf area contains one of the biggest oil and gas concentrations in the world, with oil deposits of about 2.29 billion tons and natural gas deposits of about 1,444 billion cubic meters.[28] So far, China has developed several offshore oilfields in the Yingge Hai Basin adjacent to Hainan Island within the Gulf, including the Dongfang 1-1 and Yacheng 13-1.[29] The South China Sea Offshore Oil Company pumped 14.2 million tons of crude oil in 1997, up nearly 10% to rank first among China's offshore oil producers.[30] With a capacity for developing offshore oil and gas, China may be reluctant to cooperate with Vietnam for petroleum resources in the Gulf. However, China has repeatedly called for joint development with Vietnam in the South China Sea.

Follow-Up Actions

With the entry into force of the Boundary Agreement and the Fishery Agreement, certain follow-up actions by both sides need to be undertaken. As Vietnam has stated, the Vietnamese authorities, within their competence, "need to amend, supplement and complete related legal documents in order to create the legal basis for the management and exploitation of the natural resources in the Gulf."[31] Also, Vietnam will need to provide information about the agreements to its civil servants and citizens so as to properly implement these agreements. In July 2004, Vietnam held a national conference on the implementation of the two agreements, where Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan asked relevant ministries, branches, and provinces to closely coordinate in their implementation and to cooperate with the Chinese side.[32] In August 2004, as a positive response to the Prime Minister's decision to accelerate the implementation of the Fishery Agreement, Vietnam established a subdepartment for the exploitation and protection of aquatic resources in the Gulf of Tonkin under the Fisheries Ministry's Aquatic Resource Exploitation and Protection Department.[33] Vietnam will need to provide to its fishermen the necessary training programs relating to the delimitation line and the legal limits of the different sea areas in the Gulf of Tonkin.[34]

China has to fulfill the same commitments. Since the highest priority matter in implementation is related to fishery management, the Ministry of Agriculture issued two documents in June 2004 regulating the implementation of the Fishery Agreement as well as respecting orderly fishing operations to be conducted by the Chinese fishermen. The Urgent Notice on the Implementation of the Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Cooperation Agreement for the Gulf of Tonkin,[35] issued on 14 June 2004, requests all the relevant fishery management departments in Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan, which are adjacent to the Gulf of Tonkin, to undertake preparations for the implementation of the Fishery Agreement. The fishery management departments in each province adjacent to the Gulf of Tonkin are to issue the fishing permits to specific fishing vessels within the quota granted by the Ministry of Agriculture, and make a comprehensive check of the fishing vessels which are allowed to fish in the Fishery Agreement waters. Second, the fishery management departments are to launch training programs for fishery management personnel and fishermen, and disseminate the relevant documents and sea charts to fishermen. Third, the fishery management departments are to be prepared to deliberate,

work out, and establish emergency response mechanisms, and improve the communication networks and reporting systems. Finally, law enforcement teams of the fishery management departments are to strengthen their administration in the Fishery Agreement waters, in coordination with the Public Security Department and the Navy, so as to prevent violations.[36]

The second important regulation is the Public Notice on the Implementation of the Sino-Vietnamese Agreement on Fishery Cooperation in the Gulf of Tonkin issued on 15 June 2004. Accordingly, all the fishing boats must comply with the Fishery Agreement, the Management Measures and the Supplementary Protocol when they enter into the Common Fishery Zone and the Transitional Zone. Valid certificates are required for fishing operations; a special permit issued by the South China Sea Fishery Management Bureau is required for fishing operations on the Vietnamese side of the Common Fishery Zone; a transitional arrangement permit is required for fishing operations on the Vietnamese side of the Transitional Zone. No fishing activities are to be conducted within 15 nautical miles of Bac Long Vi Island. No fishing boats are to trespass beyond the Small Fishing Boat Buffer Zone and fishing boats must leave immediately if they mistakenly enter into Vietnamese waters. Fishing vessels must accept inspections by competent authorities of either China or Vietnam when they operate in the Common Fishery Zone or the Transitional Zone.[37]

On 4 August 2004, the China Marine Surveillance launched an historic inspection cruise in the Gulf of Tonkin. The inspection cruise involved two law enforcement vessels and an aircraft. The vessels sailed along the newly delimited maritime boundary line. The mission lasted 36 hours. Taking this as a starting point, the China Marine Surveillance is to carry out routine monitoring and inspection cruises along the maritime boundary in the Gulf of Tonkin.[38]

On 8 August 2004, Wang Yi (China) and Vu Dung (Vietnam), heads of the negotiation delegations of the two countries, met in Gunagxi to exchange views on the remaining issues between them and signed Minutes to implement the bilateral border agreements. The two sides agreed, in accordance with the Boundary Agreement and the Fishery Agreement, not to take drastic action or force against fishing boats in the Gulf of Tonkin.[39]

Conclusion

The Boundary Agreement is the first maritime boundary that China has agreed upon with its neighboring countries. As China still has maritime delimitation problems with eight countries, the success of the delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin should give China valuable experience for future negotiations. The use of a single line to delimit three different maritime zones (territorial sea, EEZ, and continental shelf) may be adopted by China in future negotiations with other neighboring countries, bearing in mind that China has used the doctrine of natural prolongation in its claim to the continental shelf in the East China Sea, which could create a different boundary line (EEZ and continental shelf) in the event that China's position were accepted by Japan.

Though the Boundary Agreement is the second of the three agreements Vietnam has signed with its neighboring countries (with Thailand in 1997 and Indonesia 2003), Vietnam has noted that this one is the "most comprehensive of its kind."[40]

With the resolution of the two border issues (land border and maritime border in the Gulf of Tonkin), the only remaining boundary issue between China and Vietnam is in the South China Sea, which is much more complicated and, thus, expected to be more

difficult to be resolved. Nevertheless, in 1995 China and Vietnam established a regular consultation mechanism with the goal of resolution of this matter. In August 2004, they reached an agreement not to take any action which could complicate or enlarge the issue and not to resort to force or threat of force, including the use of force against fishing boats.[41] It is expected that with the entry into force of the two bilateral agreements governing the Gulf of Tonkin, Sino-Vietnamese relations will be strengthened and that this will have a positive impact on other bilateral negotiations. The leaders of the two countries noted in May 2004[42] that the principles of "long-term stability, future orientation, good neighborly friendship and comprehensive cooperation" have become the guiding principles for the maintenance and development of bilateral relations between China and Vietnam.

Notes

1. The figure that Vietnam refers to is 126,250 square kilometers, while the Chinese figure is 128,000 square kilometres. See, respectively, "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," 1 July 2004, at http://www.vnagency.com.vn/newsa.asp?LANGUAGE_ID=2&CATEGORY_ID=29&NEWS_ID=106778 (accessed 2 July 2004) and "Introduction to the Sino-Vietnamese Beibu Gulf Delimitation Agreement," 30 July 2004, at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/chn/zxxx/t145558.htm (accessed 10 August 2004).

2. See "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," ibid. For a detailed assessment of the legal issues regarding the boundary delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin, see Zou Keyuan, "Maritime Boundary Delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin," 30 *Ocean Development and International Law*, 1999: 235–254.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. See Appendix.

6. An unofficial English text of the Fishery Agreement is appended to Zou Keyuan, "Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Agreement for the Gulf of Tonkin," 17 *International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law*, 2002: 127–148.

7. See "Beibu Gulf," in *Encyclopaedia Sinica: Geography of China* (Beijing: China Encyclopaedia Press, 1993)(in Chinese), p. 23.

8. See: UN Doc. A/51/645 (1996), 12.

9. See United Nations, Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, *The Law of the Sea: Baselines: National Legislation with Illustrative Maps* (New York: United Nations, 1989), 384.

10 Ibid.

11. See Zou, supra note 2, 245.

12. According to a Chinese official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the majority of the islands in the Gulf of Tonkin are within the straight baselines of the two countries and some are used as basepoints. See "Sino-Vietnamese Delimitation in the Gulf of Tonkin Does not Concern Sovereignty over Islands," 3 August 2004, at http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2004/08/200408031243.shtml (accessed 13 August 2004). If accurate, this implies that the two countries have straight baselines for the Gulf.

13. For the illustrative map of this line, see Zou, supra note 2, 237.

14. Nguyen Hong Thao, "The Settlement of Disputes in Bac Bo (Tonkin) Gulf," *Vietnam Law & Legal Forum*, Vol. 7, No. 77, January 2001, 17.

15. See "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," supra note 1.

16. See "Let the Sino-Vietnamese Maritime Border Become a Peaceful, Friendly and Cooperative Tie—Interview by Wang Yi on the Entry into Force of the Sino-Vietnamese Maritime Delimitation Agreement and Fishery Cooperation Agreement in the Gulf of Tonkin," *People's Daily* (in Chinese), 1 July 2004, p. 3.

17. Ibid.

18. See "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," supra note 1.

19. See "Introduction to the Sino-Vietnamese Beibu Gulf Delimitation Agreement," supra note 1.

20. Reproduced in Sun Pyo Kiu, *Maritime Delimitation and Interim Arrangements in North East Asia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 2004), 338.

21. Fishery Agreement, supra note 6, Article 22(2).

22. Fishery Agreement, supra note 6, Article 11.

23. "Entry into force of the Sino-Vietnamese Fishery Agreement causes 10,000 fishermen to abandon boats and go to the shore in Hainan," 5 July 2004, at http://dailynews.muzi.com/11/chinese/1318446.shtml (accessed 6 July 2004).

24. See "Sino-Vietnamese Agreement on Fishery Cooperation in the Gulf of Tonkin is coming into force and Guangxi fishermen drew lots for operations in the Common Fishery Zone," *China Ocean News* (in Chinese), 29 June 2004.

25. "Sino-Vietnamese delimitation concerns three problems: Sea area, fishery and oil and gas," 5 August 2004, at http://www.chinanews.com.cn/news/2004year/2004-08-05/26/468344.shtml (accessed 13 August 2004).

26. See "Fishing boats must comply with 12 new regulations when they enter and operate in the Sino-Vietnamese agreed waters," *People's Daily* (in Chinese), 1 July 2004, p. 3.

27. See Epsey Cooke Farrell, *The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Law of the Sea: An Analysis of Vietnamese Behaviour within the Emerging International Oceans Regime* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1998), 251.

28. See Sun Shangzhi (ed.), *Study on the Comprehensive and Co-ordinated Development of China's Beibu Gulf Rim* (Beijing: Meteorological Press, 1997) (in Chinese), p. 10.

29. There are five oilfields developed by China in the Gulf of Tonkin. For details, see http://www.cnooc.com.cn/ (accessed 13 August 2004).

30. China Business Information Network, 26 February 1998.

31. See "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," supra note 1.

32. See "Conference on implementation of Tonkin Gulf demarcation and fisheries agreements," 12 July 2004, at http://www.vnagency.com.vn/newsa.asp?LANGUAGE_ID=2&CATEGORY_ID=29&NEWS_ID=108471 (accessed 11 August 2004).

33. See "Implementation of Viet Nam-China Agreement on Fisheries Cooperation," 10 August 2004, at http://www.vnagency.com.vn/newsa.asp?LANGUAGE_ID=2&CATEGORY_ ID=30&NEWS_ID=112982 (accessed 11 August 2004).

34. See "Training on Tonkin Gulf demarcations for fishermen," 6 July 2004, at http://www.vnagency.com.vn/newsa.asp?LANGUAGE_ID=2&CATEGORY_ID=29&NEWS_ID=107394 (accessed 11 August 2004).

35. Text is available in http://www.law-lib.com (accessed 5 July 2004).

36. Text is available in http://www.law-lib.com (accessed 5 July 2004).

37. Text is available in http://www.law-lib.com (accessed 5 July 2004).

38. "First Cruise of the China Marine Surveillance to Safeguard the Beibu Gulf Border," 9 August 2004, at http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/GB/shizheng/1026/2694134.html (accessed 9 August 2004).

39 "Special meeting of the heads of the negotiation delegations of China and Vietnam held," *People's Daily* (in Chinese), 10 August 2004, p.4.

40. See "Interview by Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien about Tonkin Gulf Delimitation Agreement," supra note 1.

41. "Special meeting of the heads of the negotiation delegations of China and Vietnam held," supra note 39.

42. See "Consensus on border reached with Viet Nam," *China Daily*, 10 August 2004.

Appendix: Agreement on the Delimitation of the Territorial Seas, Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelves in the Beibu Gulf between the People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

The People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as the Parties), in order to consolidate and develop the traditional neighboring and friendly relations between the two countries and the two peoples, to maintain and enhance the stability and development of the Beibu Gulf, based on the principles of mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence, and in the spirit of resolving the Beibu Gulf delimitation issue through mutual compromise, friendly consultation and fairness and reasonableness, have agreed as follows:

Article 1

1. The Parties have determined the demarcation line for the territorial seas, exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of the two countries in the Beibu Gulf in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, generally accepted principles of international law and international practice, based on the full consideration of all relevant circumstances of the Beibu Gulf and on the equitable principle, and through friendly consultation.

2. The Beibu Gulf, in this Agreement, refers to the area where to the north are coasts of the land territory of China and Vietnam, to the east are coasts of China's Leizhou Peninsula and Hainan Island, to the west is the semi-enclosed bay surrounded by Vietnam's mainland coasts, and its south limit is a straight line connected by the most outer point of Yingge Zui of Hainan Island of China with the coordinates of 18°30'19"N, 108°41'17"E, through Con Co Island of Vietnam, to the seashore of Vietnam with the coordinates of 16°57'40"N, 107°08'42"E.

The Parties have decided that the above area constitutes the scope of delimitation in this Agreement.

Article 2

The demarcation line for the territorial seas, exclusive economic zones and continental shelves between the two countries in the Beibu Gulf, as agreed by the Parties, is determined by straight lines connecting the following 21 points, for which the geographic coordinates are as follows:

Point 1: 21°28'12.5"N, 108°06'04.3"E;
Point 2: 21°28'01.7"N, 108°06'01.6"E;
Point 3: 21°27'50.1"N, 108°05'57.7"E;
Point 4: 21°27'39.5"N, 108°05'51.5"E;
Point 5: 21°27'28.2"N, 108°05'39.9"E;
Point 6: 21°27'23.1"N, 108°05'38.8"E;
Point 7: 21°27'08.2"N, 108°05'43.7"E;
Point 8: 21°16'32"N, 108°08'05"E;
Point 9: 21°12'35"N, 108°12'31"E;
Point 10: 20°24'05"N, 108°22'45"E;

Point 11: 19°57'33"N, 107°55'47"E;
Point 12: 19°39'33"N, 107°31'40"E;
Point 13: 19°25'26"N, 107°21'00"E;
Point 14: 19°25'26"N, 107°12'43"E;
Point 15: 19°16'04"N, 107°11'23"E;
Point 16: 19°12'55"N, 107°09'34"E;
Point 17: 18°42'52"N, 107°09'34"E;
Point 18: 18°13'49"N, 107°34'00"E;
Point 19: 18°07'08"N, 107°37'34"E;
Point 20: 18°04'13"N, 107°39'09"E;
Point 21: 17°47'00"N, 107°58'00"E.

Article 3

The demarcation line from Point 1 to Point 9 as provided in Article 2 of this Agreement is the line to divide the territorial seas of the two countries in the Beibu Gulf.

The division of the space above and the seabed and subsoil under the territorial seas of the two countries follows the vertical direction of the demarcation line for the territorial seas of the two countries as provided in Paragraph 1 of this Article.

Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties, no topographical change shall change the demarcation line for the territorial seas of the two countries from Point 1 to Point 7 as provided in Paragraph 1 of this Article.

Article 4

The demarcation line from Point 9 to Point 21 as provided in Article 2 of this Agreement is the line to divide the exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of the two countries in the Beibu Gulf.

Article 5

The demarcation line to divide the territorial seas of the two countries from Point 1 to Point 7 as provided in Article 2 of this Agreement is drawn in block on the special map of the Beilun River estuary jointly surveyed and prepared by the Parties in 2000 with the scale of 1:10,000; the demarcation line for territorial seas, exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of the two countries from Point 7 to Point 21 is drawn in block on the complete map of the Beibu Gulf jointly surveyed and prepared by the Parties in 2000 with the scale of 1:500,000. The above demarcation lines are all geodesic lines.

The above special map of Beilun River estuary and the complete map of the Beibu Gulf are the maps attached to this Agreement. The ITRF-96 Coordinate System has been adopted for the above maps. Coordinates for all the demarcation points as provided for in Article 2 of this Agreement are measured on and taken from the above maps. The drawing of the demarcation line as provided for in this Agreement on the attached maps to this Agreement is only for the purpose of illustration.

Article 6

The Parties shall mutually respect their respective sovereignty over, sovereign rights to and jurisdiction in the territorial seas, exclusive economic zones and continental shelves between the two countries in the Beibu Gulf as decided by this Agreement.

Article 7

In case that any single geophysical structure of oil and gas or other mineral deposits should straddle the demarcation line as provided in Article 2 of this Agreement, the Parties shall, through friendly consultation, reach an agreement on the development of the structure or deposit in a most effective way as well as on equal sharing of the profits resulting from the development.

Article 8

The Parties have agreed to consult on matters of cooperation in respect to the rational use and sustainable development of living resources in the Beibu Gulf, and the conservation, management and use of living resources in the exclusive economic zones of the two countries in the Beibu Gulf.

Article 9

The delimitation of the territorial seas, exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of the two countries in the Beibu Gulf in accordance with this Agreement shall in no means affect or hamper the position of either Party on rules of international law in the area of the law of the sea.

Article 10

Any dispute resulting from interpretation or application of this Agreement between the Parties shall be settled through friendly consultation and negotiation.

Article 11

This Agreement shall be subject to ratification of the Parties and enter into force from the date of the exchange of ratification instruments between the Parties. The exchange of ratification instruments shall be carried out in Hanoi.

This Agreement, in duplicate and in both Chinese and Vietnamese, was signed in Beijing on 25 December 2000, and the Chinese and Vietnamese texts are equally authentic.

_____   _____

(signed)   (signed)

Representative Plenipotentiary for   Representative Plenipotentiary for
  the People's Republic of China   the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
           Tang Jiaxuan   Nguyen Dy Nien

(This is an unofficial English version translated by Zou Keyuan from the Chinese version of the Agreement.)

Annex 537

Ulises Granados, "The South China Sea and Its Coral Reefs During the Ming and Qing Dynasties: Levels of Geographical Knowledge and Political Control", *East Asia History*, Vol. 32/33 (Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007)

THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND ITS CORAL REEFS DURING THE MING AND QING DYNASTIES: LEVELS OF GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE AND POLITICAL CONTROL

史 *Ulises Granados*

In the conflict over the sovereignty of the four South China Sea archipelagos —primarily the Paracel Islands (Xisha Qundao 西沙群島) and the Spratly Islands (Nansha Qundao 南沙群島), but also the Pratas Islands (Dongsha Qundao 東沙群島) and the Macclesfield Bank (Zhongsha Qundao 中沙群島)—China relies heavily on historical sources to claim that the islands were both known and under imperial authority from ancient times.[1] Before the first Manchu 滿族 naval circuit was ordered to the Paracels in 1909, Chinese sources included geographical descriptions and sailing routes, as well as maps.[2] Some of the references in these sources are to Admiral Zheng He's 鄭和 seven famous voyages (1405–33) during the Ming 明 dynasty (1368–1644), while others date to the Song 宋 (960–1279) and Yuan 元 (1277–1367) periods or even earlier.

Classical legal concepts of territorial sovereignty, jurisdiction and suzerainty, should be used with caution when analyzing the claims over the South China Sea Islands during the last two dynasties.[3] Some concepts acquire meaning when applied to territorial units *populated* by subjects under some sort of authority. Such territory can either be owned and under the direct control—that is, the exclusive, sovereign power of governmental institutions or other political agents; or be the land of a separate polity that recognizes a relationship of suzerainty. In the framework of tributary relations with the Chinese empire, a recognition of suzerainty was chosen by some polities in order to enjoy peaceful coexistence and trade prerogatives within the Chinese world order.[4]

When there are conflicting claims over regularly inhabited or completely deserted islands, international law specialists often rely on well-established doctrine—international legal principles that govern the acqui-

[1] The literature on this topic is extensive, but the following Chinese-language sources should be mentioned: Deng Ciyu, "Nan zhongguo hai zhudaoyu de zhuquan wenti" [The Sovereignty Problem of the South China Sea Islands], in *Mingbao Yuekan* [Mingbao Monthly] May 1974: 1–8; Zhang and Fang, *Zhongguo haijiang tongshi* [A Complete History of Chinese Coastal Areas and Territorial Seas] (Hangzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 2003); Lu Yiran, ed., *Nanhai zhudao, dili, lishi, zhuquan* [The Southern Sea Islands—Their Geography, History and Sovereignty] (Harbin: Heilongjian jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992); Lu Yiran, ed., *Zhongguo haijiang lishi yu xianzhuang yanjiu* [Research on the Current Situation and History of China's Maritime Frontier] (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995); Han Zhenhua, *Woguo nanhaizhudao shiliao huibian* [Historical Sources on Our Country's Southern Sea Islands] (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1988); Han Zhenhua, *Nanhai zhudao shidi yanjiu* [Research on the Historical Geography of the Southern Sea] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1996); Cheng Keqin, ed., /OVER

110   ULISES GRANADOS

/Zhongguo nanhai zhudao [China's Southern Sea Islands] (Haikou: Hainan guojixinwen chubanshe, 1996); Guoli zhongyang tushuguan Taiwan fenguan, *Hainan ji nanhai xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* [Proceedings of an Academic Conference on Hainan Island and the Southern Sea] (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1996).

Sources in English include: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, *China's Indisputable Sovereignty Over the Xisha and Nansha Islands* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980); Ji Guoxing, *The Spratlys Disputes and Prospect for Settlement* (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1992); Yang Tzou-Chow, *Storm Over the South China Sea* (New York: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 1995); Steven Kuan-Tsuh Yu, "Who Owns the Paracels and Spratlys? An Evaluation of the Nature and Legal Basis of the Conflicting Territorial Claims," in *Fishing in Troubled Waters. Proceedings of an Academic Conference on Territorial Claims in the South China Sea*, eds R.D. Hill, Norman G. Owen, and E.V. Roberts (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1991); The-Kuang Chang, "China's Claim of Sovereignty Over Spratly and Paracel Islands: A Historical and Legal Perspective," in *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, 23.3 (Summer 1991): 399–420.

[2] Since the beginning of the twentieth century Chinese claims have been framed differently due to the documentation of their more direct intervention. Note however that some authors mention 1902, rather than 1909, as date of the first circuit.

[3] Sovereignty is defined here as "the supreme authority within a territory"; jurisdiction as "the geographical area over which a government body has the power and right to exercise authority"; and suzerainty as "the position or authority of a suzerain—a dominant state that controls the foreign relations of a vassal state, but allows it to have sovereign authority in its internal affairs".

[4] The concept of suzerainty is applied in China to both trade relations with the "barbarians" and to diplomatic contacts with them. See John K. Fairbank, "Introduction: The Old Order," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), Vol.10, pp.29–34.

sition of sovereignty—in order to identify which country has title rights over certain land.[5] International law even stipulates the possibility of a territory over which there is (or was) no sovereign at a particular time, employing the term *terra nullius*. Needless to say, such legal analyses (which are not the focus of this article) depend on historical research on the case at hand.

This study mainly covers the period from the founding of the Ming dynasty to the last decades of the Qing 清 (1644–1911). As will be shown below, while a certain degree of political authority seems to have existed over the maritime regions of the northern sector of this sea with proximity to the coast (that is, the "maritime frontier" *haijiang* 海疆 or "littoral territory" *yanhai jiangyu* 沿海疆域), Chinese authorities did not carry out any act that incorporated any of the four archipelagos into the empire. In fact, discussion has continued in academic circles as to whether:

1. simply recording the presence of islands in written sources (portrayed as "dots" in several maps), meant sovereignty authority, or exclusive power over lands, and

2. the presence of Chinese fishermen living on the islands or exploiting the seas around them was enough to invoke rights.

Numerous Chinese authors dealing with this aspect of the claim have repeatedly affirmed this position, implicitly or explicitly.[6]

Chinese arguments on the South China Sea conflict are consistent in insisting that *knowledge* of the sea—its trading routes and islands—represented in written sources should carry the burden of legitimating claims, no matter how official records, private maps, or charts of private sailing routes portrayed the area. That is, simply identifying the existence of the ancient names of islands in the sources is enough to prove that those far lands were ruled by the Ming and Qing. However, the analysis of some representative sources from the Ming up to the First Opium War (1839–42)

[5] On title, Malcolm Shaw says: "This term relates to both the factual and legal conditions under which territory is deemed to belong to one particular authority or another". Malcolm N. Shaw, *International Law*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.279.

[6] Numerous Chinese works deal with this point. A selection would include: Zhongguo nanhai zhudao, pp.266–87; Guangdong sheng diming weiyuanhui bianji, *Nanhaizhudao diming ziliao huibian* [Sources on the Names of the South China Sea Islands] (Guangzhou: Guangdong ditu chubanshe, 1987), pp.62–139; Han, *Woguo nanhaizhudao*, pp.366, 400–42; Han, *Nanhai zhudao shidi yanjiu*, p.81; Lin Jinzhi, "Zhongguo zuizao faxian, jingying he guangxia nanhai zhudao /de lishi," [History of the Chinese First Discovery, Administration and Control of the Southern Sea Islands] in Lu, *Nanhai shudao, dili, lishi, zhuquan*, pp.27–40; Lu Yiran, "Rishang Xize jici qiangzhan dongsha qundao yu zhongri jiaoshe" [The Occupation of the Pratas Islands by the Japanese Tradesman Yoshiji Nishizawa and the Sino–Japanese Negotiations] in Lu, *Zhongguo haijiang lishi*, pp.90–4; Tao Cheng, "The Disputes over the South China Sea Islands," *Texas International Law Journal* 10 (1975): pp. 265–277. Guo Zhengan, "Nanhaizhudao de kaifazhe" [The Developers of the Southern Sea Islands], in Guoli zhong-yang tushuguan taiwan fenguan, *Hainan ji nanhai*, pp.471–510.

reveals diverse levels of knowledge of these seas and islands. Moreover, some Qing sources repeated, almost word for word, earlier Ming names and descriptions of these distant and dangerous regions which were not considered safe for navigation.

Therefore, to address many of China's historical core arguments, it is important to show why no Chinese official presence in the islands was documented before the late Qing. The central argument of this study is that "knowing about" the South China Sea Islands, is not the same as "ruling" or owning rights to them. It will examine the history (and Chinese historiography) of the South China Sea by dealing with important Ming and Qing records, as well as secondary sources. First, it places geographical knowledge of the South China Sea region as represented in Ming and Qing sources within the Chinese "Western Ocean (*xiyang* 西洋) – Eastern Ocean (*dongyang* 東洋)" division and discussions about where these two oceans met. This division refers to a rather diffuse frontier between "Chinese" and "non-Chinese" spheres of influence, and as an area of regular Chinese navigational activity. In this context it should be noted that, as opposed to the rich geographical descriptions of the far reaches of the "Southern Sea", references to its islands and reefs remained imprecise and quite vague. This article, then, deals with the Chinese absence from, and lack of control over, these waters after the famous voyages of Zheng He, as a result of internal and external factors. This detachment from the maritime realm was the main reason for the lack of official, or officially sanctioned, activities on the islands, and for the reiteration of imprecise references in later geographical descriptions, even in local historical records. Finally, this study opens the possibility of viewing the South China Sea as an area used for different activities by Chinese, Southeast Asians, Arabs and Europeans. This reconceptualisation itself allows notable absences in the Chinese narrative to be filled. Finally, this article stresses the need to maintain the dichotomy between "knowing the area" and "ruling the area" in the analysis of historical sources involved in this issue, a dichotomy that appears to have been smoothly "erased" in Chinese historiography in their national interest.

The South China Sea and the Division between the Western Ocean and the Eastern Ocean

Long before the beginning of the Ming dynasty, the South China Sea was already identified in Chinese sources. In some cases this was as a vaguely separate area, in others as a part of a broader ocean encompassing East Asian, Southeast Asian and Indian Ocean waters. The identification of this maritime space was conceptualized through the "Western Ocean – Eastern Ocean" division first during the Song dynasty in a general, abstract way, and later, with more detail, during the Yuan dynasty.

[7] Zhou Qufei, *Lingwai daida* [Information on What is Beyond the Passes] (*Baibu congshu jicheng* ed., Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1966), 1:13b-14a. Roderich Ptak points out that Zhou must have confused this huge area with the so-called Southeastern Sea (*Dongnan Hai* 東南海), see, "Quanzhou: at the Northern Edge of a Southeast Asian 'Mediterranean'," in Ptak, *China, the Portuguese, and the Nanyang: Oceans and Routes, Regions and Trade (c. 1000–1600)* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2004), pp.408–9.

[8] Zhao Rugua, *Zufan zhi* [Treatise on Foreigners] (*Congshu jicheng ed.*, Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan chubian, 1937), 2:1.

[9] Zhao, *Zufan zhi*, 2:7.

[10] Ptak, "Quanzhou," p.415.

In order to introduce the main features discussed in these debates, and understand their evolution, this analysis will start with a few representative pre-Ming sources:

Song

- Zhou Qufei 周去非, *Information on What is Beyond the Passes* (Lingwai daida 嶺外代答), 1178

- Zhao Rugua 趙汝适, *Treatise on Foreigners* (Zhufan zhi 諸藩志) 1225

Yuan

- Chen Dazhen 陳大震, *Treatise on the Southern Ocean of Great Virtue* (Dade Nanhai zhi 大德南海志), 1304

- Wang Dayuan 汪大淵, *Synoptic Treatise on Islands and Barbarians* (Daoyi zhilüe 島夷志略), 1349

Zhou Qufei's *Information on What is Beyond the Passes* records that the Gulf of Tonking (Jiaozhi yang 交趾洋) lay southwest of Hainan (Qiongya 瓊崖) Island. This was from where three important sailing routes found their way into the South China Sea. The first of these routes led to the countries of the south; the second route, the northern, linked the Jiaozhi yang with the coastal areas of Guangdong 廣東, Fujian 福建 and Zhejiang 浙江; and the third led to the "Great Eastern Ocean" (Dongda Yanghai 東大洋海). Within this "Great Eastern Ocean"—which can be identified as the South China Sea—Zhou identified "Changsha 長砂" and "Shitang 石塘", probably referring to the Paracel and Spratly Islands respectively.[7]

Later, in the *Treatise on Foreigners*, the term "Eastern Sea" (Donghai 東海) appears. In this text, Zhao Rugua referred to the northern section of the South China Sea as an area linking trading routes between Champa (Zhancheng 占城) and Guangzhou 廣州.[8] Further south, Java (Shepo 闍婆) appears as the starting point of some trade routes, one to the east, and one to the north to the island of Con Dao or Pulau Condore (Kunlun崑崙) off the mouths of the Mekong River, traversing the southern section of the South China Sea.[9] From Con Dao, the route divided: one western sub-route leading to the Chinese ports of Guangdong and Fujian. However, the limits of the South China Sea itself were not clearly depicted in this source.[10]

By the time of the Yuan dynasty, the idea that seas were limited in extent seems to have evolved. This led to maritime regions being more clearly delineated. Chen Dazhen's *Treatise on the Southern Ocean of Great Virtue* is one example. In this work, nine polities are recorded: Jiaozhi, Champa, Cambodia (Zhengla 真臘), Siam, Tambralinga (probably on the eastern side of peninsular Thailand, Danmaling 單馬令), Palembang (Srivijaya, 三佛齊國), Brunei, Tanjongpura (in southern Borneo, Danzhong-bulan 單重布羅), and Java. Two of them, Tambralinga and Palembang, were "in charge of" (*guan* 管) a "Small Western Ocean"; Brunei was in

charge of a "Small Eastern Ocean"; and two polities (Tanjongpura and Java) were in charge of the "Great Eastern Ocean".[11] As Roderich Ptak has shown, some maritime areas were clearly differentiated: a "Small Western Ocean", covering the Gulf of Siam and the Malayan east coast; a "Great Western Ocean" (not explicitly mentioned) from Sumatra to Sri Lanka—the Indian Ocean, a "Small Eastern Ocean" covering the Sulu Sea, the Sarawak coast, and the Mindoro-Mindanao area in the Philippines, and a "Great Eastern Ocean", conceived as a linking ocean, which comprised the Java Sea, east and south of Borneo, and eastern Indonesia.[12] This Yuan source does not mention the South China Sea coral islands.

By 1349, when Wang Dayuan wrote the *Synoptic Treatise on Islands and Barbarians*, the "Western Ocean" was already clearly distinguished from the "Eastern Ocean". According to this source, the point where the Western and Eastern Oceans divided was at Longyamen 龍牙門 (today's Keppel Harbour Straits, southern Singapore) and at the island of Con Dao. Both places were considered "gates" to the "Western Ocean", through which ships en route to the Indian Ocean passed.[13] Moreover, this source also mentions the Wanli Shitang 萬里石塘 (the Paracels) as a place where several undersea "arteries" converged from three zones, and which was related to the trading port of Chaozhou 潮州 in mainland China.[14]

It is interesting to compare these sources with contemporary Arabic ones, since Muslim traders had a rich knowledge of Chinese and Southeast Asian maritime routes. Arabic sources are less specific in identifying a "Western Ocean – Eastern Ocean" division but some of them place such a division in a similar area. By the tenth century, and until the end of the Yuan dynasty, a place called "Kalah" in Arabic on the western side of the Malay Peninsula, somewhere near present-day Kedah and the Lingkawi Islands together with the eastern side of Sumatra, where most of the Arab trade flourished, was considered as the zone that divided the oceans. It is also thought that this area represented the limit of Chinese junk navigation. Gerald R. Tibbets agrees that it was recognized as a dividing line in merchant routes from China to India and Arabia.[15] However, some Arab sources classify the Indian Ocean and the China seas into other sub-regions (like the "seven seas" of the ninth-century Ahmad ibn Abi Ya'qub) by considering different criteria, such as the languages spoken by the inhabitants of respective polities they visited. It should be noted, however, that some sources use the name "Sea of Cankhay", the ancient

/probably the Paracels, are placed in section 81, a number that might imply some subtle or esoteric meanings. 81 is sometimes associated in Chinese tradition with the number of male scales of the (sea?) dragon—this may have indicated that these were dangerous lands for navigators. Ptak questions whether this number imagery might refer to a gigantic dragon. For an analysis on the possible implications of the numerical arrangement of this Yuan source, see Ptak, "Quanzhou," p.418. See also Roderich Ptak, "Glosses on Wang Dayuan's *Daoyi zhilüe* (1349/50)," in *Récits de voyage des Asiatiques. Genres, mentalités de l'espace*, ed. Claudine Salmon (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1996), pp.127–141.

[15] According to tenth-century Muslim chroniclers Abu Zaid Hassan al Sirafi and Abu Dulaf, and to the fourteenth-century Abu al-Fida Isma'il ibn Ali (1273–1331), the place *Kalah* (the *Qadah* and *Keda* of Ibn al-Majid and Sulaiman al-Mahri, respectively) was considered the mid-point of the Arab route between China and Ceylon that ultimately led to Oman. G.R. Tibbetts, "The Malay Peninsula as Known to the Arab Geographers," *Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography* 9 (1956): 21–60, pp. 24, 27, 31. It is this western Malay peninsula city (or island?) where the route to India really began for Arab sailors, particularly after their direct trading activities moved westward from south China to the eastern side of the Malay peninsula. This happened during the tenth century, after the rebel Huang Chao 黃巢 purportedly massacred up to 200,000 Arabs, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians during the capture of Guangzhou in 879. Paul Lunde, "The Seas of Sindbad," *Saudi Aramco World* 56.4 (July/August 2005): 20–29, <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200504/the.seas.of.sindbad.htm>, accessed June 2008. Islam in Southeast Asia and its implications for interregional trade, however, largely fall outside the topic of this essay, and Arab geographers are mentioned here for completeness. For a general introduction see H.J. De Graff, "South-East Asian Islam to the Eighteenth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, eds P.M. Holt, Ann K.S. Lambton and Bernard Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), Vol.2a, pp.123–54.

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[11] Chen Dazhen, *Dade nanhaizhi* [Treatise on the Southern Ocean of Great Virtue] (*Song-yuan fangzhi congkan* ed., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), Vol.8, 7:18b–20b.

[12] Ptak, "Südostasiens Meere nach chinesischen Quellen (Song und Yuan)," and

/"Quanzhou," both in Ptak, *China, the Portuguese, and the Nanyang*, pp.17–21, 413–14.

[13] Wang Dayuan, *Daoyi zhilüe* [Synoptic Treatise on Islands and Barbarians] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), pp.214, 218.

[14] Ibid., p.318. These coral islands, most

[16] For the Ya'qub translation, see Gabriel Ferrand, *Relations de voyages et textes géographiques arabes, persans et turks, relatifs à l'Extrême-Orient du VIIIe au XVIIIe siècles* (Frankfurt am Main: J.W. Goethe Universität, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, 1986), p.50.

[17] It was long considered that the *Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores* was from 1433. However, it is now accepted by many scholars that the definitive form of this work is from 1451, seven years after the first draft was finished in 1444. See Wan Ming, "Ming chaoben *Yingya shenglan* yu Zheng He baochuan chidu" [The Ming Dynasty '*Yingya shenglan*' and the Measurement of Zheng He's Treasure Ships] in *Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan bao* [Bulletin of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences], 7 July 2005, <http://www.guoxue.com/ws/html/zuixinfabu/20050708/238.html>, accessed July 2008. See also Paul Pelliot, "Les grands voyages maritimes Chinois au début du XVe siècle," Chinese version in *Zheng He xia xiyangkao /Jiao Guang Yindu liang dao kao*, [On Zheng He's Navigation to the Western Ocean/Study on the Vietnam-China and India Sea Routes] trans. Bo Xihe and Feng Chengjun (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), pp.15–32.

[18] According to the Ming, Arab geographers acknowledged the whole eastern side of the Malay peninsula, including the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea, as belonging to a Chinese area of influence, or "Greater China" (al Sin wa Ma'l Sin; a term that comes from the Sanskrit Cina Mahacina, and from the Persian Chin Machin). A reference from the 1511 text by Sulaiman b. Ahmad al-Mahri, *Al-'Umdat al-Mahriyah fi Dabt al-'Ulum al-Najmiyah* (MSS file 2559), which identifies such a macro region, is found in Tibbets, "The Malay Peninsula," p.48. See note 75 in this paper.

Chinese Zhanghai 漲海, to refer to the South China Sea as well as, in all likelihood, the East China Sea.[16]

In Ming-dynasty records, the geographical limits of the South China Sea are not clearly shown; yet this sea, as a section of the "Eastern Ocean", continued to be conceptualized as part of a diffuse frontier between the Chinese and non-Chinese worlds of navigation and trade, one of those maritime spaces where the civilized world encountered the barbarian world. Some of those records mention coral islands (the Paracels, the Spratlys, the Pratas Reef or the Macclesfield Bank) by their ancient names, even though the use of these names remained rather imprecise.

Without trying to present an exhaustive survey, the following sources are representative:

- Ma Huan 馬歡, *Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores* (Yingya shenglan 瀛涯勝覽), 1451[17]

- Fei Xin 費信, *Overall Survey of the Star Raft* (Xingcha shenglan 星槎勝覽), 1436

- Huang Zhong 黃衷, *Language of the Sea* (Haiyu 海語), 1536

- Huang Shengceng 黃省曾, *Records of Western Ocean Tribute* (Xiyang chaogong dianlu 西洋朝貢典錄), 1520

- Mao Yuanyi 茅元儀 (comp.), *Navigational Chart of Zheng He* (Zheng He hanghai tu 鄭和航海圖) in the *Treatise on Military Preparedness* (Wubei Zhi 武備志), 1621

- Zhang Xie 張燮, *Studies on the Ocean East and West* (Dongxi yang kao 東西洋考), preface, 1617–18

- Anon., *Favorable Winds to Escort* (Shunfeng xiangsong 順風相送), sixteenth century

- *Hainan Gazetteer of the Zhengde reign* (Zhengde qiongtai zhi 正德瓊臺志), around 1521

By the Yuan dynasty, the division into a "Western Ocean" and an "Eastern Ocean" of the huge maritime area from the western Pacific to the Indian Ocean became increasingly accepted. By the early Ming this divide was clear, and from it, the idea of a "Southern Sea" also slowly emerged. Thirty-six years into the dynasty, huge fleets under the command of Admiral Zheng He were dispatched to places along the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Peninsula by the Yongle 永樂 emperor. Between 1405 and 1433, the seven voyages into the "Western Ocean" naturally increased knowledge of maritime regions. Terminology distinguishing different "oceans" was already present before the Ming and during the early Ming several sources show that these Yuan conceptions of space continued: a "Western Ocean" was identified as distinct from the "Eastern Ocean" plied by Chinese, Arabs, and Malay sailors and merchant ships.[18]

For instance, Ma Huan's *Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores* mentions Lambri (Nanboli 南渤里) in Aceh and Samudra-Pasai (Sumendala 蘇門答剌) on the northern edge of Sumatra as the most eastern point of the "Western Ocean". Java (Shepo) was also recognized in general as the place where the "Western Ocean" began.[19] These three places were probably recognized as the starting point of the "Western Ocean" as they were the final destinations of long trade routes, geographically privileged on the Straits of Malacca and the Sunda Strait. There, merchants stopped and resupplied before continuing west to the Indian Ocean or east to China, Borneo, the Philippines or the Moluccas.

The *Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores*, as well as Fei Xin's *Overall Survey of the Star Raft*, included geographical descriptions of places stretching from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean. In particular, the South China Sea was recognized as stretching from Wuhumen 五虎門 on the Fujian coast in the Taiwan Strait in the northeast, to Champa and Quy Nhon (Xinzhougang 新州港), on the central Vietnamese coast in the east. Its southwestern section stretched from Con Dao (Kunlunshan 崑崙山) in the southwest[20] to Brunei (Poluo 婆羅) in the south.[21] In the east it went from the Philippine archipelago to the island of Formosa. Importantly, neither of these two sources mentioned coral islands in the South China Sea.

However, another important source from the Ming, Huang Zhong's *Language of the Sea*, does mention these islands. According to Huang, the Wanli Shitang—in this case a loose denomination for the Paracel and Pratas Islands, as well as the Macclesfield Bank—and the Wanli Changsha 萬里長沙—the Spratly Islands, a belt of islets and coral reefs feared as an extremely dangerous place for navigation—were all found in the "Southern Sea".[22] Moreover, the *Navigational Chart of Zheng He*, the so-called "Mao Kun Map" (Mao Kun tu 茅坤圖), compiled from surviving navigational charts in 1621, identified some coral islands in the South China Sea. These included the Shitang 石塘, that is, the Wanli Shitang, and the so-called Wansheng Shitangyu 萬生石塘嶼, both names for the Paracels. The map also marks the Shixing Shitang 石星石塘 (possibly also equivalent to the Wanli Shitang), identifying an extended area covering the Macclesfield Bank, the Pratas and Paracel Islands, a belt of rock and coral formations beginning near the port of Chaozhou (echoing Wang Dayuan in his 1349's *Synoptic Account of Islands and Barbarians*).[23]

The division between the "Western Ocean" and the "Eastern Ocean" is not obvious on the Mao Kun map but only a few mid-sixteenth century sources clearly stated where it lay. Huang Shengceng's *Records of Western Ocean Tribute* (1520) considers the "Western Ocean" as starting east of Kunlun Yang 崑崙洋 and Lambri and mentions Sulu as belonging to the "Eastern Ocean".[24] By the early seventeenth century, however, this division is clearly marked in *Studies on the Ocean East and West*. Zhang Xie

[19] There is a record in *Yingya Shenglan* of Nanboli (23a) indicating a point of division at Maoshan 帽山, nowadays Pulau Weh, Indonesia (approx. 5'54 latitude north, 95'13 longitude east), of Samudra-Pasai (19b), of Shepo (3a) and the commemorative poem (2a). See also, Zhang Sheng, *Gaizheng Yingya Shenglan* [Changes and Corrections to the Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores] (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1969), p.191, and Feng Chengjun, *Yingya Shenglan jiaozhu, Ma Huan zhuan* [Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores by Ma Huan] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1937), p.74.

[20] *Xingcha Shenglan*, 1:5a, 7a; *Yingya Shenglan*, 4a. Kunlunshan can, however, be identified in other sources as Kalimantan. For an analysis of island names in this region and variations, see Chen Jiarong, *Gudai nanhai diming huishi* [Sources on Ancient Toponyms of the Southern Sea] (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1986).

[21] On the division of the "Eastern Ocean" and "Western Ocean" at Brunei (an different position from other records) see *Mingshi* [History of the Ming Dynasty] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 323:8378.

[22] Huang Zhong, *Haiyu* [Language of the Sea] (*Zhongguo nanhai zhuqundao wenxian huibian* ed., Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1975), 3:1b-2a.

[23] See the map entitled "Xinanhai yi tu" and the Mao Kun map in Mao Yuanyi, *Wubei Zhi* [Treatise on Military Preparedness] (*Zhongguo Bingshu jicheng* ed., Beijing: Jiefang chubanshe, 1989), 222:11b, 240:10b-11a. Identification of the names of coral reefs and the changes they underwent can be found in Han, *Nanhai zhudao shidi yanjiu*, pp.1-51.

[24] Huang Shengceng, *Xiyang chaogong dianlu* [Records of Western Ocean Tribute] (*Congshu jicheng* ed., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), pp.3, 13, 21.

116   ULISES GRANADOS

[25] Zhang Xie, *Dongxi yangkao* [Studies on the Ocean East and West] (Wang Qizong ed., 1618).

[26] *Ibid.* 5:16a, 3:18b.

[27] The *Dongxi nanhai yizhuguo zongtu* [General Map of all Barbarian Countries of the Eastern, Western and Southern Oceans] and the *Dongnan haiyang zhuyiguo tu* [General Map of all Barbarian Countries of the Southeast Ocean]—both from the *Dongxi yangkao*—show a huge blank space in the centre of the South China Sea, where the Paracels and the Spratlys should be.

[28] Xiang Da, *Liangzhong haidao zhenjing: Xunfeng xiangsong. Zhinan zhengfa* [Two Classics on Navigation by Compass: The Favorable Winds to Escort and Directions of the South] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), pp.27–8.

[29] Tang Zhou, *Zhengde qiongtai zhi* [Hainan Gazetteer of the Zhengde reign] (*Tianyige cang Mingdai fangzhi xuankan* ed., Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian, 1964), 21:8b–9a.

nominated polities from East and Southeast Asia as belonging either to the "Western Ocean" or "Eastern Ocean". Japan was recorded in a separate section. Among the polities included within the "Western Ocean" were Jiaozhi, Champa, Siam and even Palembang, while those belonging to the "Eastern Ocean" included Luzon, Sulu, and Brunei.[25] Zhang also recorded Palembang as belonging to the "Southeast Ocean", and placed Brunei as the point where the "Western Ocean" began.[26] Compared with early- and mid-Ming sources, it is also worth noting that in maps, the Eastern–Western divide had moved slightly to the east by the end of the dynasty. In Zhang's text, the South China Sea Islands are absent, which likely confirms that the central section of the South China Sea was largely avoided by sailors and lay outside the main trading routes.[27]

Another important source from the Ming is *Favorable Winds to Escort*, a navigational handbook probably from the sixteenth century whose authorship and precise date remain unclear. In this text, detailed descriptions of sea routes linking Fujian, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Brunei and the Philippines, among other places, are recorded. It also has less detailed references to the South China Sea coral islands: the Wanli Shitang and its adjacent waters (Qizhou Yang 七州洋), and the Wanli Changsha are briefly mentioned.[28]

The last source from the Ming is a local geographical treatise on Hainan. In the *Hainan Gazetteer of the Zhengde Reign* a maritime area south of the Chinese mainland that stretched from northern Vietnam (Jiaozhi), Champa, and Cambodia to Guangzhou and Fujian is recorded. It mentions two formations within this maritime zone, the Wanli Shitang and the Changsha (here, the Pratas). According to this record, sailing from the island of Hainan to the Fujian and Zhejiang coasts need take only four to nine days. It contains no direct reference to the Eastern and Western oceans.[29]

Knowledge of the South China Sea and its insular features is generally considered to have grown by the beginning of the Qing dynasty, but many sources from this period simply repeat previous records. The following sources are reviewed here:

- Chen Lunjiong 陳倫炯, *Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries* (Haiguo wenjianlu 海國聞見錄), 1730

- Anon., *Directions to the South* (Zhinan zhengfa 指南正法), probably early-eighteenth century

- Xie Qinggao 謝清高, transcribed by Yang Bingnan 楊炳南, *Maritime Records* (Hailu 海錄), 1820–21

- Xu Jiyu 徐繼畬, *Synoptic Treatise on the Maritime Circuit* (Yinghuan Zhilüe 瀛環志略), 1844–48

- Wei Yuan 魏源, *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries* (Haiguo tuzhi 海國圖志), 60 vols., 1847

- *Records of Qiong Prefecture in Guangdong* (Guangdong sheng Qiongzhoufu zhi 廣東省瓊州府志), 1841

Discussions on the division between the "Western Ocean" and the "Eastern Ocean" continued into the Qing dynasty. After the recovery of Formosa in 1684, the Kangxi 康熙 emperor ordered several maritime expeditions to the Southern Seas. More than forty years later, in the eighth year of the Yongzheng 雍正 era (1730), the *Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries* appeared. This source presents descriptions of places across the world from Japan to the United Kingdom, including the geography of the South China Sea. It makes distinctions between the Eastern Ocean, Southeastern Ocean, Southern Ocean, Small Western Ocean, Great Western Ocean, the Kunlun area, and the Nan'aoqi 南澳氣 region. Chen Lunjiong points out that there were several lands in the Southern Ocean south of Taiwan (which was considered as belonging to the Southeastern Ocean) and north of Indonesia. Champa, Xinzhougang, Zhenla and Jiaozhi formed the Southern Ocean's western perimeter. Within this huge "lake" he identified the Qizhou 七州 and its Qizhou Great Sea 七州大洋, as well as Wanli Changsha and West Changsha 西長沙, all referring here to the Paracels. He also recorded the Qianli Shitang 千里石塘 or Shitang (the cluster of islands and reefs of the Spratlys group), the East Changsha 東長沙, also called Shatou 沙頭 (the Macclesfield Bank), and the Nan'aoqi region (the Pratas Islands and surrounds).[30]

Similar names are included in the *Directions of the South*, a manuscript whose authorship and date are unclear but was probably written during the early eighteenth century. As in the case of the *Favorable Winds to Escort*, there are detailed descriptions of sea routes and some mention of the archipelagos. In both texts, the Paracels and surrounding waters, the Pratas (identified here as Changshawei 長沙尾, part of the Nan'ao region) and the Spratlys are recorded.[31]

With the European powers' advance into Asian waters, as well as to deepen knowledge about ocean-going foreign trade (and as a direct result of the Qianlong emperor's military campaigns in Burma and against the Miao in Southwest China), the Manchu rulers showed increasing interest in the South China Sea. The *Maritime Records*, written during the transition between the Jiaqing 嘉慶 and Daoguang 道光 reigns (1820–21), says that there were two trading routes in the South China Sea running from Guangdong to Batavia in the Dutch Indies—an "inner route" and an "outer route".[32] In this text Xie Qinggao also records the Wanli Changsha (the Paracels) and the Qianli Shitang (the Spratlys),[33] where the Paracels act as a reference point in the coastal, relatively secure but long inner route, and the Spratlys group as a reference point on the shorter, but more dangerous, outer route.

Around one hundred years after the *Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries*, the illustrious Wei Yuan recorded similar places in his famous work, the *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries*. Once again, maritime regions were classified into oceans in different directions: the Western Ocean, Great Western Ocean, Southwestern Ocean,

[30] Chen Lunjiong, *Haiguo wenjianlu* [Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries] (*Zhongguo nanhai zhuqundao wenxian huibian* ed.), 1:13a–18a, 19a–27b, 38a–40b. See also Han, *Nanhai zhudao shidi yanjiu*, pp.1–50 and the map *Sihai zongtu* 四海總圖 [Complete Map of the Four Seas] reproduced in Go Bon Juan and Joaquin Sy, eds, *The Philippines in Ancient Chinese Maps* (Makati City: Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran Inc., 2000), p.65.

[31] Xiang, *Liangzhong haidao zhenjing*, p.117. On the Pratas group, see p.155.

[32] Xie Qinggao, *Hailu* [Maritime Records] (*Zhongguo nanhai zhuqundao wenxian huibian* ed.).

[33] Xie, *Hailu*, 35a.

[34] See his world map and the *Dongnanyang geguo yange tu* [Revised Map of Southeast Ocean Countries] in Wei Yuan, *Haiguo Tuzhi* [Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries] 60 vols. (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1967).

[35] See the map *Nanyang gedao tu* [Map of All Islands in the Southern Sea] in *Xu Jiyu, Yinghuan Zhilüe* [Outline of the Maritime Circuit], reprinted in Quanguo gonggong tushuguan guji wenxian bianweihui, *Yinghuan zhilüe. Hanghai suoji* [Outline of the Maritime Circuit, Petty Records on Navigation] (Beijing: Zhonghua quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 2000), 2:32. See also, the *Dongnanyang geguo yange tu* in Go and Sy, *The Philippines in Ancient Chinese Maps*, p.56.

[36] See also the 1841 *Hainan Local Gazetteer* (Qiongzhou fuzhi 瓊州府志) in Ming Yi and Zhang Yuesong, *Guangdong sheng qiongzhou fuzhi (1)*, 1841 (1890) [Hainan gazetteer, Guangdong province] (*Zhongguo fangzhi congshu* ed., Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1967), 3:1a.

[37] References to the Paracels remained vague in Guangdong local history as late as the Tongzhi 同治 period (1862–1874). See Mao Hongbin, *Guangdong sheng Guangdong tushuo* [Illustrated Descriptions of Guangdong Province] (*Zhongguo fangzhi congshu* ed., Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1967), 17:3b.

[38] *Guangdong sheng qiongzhou fuzhi*, 17:5b–6a.

Small Western Ocean and Greater Southern Sea, among others. In Wei Yuan's work, the Eastern Ocean, comprising the current South China Sea, East China Sea and the Yellow and Bohai Seas, was considered as a single entity, differentiated from the Great Eastern Ocean on the eastern side of the Japanese archipelago and the Philippines.[34] It is clear, then, that both the *Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries* and the *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries* reiterated the idea of a Western–Eastern division, which was introduced in pre-Ming sources.

During the Qing period, the two main archipelagos in the South China Sea were also marked on several maps. Even though names of these groups of islands were not completely consistent, the Paracels group was still identified as Wanli Changsha in most eighteenth-century maps, while the Spratlys were named either Qianli Shitang or simply Shitang. However, it is clear from an examination of many maps that exactly where both archipelagos were placed frequently changed, and that descriptions of the islands and reefs were surprisingly abstract. For instance, in the world map in the *Maritime Records*, both the Paracels and the Spratlys were depicted as running perpendicular to the Chinese coastline. However, maps in other works, such as the *Record of Things Heard and Seen in the Maritime Countries*, the *Synoptic Treatise on the Maritime Circuit* and the *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries*, show the islands parallel to the mainland.[35]

In Qing-period regional sources, geographical knowledge of the northern section of the South China Sea is rather detailed, but descriptions of more distant places, such as the Paracels and Spratlys, are not clear at all. The "Southern Sea" was typically conceptualized as a coastal sea in these works. Coastal areas were described extensively, but records of deeper waters were vague. In fact, Guangdong local histories seem merely to repeat pre-Qing records of the names and locations of the Paracels and the Spratlys and their distance from the mainland.[36] When they discuss sea routes sailed by junks and European merchants, they are most concerned with noting coastal points that are relevant to littoral navigation. They include no substantial insights into blue-water routes and their references to the islands, which were considered extremely dangerous places for those who ventured to sail far from the coast, were vague.[37]

However, an analysis of some local sources shows an interesting conceptualization of maritime areas. The 1841 *Hainan Local Gazetteer* divides the huge "Southern Sea" into a coastal sea belt where vessels engaged in inter-port activities; a contiguous belt of shallow waters; a deeper area, called an inner ocean; and a vast outer ocean, or huge open sea. This division is clearly made in order to inform sailors about routes for safe passage and to facilitate marine transportation and fishery activities.[38] In sum, these representative Qing sources depicted the South China Sea and its limits

with relative clarity, often repeating earlier works. They did not, however, discuss its islands and archipelagos in any detail. Local records, on the other hand, subdivided the sea into regions close and far offshore, in order to guide sailors on where to navigate and where not to venture.[39]

Maritime Knowledge and Political Control

It is important to keep in mind that there is a considerable difference between having geographical knowledge of maritime areas, and controlling and administrating resources and subjects living in those areas. After the famous Ming voyages and throughout the entire Qing dynasty, central and Guangdong authorities had some control over a relatively narrow coastal maritime zone with its adjacent islands in the "Southern Sea", but not blue-water regions. After the voyages of Zheng He, several social, economic and military changes eventually brought the Chinese maritime enterprise to a halt, beginning with the end of its naval strength.[40] In fact, while the voyages of Zheng He are considered the zenith of the Chinese mastery over sea routes,[41] these voyages are also regarded as the end of China's oceanic navigation history.

During the Ming, two factors are important to understand the coastal frontier policy implemented by the government, which eventually moved attention from the maritime realm. One factor was that Chinese private merchants continued to engage in economic activities outside the scope of traditional tributary trade. By the time of Zheng He's voyages, it is believed that Chinese private merchants were using the trading routes of the South China Sea, while Javanese, Malay, Gujarati and Arab traders also regularly sailed the north and southwest trading routes.[42] The other factors were bandit activities and piracy, both domestic and Japanese (and, during the Qing, Dutch) in China's littoral zones. These two factors, part of the same overall problem of illegal trade, eventually forced the government to implement strict frontier-defense policies along the coastlines.

Three types of maritime frontier control were implemented by the early Ming: the strengthening of military posts, the coordination of these posts with civilian authorities, and the setting up of naval detachments. This maritime defense policy was mainly aimed at the Japanese Wako (Wokou 倭寇) pirates, whose activities became rampant all along the Eastern Sea and South China Sea coastlines, even affecting Hainan Island.[43] To cope with this problem, the government implemented security measures (that first included threats to Japanese rulers) by ordering a maritime ban on private trade.[44]

During the Hongwu reign (1368–1398), the government set up the so-called weisuo 衛所 system, military garrisons manned by a hereditary

[39] This classification was also related to control and taxation over junk activities by Guangdong and Fujian authorities. On this see Jennifer Wayne Cushman, Fields From the Sea: Chinese Junk Trade with Siam During the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries (Ithaca: Cornell University, Southeast Asian Program, 1993), pp.45–7.

[40] Lo Jung-pang, "The Decline of the Early Ming Navy," Oriens Extremus 5 (1958): 149–68.

[41] Ni Jianmin, Haiyang zhongguo [Oceanic China] (Beijing: Guoji guangbo chubanshe, 1997), p.632.

[42] Roderich Ptak, "The Northern Trade Route to the Spice Islands: South China Sea – Sulu Zone – North Moluccas, (14th to early 16th Century)," Archipel 43 (1992), reproduced in Roderich Ptak, China's Seaborne Trade with South and Southeast Asia (1200–1750) (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), p.36.

[43] For Fujian, see the Ming shilu [Veritable Records of the Ming] at Hongwu 洪武 21, Month 2, Day 4 (12 March 1388). For Guangdong at Xuande 宣德 7, Month 2, Day 1 (2 March 1432); Jiajing 43, Month 6, Day 8 (15 July 1564). For policies against Southeast Asian pirates see Hong Zhi 弘治 1, Month 3, Day 6 (17 April 1488). All records from the Ming shilu come from Geoff Wade, trans., Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: An Open Access Resource (Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore) <http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl>, accessed June 2008. For a detailed account of Wako attacks in the Hainan region during the early Ming, see Guangdong sheng qiongzhou fuzhi (1), 19:1a–38a.

[44] Zhang and Fang, Zhongguo haijiang tongshi, pp.262, 284.

ULISES GRANADOS

[45] An Jing, *Zhongguo gudai haijiang shigang* [An Essential History of Ancient Sea Frontier of China] (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999), p.206. Charles O. Hucker, "Ming Government," in *The Cambridge History of China*, eds Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Vol.8, pp.54–70. Wan Rigen, *Ming qing haijiang zhengce yu zhongguo shehui fazhan* [Ming, Qing Dynasties Maritime Frontier Policy and the Social Development of China] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2006), p.42.

[46] Zhang and Fang, *Zhongguo haijiang tongshi*, p.288.

[47] Zhang and Fang, *Zhongguo haijiang tongshi*, p.277.

[48] *Ming shilu*, Xuande 10, Month 7, Day 20 (13 August 1435).

[49] *Ming shilu*, Jiajing 15, Month 7, Day 29 (15 August 1536).

[50] Zhang and Fang, *Zhongguo haijiang tongshi*, p.265. This process had begun when the first Ming emperor's government ordered the relocation of residents from coastal zones. See Lo Jung-pang, "The Decline of the Early Ming Navy," p.163.

[51] As a concept, the region encompassing the Nanyang was considered an area where several Chinese activities developed, such as migrant movements and trade, mainly across the South China Sea. Accordingly, and following Wang Gungwu's opinion, the Nanyang did not include the whole of Southeast Asia, but rather the South China coast to neighboring coastal territories, including what was, when Wang wrote, Indonesia, British Borneo, the Malay states (and Singapore) and the Philippines. See Wang Gungwu, "The Chinese in Search of a Base in the Nanyang," *Journal of the South Seas Society* XIV.1–2 (December 1958), p. 88.

[52] Geoff Wade, *Ming China and Southeast Asia in the 15th Century: A Reappraisal*, Singapore Asia Research Institute Working Paper No.28 (Singapore: Asia Research Institute, 2004), <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/wps/wps04_028.pdf>, accessed June 2007, p.6. See also Stephen Chang Tseng-Hsin, *Mingli dongnan zhongguo de haishang huodong* [Maritime Activities on the South-East Coast of China in the Latter Part of the Ming /OVER

soldiery, for patrolling coastal regions. Central authorities also set up different military garrisons (*zhai* 寨) and naval bases (*shuizhai* 水寨). During the early Ming, eleven military districts in Fujian and nine in Guangdong were set up in coastal areas, while three military circuits for both Fujian and Guangdong were also established. The government thus tried to organize coastal defense along a belt stretching from the north of the Taiwan Strait to the island of Hainan.[45] From the 1420s, the state of the *weisuo* system began to crumble and had to be rearranged in the mid-Ming in order to cope effectively with continuous *Wako* attacks. The government introduced several changes, including the abolition of the policy of sending soldiers to serve on farmlands (*tuntian* 屯田) while on duty.[46]

The first time the government implemented a maritime ban was in 1374, when the closing of the Superintendency of Maritime Shipping (*shiboshi* 市舶司) at Ningpo 寧波, Chaozhou and Guangzhou was ordered.[47] The Ming prohibited fishing in the littorals,[48] limited marine transportation enterprises, set up a maritime protection and naval supervision system,[49] and ordered the removal of local populations from coastal lands and islands (*qian hai* 遷海).[50]

This decision to remove populations, a policy largely continued during the Qing dynasty to contain the influence of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功) from Taiwan, had devastating effects on the coastal population and was indeed one of the main factors contributing to the Chinese emigration to the Nanyang.[51] This maritime ban was later complemented by several other prohibitions in 1381, 1384, 1390, 1394 and 1397.[52] In the mid-Ming, new prohibitions came into force in 1524 and 1533. These were only partially lifted in 1567 for Fujian, as a compensation to the people of that province for helping to fight piracy, leaving Yuegang 月港 as an open port.[53]

A new ban was proclaimed in 1656, soon after the Manchu rulers assumed power. This policy ultimately backfired and turned many people into bandits (even into seasonal bandit-farmers), smugglers and pirates, and again fueled emigration to the Nanyang, a trend already well established by the mid-Ming.[54] However, this and subsequent prohibitions did not mean, as Wang Gungwu has pointed out, that trading was impossible, but rather made it "illegal, secret, and largely unrecorded".[55]

During the early Qing, illegal trade, piracy, and the mid-sixteenth century violent incursions of Europeans into Chinese coastal areas, all led the central government to follow a similar maritime defense policy to the one pursued by the previous dynasty. Twenty-one coastal military posts were set up in Jiangsu 江蘇, Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong, and elsewhere, as well as minor military garrisons on the coast, including at Chongming 崇明, Dinghai 定海, Jinmen 金門, Haitan 海壇, Qiongzhou 瓊州 and Nan'ao, all of which aimed at suppressing rampant piracy in

the East China Sea and the South China Sea.[56] In Guangdong, from the beginning of the dynasty, the government set up maritime frontier circuits and a marine force in charge of supervising of a total of five garrisons to patrol the Southern seas,[57] even though, most probably, such circuits did not reach the coral islands.

As for the maritime ban, from the thirteenth year of the Shunzhi 順治 era (1656) to the recovery of Formosa in the twenty-third year of the Kangxi era (1684), private merchant enterprises and the maritime transport of people were banned from Shandong 山東 to Guangdong.[58] However, this renewed closed-door policy had the opposite effect to what had happened before: it encouraged overseas movements of goods and Chinese people across the South China Sea.[59] After a period of relaxation, the maritime ban was again imposed in 1717, in particular to all trading activities to the Nanyang.[60]

Ming policies of transferring people from coastal to inland regions also continued during the Qing. After the government decreed a new ban on private maritime activities in 1656, huge sectors of the coastal population were moved inland or to other provinces. According to 1661 regulations applied to Hebei 河北, Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong provinces, people living in coastal areas had to move from 30 to 50 *li* inland, thus creating a buffer zone between naval garrisons and the coastal population. This decision, again, was one of the factors that accelerated the overseas migration of Chinese to the Nanyang.[61]

Moreover, by the time the Manchu sovereigns ruled the Chinese empire, the Western powers had already been consolidating their presence in Southeast and East Asia. It became more obvious that the Chinese coastal authorities did not have the leverage to patrol the South China Sea waters. Since the beginning of the European "discoveries" during the late fifteenth century, the South China Sea caught the attention of Europe, starting with the Portuguese incursion into Macau in 1557, later with the Dutch occupation of Amoy (Xiamen 廈門), Tainan 臺南 and the Pescadores at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and also by the Spaniards, who set foot on Manila in 1570, and Formosa in 1626. By the twenty-second year of the Qianlong 乾隆 reign (1757), the Qing government decided to limit all foreign trade activities to the port of Guangzhou, in order to regulate commercial exchange with European merchants as much as possible. Other open ports were also closed during the Kangxi rule.[62]

/Chia-Ching Reign, 1522–1566," in Mote, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.7, pp.466–505. For the mid-Ming Japanese piracy problem, see also So Kwan-wai, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China during the 16th Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1975).

[55] Wang Gungwu, "Ming Foreign Relations: Southeast Asia," in Mote and Twichett, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.8, p.307.

[56] An, *Zhongguo gudai haijiang shigang*, p.246.

[57] Wang, *Ming qing haijiang zhengce*, p.197.

[58] Jane Kate Leonard, *Wei Yuan and China's Rediscovery of the Maritime World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p.69.

[59] Ibid., pp.212, 225. In spite of this policy, even well before the late Ming at the mid-seventeenth century, Chinese junks continued to sail between Fujian and Guangdong and Southeast Asia, engaging in trade and migration movements with Vietnam, Indonesia, the whole Malay Peninsula and the Philippines. See Akira Matsuura, "Shindai no kaiyoken to kaigai imin" [Qing Dynasty Maritime Realm and Overseas Migration], *Ajia kara kangaeru -3: Shuen kara no rekishi* [Reflexions From Asia No.3: History From the Periphery], eds Yuzo Mizoguchi, Takeshi Hamashita et al. (Tokyo: Tokyo digaku shuppansha kai, 1994), p.166. On the Chinese junk trade to Thailand, see Cushman, *Fields From the Sea*.

[60] Wang, *Ming Qing haijiang zhengce*, pp.155, 435.

[61] Zhang, *Zhongguo haijiang*, p.311. Wang, *Ming Qing haijiang zhengce*, pp.144–49, 153. By the mid-seventeenth century, emigration was also fueled by the increased taxation imposed on the population of the littorals. In general, during the Ming and Qing, migration to the Nanyang was done by those that either opposed the government or by merchants seeking better opportunities outside the realm of Chinese official control. It is estimated that by the end of the Ming, around 70,000–80,000 Chinese were already permanent residents in East and Southeast Asia. See Wang, *Ming Qing haijiang zhengce*, pp.401, 408, 414.

[62] Ibid., p.195.

/Dynasty] (Taipei: Silidongwu daxue zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, 1988), pp.8–11.

[53] Zhang, *Mingli dongnan zhongguo*, pp.12–16. Ray Huang, "The Lung-ch'ing and Wan-li reigns, 1567–1620," in Frederick W. Mote and

/Denis Twitchett, eds, *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Vol.7, p.559. Wang, *Ming Qing haijiang zhengce*, p.85.

[54] Wang, *Ming Qing haijiang zhengce*, pp.99, 390, 398. See also James Geiss, "The

122   ULISES GRANADOS

[63] For a classic study for those two periods, see Jung Pang Lo, "The Emergence of China As a Sea Power During the Late Sung and Early Yuan Periods," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 14.4 (August 1955): 489–503.

[64] Marwyn Samuels, *Contest for the South China Sea* (New York: Methuen, 1982), pp.22–5.

In the end, after 400 years of Chinese naval strength, from the Song, Yuan[63] and early Ming, the advance of foreigners into oceans nearby, and a closed-door domestic policy (also fueled by increasing worries about the northern frontier during the mid-fifteenth century), turned the South China Sea from being a huge "Chinese lake" into being an "open sea"[64] beyond the reach of government. For the entire Ming until the late Qing, records of government-sanctioned activities at the archipelagos are absent in Chinese sources, representing a consistent silence in Chinese historiography.

Levels of Knowledge of the "Southern Sea"

[65] By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, private maritime trade flourished in Northern Vietnam at the Gulf of Tonkin, thanks to Chinese, Vietnamese and Muslims merchants who used the western trading route of the South China Sea, that connected the Jiaozhi yang and the Nanhai. See Li Tana, "A View From the Sea: Perspectives on the Northern and Central Vietnamese Coast," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37.1 (February 2006): 83–102.

[66] Ptak, "The Northern Trade Route," p.39. Recent archeological findings have revealed the existence of a hybrid Chinese–Southeast Asian shipping tradition in the southern sector of the South China Sea. See Pierre-Yves Manguin, "Trading Ships of the South China Sea," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* XXXVI (1993): 253–80. See also Geoff Wade, *Pre-Modern East Asian Maritime Realm: An Overview of European-Language Studies*, Asia Research Institute Working Paper No.16, (Singapore: Asia Research Institute, 2003) <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/wps/wps03_016.pdf>, accessed June 2008, pp.7, 17–20.

[67] On these concepts—*Renkai chiiki* 連海地域, *Kankai chiiki* 環海地域 and *Enkai chiiki* 沿海地域—see Takeshi Hamashita, "Chisei-ron, tochishi kara mita chiiki to kaiiki," [On Geopolitics: Land and Sea Areas Viewed From the History of Governance], in *Shihai no chiiki shi* [History of Areas of Control] eds Takeshi Hamashita and Minoru Kawakita (Tokyo: Yamagawa shuppansha, 2000), p.113.

In order to analyze sources and judge arguments regarding the history of the South China Sea, it is useful to conceptualize this maritime area in various ways. As with other oceans and open or semi-enclosed seas, the South China Sea must be first considered as an area subject to partial state administration, as well as a space for economic development, human interaction, and exchanges of goods. By the fourteenth century, most sectors of this sea were sailed regularly not only by Chinese junks, but also by Muslim and Southeast Asian traders in the East-West spice trade, or inter-Asian trade of other commodities. During the Ming and Qing periods, the South China Sea, which shared similar geopolitical and economic relevance with other seas, could well be conceptualized as having been simultaneously:

1) a maritime space connecting other seas marked by Samudra-Pasai, Lambri and Shepo

2) an area connecting coastal tributary states and the Chinese mainland, and later European colonies through the traditional east and west trade arteries around the South China Sea,[65] and

3) an area where economic interaction took place along a coastal cities linked in a network, as in the trade route between The Philippines, northern Borneo and Malacca, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[66]

Based on this multi-level approach to the subject,[67] how do we analyze the "knowing the area – ruling the area" problem for the South China Sea islands? How do we judge Chinese sovereignty claims over the Paracels, Sparatlys, Macclesfield Bank and Pratas groups while acknowledging the history of the period from the early Ming to the First Opium War? What is the link between the geographic knowledge that Chinese navigators possessed of this huge maritime space and the assumption of the "Southern Sea" as having been part of the empire? In other words, by analyzing written sources and maps, how can the historical claims that are central in the Chinese narrative in the South China Sea conflict be validated?

Certainly, interpretation of surviving records and maps has to take into account the particular political and social context in which they were prepared. Moreover, any certainty in the geographical record concerning islands and the extent of the sea reflected the rich maritime experience of sailors. It is equally true, however, that in most cases, such portrayals were limited to *real* geographic knowledge of those features, as well as to the prevailing practices of the cartographers who depicted such accounts. This is particularly important in Chinese cartography, because many authors before the twentieth century were not professional technicians, or trained cartographers, but scholars who were equally interested in the natural sciences, the social sciences, history, etc. In fact, many maps were useless for real navigation, being drawn rather to illustrate or communicate other messages or ideologies such as China's central position in the world.

It was at the time of the voyages of Zheng He from 1405–33 that the "Southern Sea", as part of the division between the "Chinese" and "non-Chinese" area of regular navigational activities, witnessed the power of a strong China within the framework of tributary relations with rulers from Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent and the eastern African coast. The South China Sea had thus become for China an integral part of an extended geopolitical order, a *Pax Sinica* enforced by coercion when needed. This is illustrated by the case of King Alagonakkara of Ceylon, who was taken prisoner and sent to Nanjing in 1409.

In this historical framework, one of the main values of the South China Sea was undoubtedly its geopolitical significance as a maritime space connecting other seas. This is clearly understood and depicted in the *Overall Survey of the Oceans' Shores, Overall Survey of the Star Raft* and the *Treatise on Military Preparedness.* However, references to the four archipelagos in the South China Sea are non-existent in the works of Ma Huan and Fei Xin—unlike the coastal regions of Southeast Asia and of several vassal states.[68] In Mao Yuanyi's *Navigational Chart of Zheng He,* the Paracel and Spratly Islands are merely depicted as dots or mountains located beyond Zheng He's naval route to the Indian Ocean. Therefore, it can be assumed that Ming authorities considered these islands as belonging to a zone of secondary importance. In fact, judging by these representative Ming sources, it seems very difficult to believe that the Chinese authorities had incorporated any of the four archipelagos into the empire at all.

From the time of Zheng He's voyages until around the First Opium War (some years before the publication of Wei Yuan's *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries* in 1847), the South China Sea was not simply relevant for military or geopolitical reasons. Rather, it remained important for being the intermediate stage in trading activities between southern Chinese and Southeast Asian ports, and among Southeast Asian ports. It was an area for junk sailing and overseas migration activities among

[68] In Ma Huan's *Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores* there is a reference to a place called *fuqingluo* 浮青螺 (see commemorative poem, 2a). According to general Chinese academic opinion, this place might be the same as the *jiuruluozhou* 九乳螺洲 or *jiuruluoshi* 九乳螺石, in a Northern Song work called the *Collection of the Most Important Military Techniques* (Wujing zongyao 武經總要), referring to an old name for the Paracels. However, according to Ptak, it is also possible that such a reference does not correspond to those islands at all. On this debate, see Guangdongsheng diming weiyuanhui bianji, *Nanhaizhudao diming ziliao huibian,* pp.154–155. For Ptak, see, "The Coral Islands in the South China Sea According to Chinese Sources (Song to Ming)," in Avelino de Freitas de Meneses, ed. *Portos, Escalas e Ilhéus no Relacionamento entre o Ocidente e o Oriente. Actas do Congresso Internacional Comemorativo do Regresso de Vasco da Gama a Portugal, Ilhas Terceira e S. Miguel (Açores)* (Lisboa: 2 vols., sl, Universidade dos Açores/Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2001, University of the Azores/National Commission for the Commemoration of the Portuguese Discoveries, 2001), Vol.II, pp.337–58; and "Die Paracel- und Spratly-Inseln in Sung-, Yuan- und frühen Ming-Texten: Ein maritimes Grenzgebiet?" in *China and Her Neighbors: Borders, Visions of the Other, Foreign Policy, 10th to 19th Century,* eds Sabine Dabringhaus and Roderich Ptak, South China and Maritime Asia series Vol.4, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Veralg, 1997), pp.159–81.

124   ULISES GRANADOS

[69] On this issue, see *Nanhaizhudao dim-ing ziliao huibian,* as well as Han, *Woguo nanhaizhudao,* pp.795.

[70] Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerraneé et le Monde Méditerranéen à L'époque de Philippe II,* 2nd ed. (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), Vol.1, pp.94–152.

[71] An analysis of European maps corres-ponding to the Ming and early and mid-Qing will not be attempted in this paper. For an introduction to some representative maps portraying the South China Sea area, see Tatsuo Urano, *Nankai shoto kokusai funso shi* [International Conflict Over the South China Sea: History, Analysis and Documents] (Tokyo: Tosui shobo, 1997), pp.135–46.

economic and social networks. Geographic knowledge of trading ports, not only in the South China Sea, but also of tributary states and territories all along the Chinese Nanyang was of utmost importance for both official tributary and private trade activities. Therefore, there was a need for docu-mentary sources, maps and sailing routes.

Why, then, is it that in Ming sources, such as the *Navigational Chart of Zheng He,* or in early-Qing works such as *Favorable Winds to Escort, Directions to the South,* or late-Qing sources such as *Outline of the Maritime Circuit* and the *Illustrated Gazetteer of the Maritime Countries,* descriptions of the South China Sea archipelagos were so brief and imprecise? Also, why was the naming of islands and archipelagos so irregular? Chinese historians have certainly recognized this particular feature in the historical sources on the South China Sea in several studies.[69]

Blue-water navigation was, and still is, a dangerous endeavor in these waters where the ports and cities of South China were connected to South-east Asian ports across an area connecting coastal vassal states, European colonies and the Chinese mainland. In addition, from the early sixteenth century, European powers maintained their links between European centres and their colonies, as well as with southern Chinese ports in this area. In both cases, the South China Sea remained as a region of *coastal* activities. Navigation in this region, first by Asians and Arabs, and later by European sailors, is thought to have remained cabotage, resembling the maritime routes that circumnavigated the Mediterranean Sea routes during the sixteenth century studied by Fernand Braudel.[70] The Arabs, who dominated the spice trade, were experienced seafarers and were able to sail the open seas because of their high level of astronomical knowledge. Littoral sailing was, however, always safer and probably more profitable for small fleets.

However, junks sailing between Chinese ports and European ships en route to and from South and Southeast Asia, did not appear to use the middle section of the South China Sea, particularly where the Spratlys are located. Most likely, crossing the sea was deemed unsafe, when compared with port-to-port cabotage. Some of those who ventured into the shallow coral areas were shipwrecked because the whole area is scattered with dangerous reefs and barren rocky islands. Most of this area was not even properly mapped until the British edited their first sea pilot charts. Under-standably, European, Arab, Chinese, and Southeast Asian merchant ships avoided this area. As a result, information on the extent, geography and exact position of these dangerous sailing grounds, particularly around the Spratlys, remained obscure. Thus, Chinese geographical records from the Ming and Qing, *and* European maps (particularly made by Portuguese and British sailors),[71] show the Paracels, Pratas, Macclesfield Bank and the

Spratlys as mere dots or lines. As noted above, there seems to have been a lack of detailed knowledge of the geography of these islands and reefs, as they were regarded as having low importance.

At this point, we must acknowledge that locals had a better knowledge of the islands, even though this has not being given appropriate weight in recent non-Chinese studies of the South China Sea. Apart from the tributary trade, private trade and migration movements that flourished in the South China Sea, coastal and blue-water fishing activities must have been important for local communities. Philippino and Malay fishermen most likely extended their coastal activities to pelagic fishing. However, judging from the available sources (or the lack of them from other claimant countries), it could be stated that those who sailed into the dangerous zones of the South China Sea islands were mainly, if not exclusively, Chinese fishermen.

It is known that the Arabs mastered the sea routes of the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean and some of their pilot directions still exist, in particular those of Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn Majid and Sulaiman b. Ahmad al-Mahri from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By the nineteenth century, Vietnamese sailing directions also appeared, even though they appear to have limited themselves to the Vietnamese littorals as far as the western coast of the Malay Peninsula.[72] Yet, by far the most detailed studies on sailing routes along the South China Sea islands came from Chinese fishermen themselves.

Chinese navigational guides of the South China Sea islands were transmitted orally between Hainanese fishermen from the mid-Qing, but it is possible that they came from a much earlier period, even the mid-Ming.[73] Chinese sailing directions, as already noted, may also have been significantly influenced by Arab traditions, as it is known that by the mid-fifteenth century some Arab charts and navigational works were already in use for the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea.[74]

During the first years of the twentieth century, this Chinese "minor tradition" came to light in the form of a total of eleven navigational guides known now as the *Road Maps* (*Genglu bu* 更路簿 or *Shuilu bu* 水路簿).[75] The authorship of the guides remains unclear, even though some manuscript titles follow the name of their compiler, or that of the individual that possessed the manuscript by the time the main research on the topic was carried out in China during the mid-1970s (see Figure 1 overleaf).

Locals usually made a living by fishing and catching turtles in the Sulu Sea, the Strait of Kalimantan and the Natunas waters, as well as on the south and southwestern margins of the South China Sea. Fishermen from the northern section of the sea—Hainan Island and the coast of

[72] See Geoff Wade, "A Maritime Route in the Vietnamese Text 'Xiem-La Quoc-Lo-Trinh Tap-Luc'," in *Commerce et Navigation en Asie du Sud-Est, XIVe–XIXe siècle*, eds Nguyen The Anh and Yoshiaki Ishizawa (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1999), pp.137–70.

[73] Some of the Chinese sources mentioned in this essay had the two-fold aim of describing lands of the Eastern Ocean and Western Ocean, as well as being instructions, or road maps, to get to them. The *Favorable Winds to Escort*, the *Directions to the South* and the *Records of the Maritime Countries* (Haiguo guangji 海國廣記) are some examples. See Shen Moushang, *Haiguo guangji*, in Zheng Housheng and Zheng Yiyun, *Zheng He xia xiyang ziliao huibian* [Historical Sources on the Voyages of Zheng He to the Western Ocean] (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1980), pp.306–27.

[74] The Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris has two important Arab navigational manuscripts, one from Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn Majid (MSS file Arabe 2292, dated 1462), the other from Sulaiman b. Ahmad al-Mahri (MSS file Arabe 2559, dated 1511). Considering that in Southern China, particularly in Hainan, there are important Muslim communities, it may well be that these and other sailing directions were used by Chinese Muslim sailors. On the manuscripts, see Gabriel Ferrand, *Instructions nautiques et routiers arabes et portugais des XVe et XVIe siècles / T. 3 : Introduction à l'astronomie nautique arabe* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1921–1928), pp.198–248. Tibbetts, "The Malay Peninsula as Known to the Arab Geographers," pp.47–57.

[75] *Nanhaizhudao diming ziliao huibian*, pp.88–140. Chinese and Vietnamese measurement of sailing distance shows an interesting similarity, both using the unit *Geng* (Chinese) and *Canh* (Vietnamese) for the equivalent of approximately 60 Chinese *li*. Cheng, *Zhongguo nanhai zhudao*, p.281, Wade, "A Maritime Route in the Vietnamese Text," p.170.

ULISES GRANADOS

Figure 1 *The Road Map* series

Guide name	Main content	Sailing routes entered	Current depository
Shunfeng de li (*Wang Guozhang*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels, Spratlys Marine seasonal currents	Eastern Sea (Paracels): 42 Northern Sea (Spratlys): 209 Total: 251	South China Normal University
No name (*Lin Hongjin*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys Marine currents chart	Eastern Sea: 49 Northern Sea: 162 Total: 211	South China Normal University
Zhuming dongbei hai genglu bu	Sailing routes for the Paracels, Spratlys and Pratas Marine currents	Total: 135	South China Normal University
Donghai beihai genlu bu (*Li Genshen*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels, Spratlys and Guangzhou	Total: 151 (including 112 routes for the Spratlys)	South China Normal University
No Name (*Su Deliu*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels, Spratlys and Nanyang	Eastern Sea: 29 Northern Sea: 106 Guangdong, Hainan, Zhongnan Peninsula, Nanyang routes: 54 Total: 189	Nanyang Research Institute at Xiamen University, Guangdong Museum
No Name (*Xu Hongfu*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and East Spratlys (Macclesfield Bank?) Wind currents	Northern Sea: 153 *dong sha tou*: 67 Total: 220	Institute of Aquatic Research, Hainan
Dingluo jingzhen wei (*Yu Yuqing*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys	Eastern Sea: 35 Northern Sea: 65 Total: 100	Nanyang Research Institute at Xiamen University
Xinansha gengbu (*Chen Yongqin*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys	Paracels: 16 Spratlys: 83 Total: 99	Nanyang Research Institute at Xiamen University
Qu xinan sha shuilubu	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys	Paracels: 13 Spratlys: 74 Total: 87	Guangdong Museum
No Name (*Lu Honglan*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys	Eastern Sea: 66 Northern Sea: 120 Total: 186	Guangdong Museum
No Name (*Peng Zhengka*)	Sailing routes for the Paracels and Spratlys	Eastern Sea: 17 Northern Sea: 200 Total: 217	Guangdong Museum

mainland Guangdong—used their largely orally transmitted navigational knowledge for regular annual incursions into the Paracels and Spratlys.[76] Those who dared to venture into these dangerous grounds could find relatively detailed information on best seasons for sailing, the position of each insular feature, sailing currents and tides in the *Road Maps*. What these guides also seem to reflect is that Chinese fishermen, mainly from Hainan, incorporated huge sectors of the South China Sea and its archipelagos as an area of sustainable economic exploitation on a regular basis.

Obviously, as navigational guides, these sources (whose authorship remains unknown) do not include information on the role played by Guangdong or Hainan authorities on Chinese fishing activities. Therefore, their value as contributions to the analysis of the history of the sovereignty problem of the islands in question must remain minimal. Although they suggest that Chinese activities took place in the area, they are not sufficient to legitimate ownership, as suggested frequently in current official and academic histories of the conflict. However, these sources open the door for approaching the discussion of "knowing the area" at a deeper level, by supporting the idea that generations of Chinese fishermen had ventured into these dangerous grounds, and even made those islands their place of ultimate rest.

Final Considerations

In the realm of international law, current Chinese (and Taiwanese) historical arguments over the sovereignty of the South China Sea islands clash directly with Vietnamese ones. Hanoi claims that this sea (Bien Dong) the Paracels (Hoang Sa) and the Spratlys (Truong Sa) have belonged to Vietnam since the seventeenth century.[77] Maps that mark the Paracels (then called Bai Cat Vang), allegedly go back to the fifteenth century.[78] Hanoi's own claim of sovereignty over the Paracels and Spratlys shows similarities with China's and Taiwan's, particularly from the early nineteenth century when, supposedly, the Vietnamese central government sanctioned activities by fishermen and survey teams at the islands.[79]

The present author believes that to start unraveling the South China Sea islands conflict, which now involves The Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei as well as China, Taiwan and Vietnam, the discussion should be framed in terms of events that have occurred since the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Examining events further into the past has the potential to enter the realm of myth—especially since the Chinese sources are characterized by numerous gaps and silences—where tenuous narratives can crystallize into uncompromising official national histories. For China, the formation of a renewed oceanic identity, directly related to this conflict by actions carried out by the Chinese state, can be traced to the beginning of the last century, as discussed by this author elsewhere.[80]

[76] According to the research conducted in China during the 1970s, the road map of Su Deliu is named after a fisherman from Hainan island who, around 1921 (when he was thirteen years old) obtained this otherwise unnamed text from his ancestors. The same story is repeated in the case of the road map of Lu Honglan, which was the name of another Hainan fisherman born in 1900, who received the original sailing directions from relatives. In the case of the Peng Zhengka road map, it is known that he was at the Spratlys when the French occupied nine of these insular formations in 1933, see *Nanhaizhudao diming ziliao huibian*, pp.124–125. On the 1933 French occupation, see Han, *Nanhai zhudao shidi yanjiu*, pp.104–115; Stein Tonnesson, "The South China Sea in the Age of European Decline," *Modern Asian Studies* 40, 1 (2006): 3–8; Ulises Granados, "As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier: Ocean Identity in the Making, 1902–1937," *Pacific Affairs* 78, 3 (Fall 2005): 451–52.

[77] Republic of Vietnam. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *White Paper on the Hoang Sa (Paracel) and Truong Sa (Spratly) Islands* (Saigon: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1975), pp.16. Luu Van Loi, *The Sino-Vietnamese Difference on the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes* (Hanoi: The Gioi Publishers, 1996), pp.33.

[78] Thanh Thuy, "The Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes Are Vietnamese Territory," in *The Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes (Paracels and Spratly)* (Hanoi: Vietnam Courier, 1981), p.15

[79] *White Paper on the Hoang Sa*, pp.27–35; Luu, *The Sino-Vietnamese Difference*, pp.33–47.

[80] Ulises Granados, "As China Meets the Southern Sea Frontier".

ULISES GRANADOS

[81] Marwyn Samuels points out that "by the eighteenth century, and culminating in the nineteenth century confrontations with Britain, France and Japan, Chinese interest in the South China Sea islands became less a matter of trading networks and navigational hazards, and more a function of strategic and political concern". Samuels, *Contest for the South China Sea*, p.24.

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The South China Sea, until the First Opium War, was an area of utmost importance, where Asians and Europeans engaged in tributary and private trade, and where fishing and migration took place. However, as shown here, the islands and coral reefs of this area remained far from subject to official Chinese control. In a maritime area where economic activities flourished, the South China Sea islands became mere reference points, far from customary navigational routes due to safety concerns. These islands also seem to have been outside the effective, real administration of the Chinese authorities: they were far away and dangerous places, avoided by large ships and trading junks. However, they continued to be fishing grounds for generations of local people who made a living there. It was not until colonial pressure peaked in the region with the British, French and Japanese presence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the South China Sea re-emerged as an area of geo-strategic importance.[81] It is only since then that the Chinese authorities have evinced a real interest in the islands, and only since the first Chinese naval circuit to the Paracels and Pratas in 1909 that the "knowing the area – ruling the area" dichotomy has gradually been blurred. Latterly, of course, this confusion has served the higher political purpose of China's national interest. Thus, international law specialists have a duty to examine the historical record in a scrupulous manner, in order to provide answers and acceptable solutions to this delicate territorial imbroglio.

Annex 538

Angus Konstam, *Piracy: The Complete History* (2008)

PIRACY

THE COMPLETE HISTORY

ANGUS KONSTAM

Front cover: *Spanish engagement with Barbary pirates* (National Maritime Museum, London)
Back cover: *The capture of Blackbeard* (Bettman/Corbis)
Black and white images: Stratford Archive
Maps: Peter Bull Art Studio

CHAPTER 9

THE CHINESE PIRATES

PIRACY IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

Over the centuries piracy ebbed and flowed around the world, appearing and disappearing again according to the whims of circumstance – and naval power. However, in Chinese waters the threat of piracy remained constant for seafarers for more than a thousand years, probably longer. The first recorded incidence of piracy in the South China Sea took place in AD 589, around the time the emperor Wen unified China under the banner of his Sui Dynasty. However, it is almost a certainty that piracy flourished long before, as the fragmented petty states provided piracy with the perfect political climate it needed in order to prosper. Minor warlords dominated long stretches of the Chinese coast, their ships trading, raiding or conducting piratical attacks with equal ease. It was only when the emperor Wen and his dynasty managed to impose some degree of central authority that the power of these local warlords was temporarily checked.

This proved short-lived, and it was not until the Ming Dynasty in the 13th and 14th centuries that Imperial authority extended into the coastal provinces, mainly by threatening local rulers with invasion and execution if they did not stop misbehaving. While this meant that these rulers acknowledged the emperor as their feudal master, it still did not mean they didn't involve themselves in

piracy when it suited them. This might have been a golden period for China, as her merchants ranged as far as the Indian Ocean, but it was also a boom time for the pirates. It was only in the 15th century that the Chinese came up with a solution. They paid the local rulers to suppress piracy in their own waters. As many of them were the same people responsible for the attacks, the policy was bound to fail. The Chinese government continued to adopt this pragmatic approach for the next five centuries.

In fact the whole business of piracy was different in China from anywhere else in the world. For a start, piracy was highly organized. Rather than operating in individual ships or even small groups, pirates congregated into fleets. Instead of occupying small pirate havens, Chinese pirates tended to control large sections of the coast, and ruled them much as if they were local warlords. Indeed a few of them were the very people the Chinese authorities paid to suppress piracy in their own waters. While this policy certainly reduced regional involvement in piracy, it also meant that some of these dubious local rulers became little more than bandits who enjoyed the protection of the emperor. However, for the most part these Chinese pirate confederations or empires kept well away from politics, and simply ruled their pirate fiefdoms as independent states. Their strength lay in their numbers – both the regional rulers and the emperor lacked the naval strength to do more than patrol their own local sea lanes. As a result, for five centuries the pirates were allowed to operate unchecked. Piracy in the Far East was eventually suppressed by the European powers, whose steamships and modern armaments were able to decimate the older fleets of pirate junks. It was not until the Europeans arrived with their steam-powered warships that the problem was finally dealt with.

Of course China was not the only country in the Far East to suffer from piracy. The coastal waters of Japan were plagued by pirates well into the 16th century, while we have already examined the tribal piracy that went on in the islands of the Philippines and the Malay Archipelago. Another pirate 'hot-spot' was the coast of what is now Vietnam. Before the 10th century the region was just another Chinese province, but from AD 939 onwards it ran its own affairs – at least until the French arrived in the 19th century. However, the Vietnamese still had to pay an annual tribute to the Chinese emperor, and the country remained divided into small semi-autonomous provinces, similar to those found along the Chinese coastline. Local rulers used piracy as a means of protecting their own fiefdom at the expense of their neighbours. Piratical activity reached

a peak during the Tay Song Dynasty (1778–1802) – a period of widespread rebellion and decentralization. Even the reunification of Vietnam by the Nguyen Dynasty did little to check the influence of these petty pirate kingdoms, and it was only through the intervention of the European powers (primarily the French) that the power of the Vietnamese pirates was finally broken.

The arrival of the first Europeans in the late 16th century brought traders into contact with these pirates, and, just like the Chinese and Vietnamese rulers themselves, the Europeans had to reach some form of accommodation with the pirates in order to trade. Their arrival coincided with the rise of the first large-scale pirate 'empire' – that of the Chinese warlord Cheng Chi-Lung (or Zheng Zhi-Long -- 1604–61), who operated in Fujian province. His power showed that, in China, piracy and politics were intertwined – Cheng combined his role as a pirate leader with those of a province administrator, a leading merchant trader, and even an admiral in the Imperial navy! His son Cheng Ching-Gong (or Zheng Cheng-Gong, nicknamed 'Koxinga') would expand this pirate empire into what was effectively the most powerful maritime power in the South China Sea.

It was only with the growth of European colonialism in the 19th century that the European maritime powers brought their naval might to bear on the problem of piracy in Chinese waters. Their successful defence of their trading enclaves during the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century involved the employment of a naval force in the region, and this presence remained for the best part of a century, protecting the interests of European merchants against local warlords and pirates alike. Their technological advantage over the Chinese (and Vietnamese) pirates meant that relatively small naval forces were able to conduct punitive expeditions that succeeded in destroying the naval power of these pirate kingdoms, allowing European commerce to prosper without the constant threat of attack. In effect a combination of colonial police work, maritime steam power and shell-firing naval ordnance brought an end to a thousand years of pirate domination in the South China Sea.

KOXINGA

The first of the three great Chinese pirate empires was based in Fukien province, opposite the island of Taiwan. Cheng Chi-Lung was a surprising pirate chief.[1] After all, he was more of a merchant than a sea robber, although he also dabbled in politics as well as piracy. He served his business apprenticeship with a Chinese

merchant, working both in Japan (where he found a wife – Tagawa Matsu), and with Dutch traders, who had recently established an outpost on the Penghu (Pescadores) Islands in the Formosa (now Taiwan) Straits. He may well have dabbled in piracy during the early 1620s, using the Dutch port as a base, and acting more as a Dutch privateer than as a pirate.

When his trading mentor died in 1623 his merchant fleet and escorting war junks were passed to Cheng. He established himself in Taiwan, but a growing rivalry with the Dutch encouraged him to move his operation to Hsiamen

THE JUNK

For centuries the junk was the mainstay of Chinese and South-East Asian maritime shipping, equally suitable as a merchant trader or as a pirate ship. It was the Portuguese who first coined the name *junco*, a derivative of the Indonesian *djong*. The junks used by the pirates of the South China Sea were little different from the junks encountered by Marco Polo centuries before, and their motor-powered descendants can still be seen today.

Most pirate junks were converted from trading junks, armed with several guns (including numerous small swivel pieces called *lantakas*), and crewed by as many as 200 men. Some of the largest pirate junks were over 100ft (30.5m) long, with a beam of 20ft (6m), and carried three masts. The largest seagoing pirate junks had a substantial cargo space in the hold, part of which was used to store powder and shot. Junks were also divided into numerous small compartments below decks, which offered some form of protection against flooding if they were hit by enemy shot. This made them a lot less fragile than they looked.

Although the Europeans sometimes described junks as being primitive craft, mariners recognized that they were ideally suited to the waters of the South China Sea, being fast, reliable and commodious.
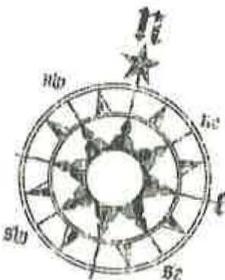
(Xiamen), the main port in the Amoy Islands, and other ports in Fukien, on the other side of the Formosa Straits. While the mercantile arm of his maritime empire suffered from Dutch competition, the Europeans were traders, not pirates, and as long as Cheng avoided attacking Dutch ships, his pirate fleet was able to operate without any restriction. One of his most daring ventures was a large-scale raid on shipping in the mouth of the Yangtse River, an attack that secured his reputation as the unrivalled master of the Chinese seas. Within a decade his pirate war junks cruised as far afield as the Vietnamese coast and the Yellow Sea, and merchant ship owners were forced to pay him protection money in order to remain in business.

They were not the only ones who paid Cheng off. In 1641 the Ming emperor Chu You-Jian (Chongzhen) needed help in countering the revolt that would eventually cost him his throne. Consequently he appointed Cheng as his 'Admiral of Coastal Waters', and charged him – of all things – with the suppression of piracy. The pirate chief was even paid an Imperial salary for three years, until the Manchu rebels captured Beijing, and Chu You-Jian was forced to commit suicide.

Cheng Chi-Lung played a large part in these events, having aligned himself with the Ming successor Prince Tang in 1645. He ruled Fukien in the name of the Ming Dynasty, but in 1649 he was persuaded to change sides, so allowing the Manchus to capture the province. His actions helped secure the end of Ming resistance, and therefore the new Manchu (Qing) Dynasty rewarded Cheng for his efforts. He remained in charge of Fukien for another two decades, until the activities of his son led to his being called to Beijing in 1661. There the great pirate chief was held accountable for his son's actions, and he was executed. However, his son, nicknamed Kuo Hsing Yeh or Koxinga, meaning 'Lord with the Imperial Surname', would wreak a terrible revenge.

Koxinga was born in 1624, most probably during his father's stay in the Japanese port of Nagasaki. He was raised in Fukien, and during the late 1640s he took part in his father's military campaign on behalf of the Ming Dynasty. From around 1650 onwards, he also ran the twin family businesses of trade and piracy, leaving his father to concentrate on his political responsibilities. Much has been written about Koxinga the pirate chief, the Taiwanese hero and the Ming loyalist. Although many of the legends that surrounded him fail to stand the test of historical scrutiny, the pirate chief certainly became a figurehead for anti-Manchu resistance – the defender of the older Ming civilization. One of

THE CHINESE PIRATES

The China Seas
c. 1800

A Scale of English Miles
0   100   200   300   400   500

Mouth of
Yellow River
to 1853

Yellow River

KIANGSU

CHINA

Nanking

Shanghai

Hankow

Changchow

Ningpo

Yangtse River

CHEKIANG

Wenchow

East
China
Sea

Foochow

FUKIEN

Tamsui

Amoy

KWANGSI

GUANGDONG

Canton

Kowloon

FORMOSA

Pearl River

Chiang-p'ing

Hong Kong

Haiphong

Tien-pai

Macao

Red River

Lei-Chou
Peninsula

Hanoi

South
China
Sea

Gulf
of
Tonkin

Ch'iung-choo

HAINAN

Hue

THE
PHILIPPINES

INDO
CHINA

these legends describes how he captured the city of Changchow (Zhangzou) from the Manchus, only to find that his mother had died during the siege. As the story goes, he went to the temple, then burned his old clothes as a symbol, and declared his intent: 'In the past I was a good Confucian subject and a good son. Now I'm an orphan without an Emperor – I have no country and no home. I have sworn to fight the Manchu army to the end, but my father has surrendered and my only choice is to be a disloyal son. Please forgive me.'[2]

At first he operated in Fukien, enjoying the protection of his father. However, as the new commander of the pirate fleet he concentrated his attacks on Manchu shipping. He then followed this up with a more aggressive policy, leading rebel forces in a series of raids and amphibious attacks against Manchu territory. Inevitably the military might of the Manchus meant that he was forced back, and eventually had to abandon the mainland of Fukien. He took refuge just off the coast in Chinmen, a port in the Amoy Islands, where the Manchus were unable to reach him. A military stalemate followed that lasted for a decade, although Koxinga still served as a focal point for anti-Manchu resistance.

The high point of his military endeavours came in 1659, when he led a pirate fleet up the Yangtse River as part of a combined rebel assault on the Manchu capital of Nanking (Nanjing). The enterprise was a disaster, as the Manchus were able to trap the pirate fleet in the river, and then destroyed it using massed batteries of artillery. Koxinga managed to escape, but the rebel cause was lost. While Koxinga's anti-Manchu resistance is verified by historical sources, the suspicion is that his exploits have been exaggerated by later historians. He is often portrayed as a sort of Chinese Robin Hood figure, whereas the truth was probably quite different.

The Dutch traders who operated in the region certainly painted a somewhat different picture. While they describe Koxinga as a rebel, they suggest that politics were only a secondary concern for him. First and foremost, Koxinga was a pirate. The Amoy Islands (then called the Zsu-ming prefecture) just off the coast of Fukien provided him with an ideal base for operations. While the Manchus dominated the mainland, including his father's province of Fukien, Koxinga ruled the seas – and ran his pirate empire. He continued his father's policy of offering protection money to merchants from Korea to Vietnam, while his pirate junks attacked anyone who refused to pay. Unlike his father, Koxinga was prepared to take on the Dutch, who reported to Amsterdam that Koxinga's pirate junks regularly attacked Dutch shipping, off both the Penghu

Islands and also the new Dutch colony of Taiwan. For a decade he maintained complete control over the coastal waters from the Mekong Delta to the mouth of the Yangtse.

The disaster at Nanking in 1659 meant that for the first time, Koxinga was on the strategic defensive. His naval power had been weakened, and there was now no guarantee that the Manchus would not commit their overwhelming resources to an assault on the Amoy Islands, whose proximity to the Chinese mainland made them an obvious target. He also lost his one ally in Fukien when, in 1661, the Manchus executed his father in retaliation for his son's resistance. This meant that Koxinga needed a more secure base.

In 1661 he launched an amphibious attack on Formosa, landing on the southern tip of the island near the modern city of Kao-hsiung. The Dutch had built a powerful fortress – Fort Zeelandia – on a sandy spit which defended their main settlement of Oranjestad (Orange City, now Tai-nan). On 30 April Koxinga blockaded the settlement with a fleet of 400 pirate junks, while his army of 25,000 men laid siege to the fort. The siege that followed lasted for nine months, but with no prospect of relief, and most of his 2,000-man garrison stricken by thirst, hunger and disease, Governor Coylett had no option but to surrender. On 1 February 1662 the Dutch surrendered Formosa to Koxinga, who accepted control of the island in the name of the Ming Dynasty.

The capture of Formosa was a triumph for the pirate chief, but he did not live long enough to enjoy the spoils of war. Later that year he died of malaria, although there were rumours that his death was the result of a seizure, following a disagreement with his son. Today, Kuo Hsing Yeh (Koxinga) is seen as a hero, both in Taiwan and in mainland China, where his reputation as a defender of Ming culture and civilization seems to have outweighed his crimes as a pirate warlord. Taiwan even boasts a shrine to Koxinga, which makes him the only pirate ever to be considered a religious deity. After his death Koxinga's pirate empire was taken over by his son Cheng Ching or Zheng Jing (1642–81), who held Formosa against the Manchus for two more decades. However, he was unable to hold together the great pirate fleet, and it fragmented soon after Koxinga's death. This left Formosa open to invasion, and in 1681 the Manchus overran the Amoy and Penghu Islands, and then attacked Formosa. Cheng Ching died fighting the invaders, and although his followers continued fighting for another two years after his death, the island eventually fell to the Manchus.

THE GREAT PIRATE CONFEDERATION

After the collapse of the great pirate empire of Koxinga, piracy in Chinese waters became a fragmented business, in which no one pirate chief or warlord was able to unite the various groups under a single banner. This lasted for a century, a period when individual provincial rulers acted as both pirates and traders, and when their influence extended no further than the boundaries of their own territorial waters. Then Cheng Yih appeared, and within a decade he had created a pirate empire that rivalled that of Koxinga.[3]

As the son of a Chinese pirate operating in Vietnamese waters, Cheng Yih (or Zheng Shi, 1765–1807) was literally born into the business. In fact it has been suggested that his family had been pirates for generations, although this was probably little more than an attempt to link his empire with that of Koxinga. This was a time when Vietnam was in turmoil, as the Tay Son rebels were busy wresting control of the country from the Nguyen lords, who had ruled it for centuries. Cheng's rise was set against the backdrop of this conflict, and by the time it ended the pirate had become the leading maritime power in Vietnamese waters. However, the re-establishment of order meant that his presence would soon be considered a threat to the new Vietnamese rulers. Consequently in 1801 he moved his operation along the coast to the Chinese province of Guangdong (Kwangtung), a centre for the opium trade. In the process he took control of the smaller pirate fleets he encountered along the coast, and so his power grew as he headed east.

In April 1804 he took on the Portuguese, and blockaded their trading port of Macao for at least two months, defeating a small Portuguese squadron sent to break the pirate blockade. This prompted the British to intervene, and the following year the Royal Navy began escorting British shipping and that of their political allies in the waters off Hong Kong, Macao and other European enclaves on the Chinese coast. However, the threat posed by Cheng Yih was still growing. In 1805 he formed a pirate confederation, uniting the Chinese pirates who operated along the coast of the South China Sea into one mighty pirate empire. He divided this force into six fleets, each known by a colour – black, white, red, blue, yellow and green. Each fleet was also given a particular area to operate in, which helped ensure that the fleets would not fight each other, or interfere in each other's operation.

Cheng Yih retained a nominal control over the other pirate fleets, but he kept control of his original fleet for himself. This force of some 200 pirate junks

became the 'Red Flag Fleet', and was based in the provincial capital of Canton (now Guangzou). By the time of his death in 1807, Cheng Yih's Red Flag Fleet had trebled in size – some 600 pirate junks crewed by some 30,000 men, making it the largest pirate fleet in the South China Sea. Of course this was only part of his power base – in time of need he could also count on the rest of his pirate confederation, whose commanders had agreed to help each other in time of difficulty. That meant that Cheng Yih could call upon as many as 1,200 junks and 150,000 men – the largest pirate confederation in history. Protection money was demanded from Chinese merchants and coastal communities, and Cheng Yih's junks seemed able to roam at will, attacking ships or demanding payment with impunity.

The reason Cheng Yih could get away with this was that the Chinese government had failed miserably in its attempts to deal with piracy. In fact it
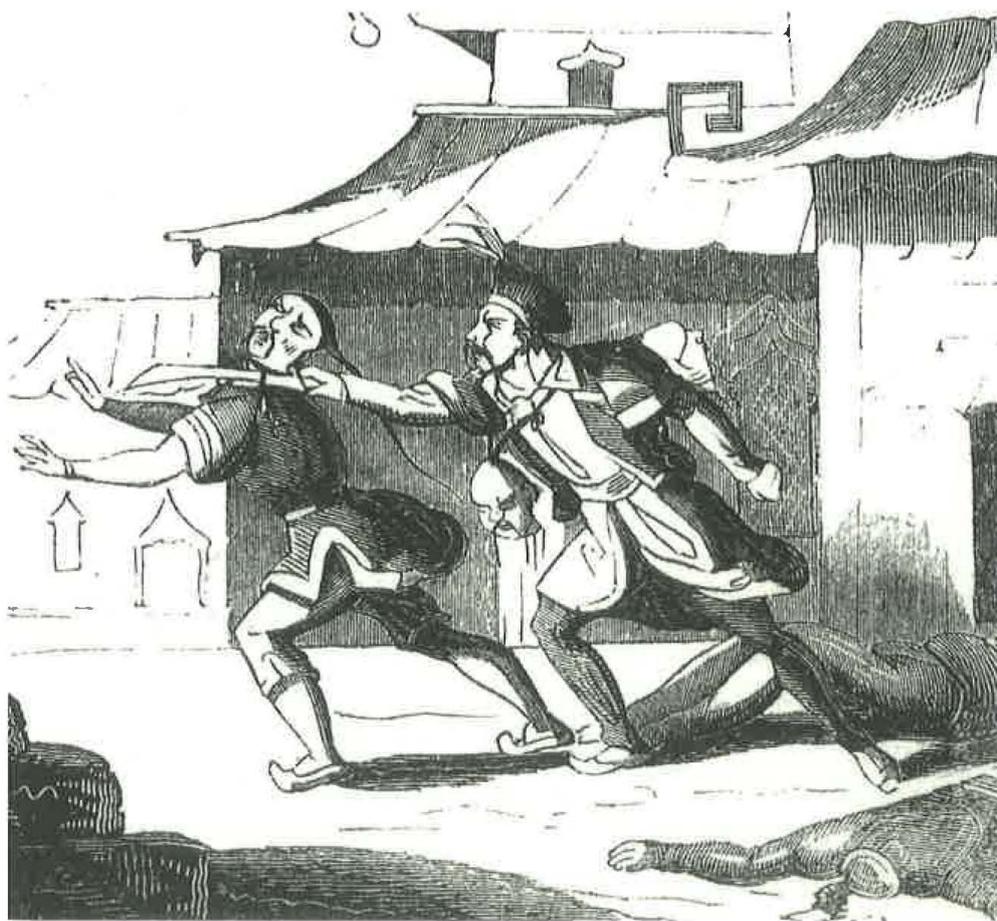
Chinese pirates depicted running amok in a coastal village during the early 19th century.

seemed more intent on limiting the impact of European traders than it did on protecting its own national trade routes. Any Imperial response to the pirate threat required the support of provincial governors, many of whom were either in league with the pirates or were pirate leaders themselves. In the event that sufficient force could be gathered for a punitive expedition, Cheng Yih simply gathered his forces. If one pirate fleet was threatened, the other coloured fleets would be summoned, and the threat would be repelled. In effect the pirate confederation was invulnerable to attack. However, after his attack on the Portuguese, Cheng Yih was at pains to discourage attacks on European traders. After all, while he might be able to deal with the forces of the Chinese emperor, the combined naval might of these foreigners might be a different matter entirely.

Cheng Yih was at the height of his power when he died in late 1807, probably by being washed overboard during a storm. His wife Cheng Shi (or Zheng Yih Sao, which means wife of Cheng Yih) took over control of the Red Flag Fleet, and somehow managed to hold together the rest of the pirate confederation. She is also sometimes referred to as the 'Widow Cheng', or as 'Madam Cheng'. She was aided in this takeover by Cheung Po Tsai (or Chang Po), the young male lover (and adopted son) of her husband Cheng Yih, who duly transferred his allegiance and affections to the pirate leader's wife.[4] According to tradition Madam Cheng first came to the attention of the pirate leader when she worked as a prostitute in Canton. She went on to rule a pirate empire.

Madam Cheng proved to be a natural pirate leader, and over the next few years she developed a reputation for ferocity and skill, building the Red Flag Fleet up into a force of some 800 pirate junks, and completely dominating the coastal waters from Hainan as far as Formosa. Unlike her husband, Madam Cheng refused to be intimidated by the Europeans. In September 1809 she kidnapped a group of seven British seamen from an East Indiaman anchored off Canton. They were eventually released after a ransom was paid, and one of them – Richard Glasspole – left an account of his experiences. He described the code of laws under which Madam Cheng governed, in which theft, disobedience or rape was punishable by death, and lesser crimes such as desertion involved the cutting off of an ear, a thumb or even a limb. The result of this severity, according to Glasspole, was to create a force that was disciplined, resolute and united.

However, the whole empire started to break down. Unable to defeat the pirates on the high seas, the Chinese authorities adopted a 'carrot and stick' approach. First came the stick – supervised by Pai Ling, the new provincial

THE CHINESE PIRATES

governor of Guangdong. He declared war against the pirates operating around Canton, and solicited European help to defeat them. First he resettled thousands of inhabitants of coastal settlements further inland, thereby denying the pirates a source of revenue and provisions. Supported by European warships and a flotilla of fireships, the Cantonese fleet cleared the local waters of pirates by the end of the year. Then came the carrot. The emperor offered a pardon to all Chinese pirates, and the terms were generous enough to be tempting. One of the first to accept the offer was Cheung Po Tsai, who defected to Pai Ling in early 1810, taking most of the Red Flag Fleet with him. This was a severe blow to Cheng Shi, who had just been elected as the new head of the great pirate confederation. In theory that made her one of the most powerful women in China. In reality her world was falling apart.

The pirate leader Madam Cheng (Cheng Shi, or Zheng Yih Sao) took over control of a large pirate fleet in the early 19th century, and went on to rule the largest pirate confederation in China.

299

The confederation was in disarray, as many saw the benefits of accepting the pardon, which opened up lucrative Imperial markets that had hitherto been denied to the pirates. Worse, the five remaining coloured banner fleets began fighting one another, as some accepted the pardon – and Imperial rewards – while others held out. Some, like Cheung Po Tsai, became pirate-hunters, and actively campaigned against their former comrades. By the end of the year Cheng Shi was forced to admit defeat, and she accepted the pardon herself. However, she was allowed to retain her own small force of ships and men, and she remained an influential figure in Guangdong; for the next three decades she ran the biggest opium smuggling operation on the Chinese coast. For his part, Cheung Po Tsai went on to become a highly respected Imperial admiral, although it was still suggested that he never quite turned his back on his old piratical ways.

SHAP'-NG-TSAI

The threat of piracy receded slightly during the early 19th century, but it never went away completely. The Chinese policy of bribing regional officials and their 'carrot and stick' policy clearly reaped dividends. However, three decades after the collapse of Cheng Shi's great pirate confederation, the Europeans and the Chinese had come to blows, the friction caused by the import of Indian opium into China on board British ships. When the Chinese seized ships carrying the drug, the British reacted with military force, initiating a conflict known as the First Opium War (1839–42). It ended with the Chinese being forced to sign a humiliating trade agreement that further opened up the country to European trade. Hong Kong Island was occupied by the British in 1841, and was formally ceded to Britain a year later. Canton also became an open port, and by 1843 it became the centre of a thriving opium trade. From there the drug was smuggled along the coast to other ports, and by encouraging smugglers the trade also encouraged piracy – an occupation adopted by many smugglers in their spare time.[5]

While the Chinese navy should have been powerful enough to deal with this problem, its recent encounter with the Royal Navy had left it defeated and demoralized, in no condition to fight a major anti-piracy campaign beyond the waters surrounding the major ports. Shap'-ng-Tsai was one such smuggler-turned-pirate, who was based in Tien-pai (sometimes called Tin Pak – now Dianbai), in the western corner of Guangdong province, and 175 miles west of Hong Kong. He offered protection to smugglers in exchange for money, and

during the 1840s this business expanded until he was able to extort payment from coastal shipping operating between Hainan Island and Canton, and from many coastal communities in between.

By 1849 his fleet had grown to 70 pirate junks, and his protection racket had been extended as far as Vietnam. Then he made the mistake of attacking 'treaty' vessels – the European and American carriers who shipped opium into the 'treaty ports'. He captured one American and three British opium-carrying clipper ships, which led to a panic in the treaty ports that disrupted trade. If Shap'-ng-Tsai had limited his piratical attacks and the extortion of protection money to Chinese victims then the foreigners would probably have left him alone. However, an attack against Western ships was a completely different matter.

In September 1849 the Royal Navy commander of the Hong Kong Squadron was given orders to attack the pirate lair – a punitive expedition that had been demanded by the East India Company, whose shipping had been disrupted. Consequently the Scottish-born Commander John Hay led a squadron of steam warships into Tien-pai, only to find the pirates had already fled. Tipped off by his spies in Hong Kong, Shap'-ng-Tsai had led his pirate fleet westwards towards the safety of Haiphong in Vietnam, leaving Commander Hay with nothing to show for his efforts except the destruction of the pirate base and the recapture of around 100 trading junks, which had been held in the port while the pirates waited for their owners to pay a ransom for them. He also destroyed a secondary pirate base at Bias Bay, between Macao and Tien-pai.

According to Admiralty law these captured junks were now prizes of the Royal Navy, and once the expedition returned to Hong Kong they were sold in auction to the highest bidder. In this case the bidder turned out to be none other than an agent of Shap'-ng-Tsai, who simply recouped the cost of the sale from the ship owners – and added a substantial handling fee in lieu of his lost ransom. It was clear that a second naval expedition would be needed to deal with the pirate fleet, so once again Commander Hay was ordered into action.

In late October his squadron tracked the pirates down in the Red River (Hong Ha) Delta, just north of the Vietnamese port of Haiphong. First Commander Hay blockaded the mouth of the river to prevent any escape, and then he led part of his fleet into action against the pirates – three steam warships (including the East India Company armed paddle-steamer *Phlegethon*) – supported by a squadron of Imperial Chinese junks. The pirates were taken by surprise, and their junks were still at anchor when Hay arrived. The battle was therefore

extremely one-sided – steam against sail, shell against roundshot – and by the end of the engagement 58 pirate junks had been captured or sunk. Some 1,800 pirates were killed in the battle, either by British or Chinese gunfire or else by the local Cochin villagers.

As for Shap'-ng-Tsai, he escaped up the Red River in a small junk, one of six to survive the battle. The British were unable to pursue. The Chinese then solved the problem of the pirate being still at large by offering him a pardon. Not only did Shap'-ng-Tsai accept it, but according to some sources he went on to hold a commission in the Imperial navy, helping to scour Chinese waters for pirates. The incident also led to a permanent Royal Navy presence on the Chinese coast, and over the next few years it continued its anti-piracy operations, working in conjunction with the Chinese government and the East India Company. Consequently, by the mid-19th century the waters of the South China Sea were deemed clear of pirates, a victory achieved through a combination of Chinese pragmatism and Western firepower.

Annex 539

Hyunhee Park, "A Buddhist Woodblock-printed Map in 13th Century China", *Crossroads: Studies on the History of Exchange Relations in the East Asian World*, Vol. 1/2 (2010)
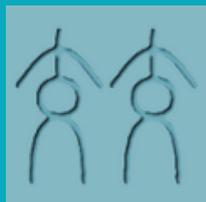
Crossroads

Studies on the History of Exchange
Relations in the East Asian World 縦横　クロスロード　크로스로드

Home > Vol 1/2 (2010) > **Park**

A Buddhist Woodblock-printed Map in 13th Century China

PARK Hyunhee

Introduction

One of the earliest extant woodblock-printed maps in China is the "Dong zhendan dili tu" 東震旦地理圖 (Geographic Map of the Land of China to the East).[1] Being included, along with other maps about regions beyond China, i the Buddhist chronicle *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (General Records of the Founders Buddhism), dated 1265–1270, the map shows the blending of different cultu and geographic knowledge behind its production.[2] The map (as a part of the book) was made by woodblock-printing, a technology that had been in a wid use at that time (see Fig. 1). The map's Buddhist author adopted a circulatin geographic representation of China but shifted its worldview (especially *axis mundi*, i.e., center of the world) to present China at the eastern periphery o the Buddhist world. During the Song Dynasty, government-sponsored mapmakers placed China at the center and foreign countries at the margins the world, which is typical of most extant Chinese maps. However, some contemporary Buddhist scholars drew maps from a different perspective, eve though they used the same geographic knowledge to create them. Maps like "Dong zhendan dili tu" illustrate this well. The map also portrays many place names of foreign countries, including some places in West Asia that are show for the first time. Although few original maps created during the period survi some maps are preserved thanks to the massive volume of book printing in China, including the "Dong zhendan dili tu".

This paper will compare "Dong zhendan dili tu" with earlier maps (both woodblock-prints and stone steles) and written contemporary geographic accounts in order to examine the geographic information and to trace the sources of place names. Through this analysis, this paper will explore pattern of complex cultural transmission, focusing on the following four points; first, Buddhism's challenge to the traditional Chinese worldview; second, the exte of Chinese geographic knowledge about China and the world beyond; third, t contribution of Chinese woodblock-printing to the map's wide circulation; an fourth, the transmission of the map and its geographical knowledge to broad East Asia.
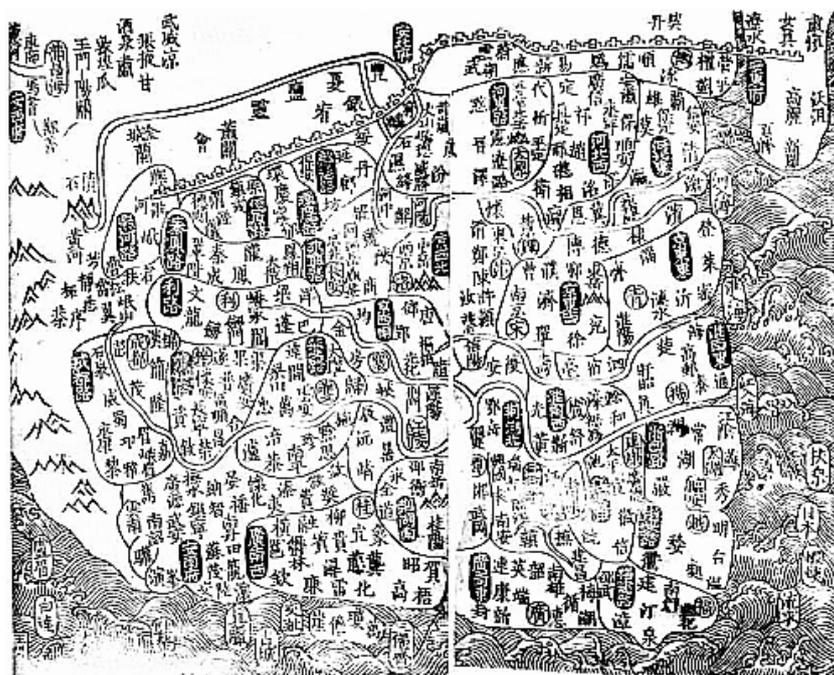
Fig. 1: "Dong zhendan dili tu" (in *Fozu tongji*)

1 The Challenge from Buddhism in Worldview

National self-perceptions often reflect their sense of cultural superiority. This
was true of Han Chinese, who shared the belief that China was the center of
the world and the source of all civilization and learning.[3] Yet the very title o
the Buddhist map, "Dong zhendan dili tu", challenges this tradition by positir
different worldview drawn from Buddhism, a religion introduced from India,
foreign country located to the west of China. The term "zhendan" 震旦 was
mainly used in Buddhist texts as a name for China.[4] In order to understand
alternative cosmology that locates China to the east of the ultimate center o
the Buddhist world – the lake of Anavatapta 阿耨達池 – it is useful to look fo
clues in texts like the *Fozu tongji* and the maps that are contained in this
volume.

The *Fozu tongji* chronicles the history of Buddhism from 581 to 960 CE, and
follows the format of Chinese official histories, including Imperial annals (*bei*
本紀), genealogies (*shijia* 世家), biographies (*liezhuan* 傳), tables (*biao* 表), a
monographs/treatises (*zhi* 志).[5] It was written by the Song Buddhist monk a
scholar Zhipan 志磐, and published in woodblock form between 1265 and 12
Thirty-six of the original fifty-four sewn chapters (*juan* 卷) survive; these
chapters cover general Buddhist knowledge as well as the doctrines of the
Tiantai school (*Tiantai zong* 天台宗), one of the most important schools of
Buddhism in China and East Asia at large. Zhipan compiled the text seeking
justify the authenticity of Tiantai against the Chan school (*chanzong* 禪宗), a
growing rival.[6] Chapters 31 and 32 of the *Fozu tongji*, entitled "Shijie mingti
zhi" 世界名體志 (An Account of Places and Shape of the World), includes elev
maps as a supplement to the text. Chapter 31 discusses the total image and
structure of the Buddhist universe, starting with a description of the greater
universe and ultimately focusing on the imaginary Mount Meru (chin. Xumi s
須彌山), the place where Jambudvīpa[7] (chin. Zhanbu zhou 瞻部洲), the world
human beings, lies.[8] The set includes five pictorial maps that illustrate narra
descriptions of Buddhist cosmology, among which "Sanqian daqian shijie tu"
千大千世界圖 (Map of the Entire Universe) depicts Mount Meru and Jambudvīp
to the south (See Fig. 2).[9]

Chapter 32 discusses the sensory world and a brief history of China and fore
countries, and includes six maps. Three of the maps, among them "Dong
zhendan dili tu", are geographic maps of the world of the living (which we w
discuss below), presented as Jambudvīpa.[10]

須彌山

北方八天
西方八天　帝釋天宮　東方八天
南方八天

帝釋身長一里衣重六銖
壽一千歲人間百年為一日

四王身長半里衣重半銖
壽五百歲人間五十年為一日

四天王天
忉利天
持覺天
堅手天

金水海

持雙山
持軸山
持水山
善見山
馬耳山
障礙山
持地山

Jambudvīpa ○ (Zhanbu zhou)

南洲

小鐵圍山
大咸水海
金輪
水輪
風輪
空輪
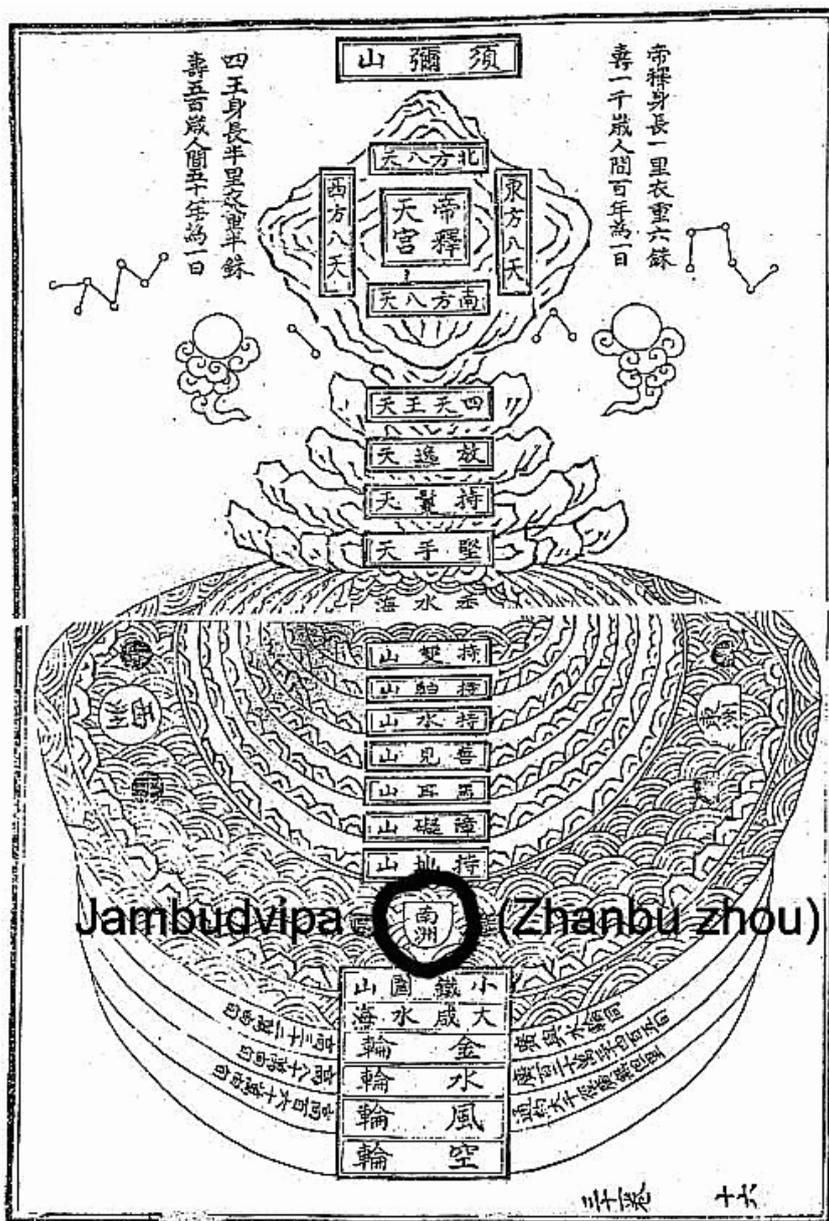
Fig. 2: "Sanqian daqian shijie tu" (in *Fozu tongji*)

Two geographical maps emphasize parts of Jambudvīpa outside China, demonstrating that Buddhist authors held more interest in envisioning territo beyond China than did contemporary Chinese authors. "Han xiyu zhuguo tu" 西域諸國圖 (Map of the States in the Western Regions during the Han Dynast charts the western regions known to the Chinese during the Han period (see Fig. 3),[11] while "Xitu wuyin zhi tu" 西土五印之圖 (Map of the Five Indian State the West) plots the sites in Central Asia and India visited by the famous Tan dynasty Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (c. 602/603–664) during his nineteer year pilgrimage to India in the mid-seventh century (see Fig. 4).[12]

Zhipan (or the real cartographer of the map) drew the above-mentioned ma based on earlier texts, like "Han xiyu zhuguo tu" and *Da Tang xiyou ji* 大唐西 域記 (The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions), for each map.[13] The locations of countries are relatively accurate compared to the written source "Xitu wuyin zhi tu" shows the Buddhist author's direct interest in the original land of his religion, India (chin. Tianzhu 天竺).[14] Although it clearly bears realistic information about places names and their location in India and surrounding countries, the map is nonetheless drawn from a Buddhist perspective. At an approximate center of the map lies the lake called Anavatapta, which is located at the center of Jambudvīpa (chin. Zhanbu zho 部洲), the world where human beings live according to Buddhist tradition.[15]

Fig. 3: "Han Xiyu zhuguo tu" (in *Fozu tongji*)

Fig. 4: "Xitu wuyin zhi tu" (in *Fozu tongji*)

In contrast to these two maps, "Dong zhendan dili tu" focuses largely on Ch
Yet the map, which follows the Buddhist tradition that situates China to the
west of the center of the world, clearly differs from contemporaneous Chines
maps with their orientation of China at the world's center. This suggests that
Buddhism, a foreign religion introduced to China several centuries earlier,
challenged the conventional sinocentric worldview.[16] A text in "Dong zhenda
dili tu" explains all of these challenges: [17]

談天地之極際者, 無若佛經。(…)
When we talk about the structure and the size of (or the end of) the entire
universe, we can refer to nothing other than Buddhism. (…)

After explaining the geography of China from this Buddhist perspective, Zhip
criticizes the Confucian (*rujia* 儒家) worldview.

世儒謂之中國。且據此地。自論四方之中耳。儒家談地止及萬里。則不知五竺之殷盛西海
截也。(…)
Confucians always regard this land [the land that Zhipan just described] as
China. They only discuss the inside landscapes of China, depending heavily u
what they regard as the land of China. When such Confucians talk about the
land [or the earth or the world], however, their knowledge cannot go miles

miles further away [from what they call China]. In other words, they know
neither the prosperity of five [regions] of India nor what the West Sea is like
(…)

Zhipan also criticizes the Daoists' discussion about the world[18] which, he
argues, is only bound to the worlds of heaven, earth, and humans (*Sanjing*
三境) and cannot understand the true structure of this world (illustrated in Fi
1). He concludes his discussion with the following remark:[19]

是則談天地之極際者。非憑佛經。不足以盡其致也。
Accordingly, if those who talk about the structure and the size of (or the end
of) the entire universe do not depend upon Buddhism, their knowledge is no
enough to describe the world.

In this light, "Dong zhendan dili tu" shows only a small part of Jambudvīpa i
the east and a smaller part of a much larger universe.

In fact, "Dong zhendan dili tu" shares a rich geographic knowledge about Ch
with a fairly accurate sketch of the contour of the whole of China and foreig
places seen in earlier and contemporary Chinese maps made by earlier
Confucian scholar-officials who were mostly sponsored by the Chinese
government. Although the map is drawn from a Buddhist perspective, its aut
drew on China based geographic knowledge that had accumulated for centur
Comparing this map with both earlier and contemporaneous extant maps,
therefore, will demonstrate what kind of foundational geographic knowledge
been circulating among Chinese scholars by the time of the map's production
and how Buddhist scholars adopted and modified popular geographical
knowledge. It also provides an opportunity to contrast Confucian and Buddh
worldviews through maps like the *Fozu tongji*.

2 Reflections of Contemporary Chinese Geographic Knowledge about China and the World Beyond

"Dong zhendan dili tu" largely depicts the political divisions and administrati
districts that existed during the Northern Song dynasty. The foundational ma
that provided the basis for "Dong zhendan dili tu" were probably maps that
reflected these features.[20] Yet no such possible direct foundational maps
survive, so we have to compare the map with earlier extant maps.

In fact, "Dong zhendan dili tu" looks quite similar to several Song-period ma
that circulated decades earlier. The earliest surviving woodblock-printed map
China can be found in an atlas entitled *Lidai dili zhizhang tu* 歷代地理指掌圖
(Handy Geographical Maps throughout the Ages), the earliest surviving maps
entire China proper, which dates somewhere between 1098 and 1100.[21] Fort
four maps constitute the atlas. Except for two star charts, each map shows t
clear contours of China proper, and focuses on a range of topics that include
the administrative systems of different dynasties and basic topography, and
provides narrative explanations at the right and left boundaries of the map.
map in question, "Dong zhendan dili tu", systematically describes the
administrative districts that existed within China at the time, including the
names of circuits (*lu* 路) in black and white, and the names of larger prefect
(*fu* 府) within circles. One map in the atlas, entitled "Shengchao Yuanfeng jiu
tu" 聖朝元豐九域圖 (Geographic Map of the Reign of Yuan Feng), similarly plot
the administrative districts that existed during the Yuanfeng 元豐 reign (1078
1085), without the embellishments of "Dong zhendan dili tu" like foreign pla
and illustrations of sea waves. Another map in this collection that contains
similar features is the first map, entitled "Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu" 古今
區域摠要圖 (General Survey Map of Chinese and Non-Chinese Territories from
Past through the Present) (see Fig. 5).

As the title reveals, "Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu" shows the geographical,
historical, and administrative sites that were important to its time. We can
assume that the map represents the sum of geographic knowledge accumula
by the time of the map's production. It might not have been easy for reader
to identify which geographic information belongs to which period in history
without the help of narrative explanations set on the accompanying text in t
left side that gives us information from earlier periods. For example, the not
the upper left-hand side of the map cites place names of the western region
some of which, it explains, were conquered by Tang Taizong and Gaozong (r
649–683); these include Kucha 茲, Wusun 烏孫, Loulan 樓蘭, Kashgar 踈勒,
Shache 莎車, and Khotan 于闐 in Central Asia. Therefore, these particular pla

names obviously date back to the Tang dynasty or even earlier. The map als[...]
portrays other foreign countries in East, South, and Southeast Asia that had
some commercial (and for some, even close diplomatic) relations with China[...]
these include Jurchen 眞, Bohai 渤海, the three kingdoms of Korea (Silla 新羅[...]
Baekje 百濟, Go[gu]ryeo 高[句]麗), Japan 日本, Ryūkyū 流求 (modern 琉球), E[...]
蝦蜻 (modern 蝦夷; an old name for the northern part of Japan), Sumatra, Ja[...]
Champa 占城, and India (Tianzhu 天竺). A separate set of annotations attach[...]
to the map provides further geographic information that served as a foundat[...]
for this map; among the hundreds of foreign place names it lists are Bosi 波[...]
(Persia) and Dashi大食 (Arabia)[22] in West Asia.[23]

Fig. 5: "Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu" (in *Lidai dili zhizhang tu*)

When did the Chinese acquire such rich geographic knowledge as reflected i[...]
"Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu"? Although no map of all China proper from th[...]
first millennium survives (not to mention foreign regions), the written
geographic accounts of official histories show that the Chinese accumulated
geographic knowledge of China and some territories beyond it through
continuous contacts that facilitated during the first millennium (or even
earlier).[24] This comprehensive geographic knowledge advanced enormously
during the Tang dynasty (618–907), which helped to solidify the reunificatio[...]
China and promote the cosmopolitan culture it gained by its political expans[...]
and cultural influence in neighboring countries. The most representative
geographic works produced in this historical context are treatises and maps
written by Jia Dan 賈耽 (729–805), the most prominent figure in the history[...]
early Chinese geography. Jia Dan was a prime minister and renowned
geographer at a time when the Tang dynasty was at its prime. According to[...]
biography in the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (New History of the Tang Dynasty), he[...]
himself never traveled to foreign countries, although he was interested in
geography from childhood.[25] Yet, while he was serving as a minister of the[...]
Honglu si 鴻臚寺 (Court of State Ceremonial), which received visitors from
foreign countries under the tribute system, he collected information in order[...]
write geographic works about various regions. Only pieces of his geographic
accounts survive by being included in the geography section (*dili* 地理) of th[...]
Xin Tangshu. His thorough accounts of the routes that existed between Chin[...]
and foreign lands at the time show how knowledgeable and familiar he was[...]
the geography of foreign lands.[26] In addition to his geographic treatises, Jia[...]
Dan also drew maps like the "Hainei huayi tu" 海內華夷圖 (Map of Chinese an[...]
Non-Chinese Territories in the World).[27] A written description in *Xin Tangshu*[...]
states that the map measured approximately nine meters in width and ten
meters in length.[28] While this map does not survive, we have clear evidence
that Jia Dan's map greatly influenced the creator of the "Hainei huayi tu". F[...]
example, an annotation states that the map only shows the most important
foreign places out of hundreds of these names that were listed by Jia Dan.[29]

Two other maps drawn a little later in time were probably also based on Jia[...]
Dan's map. These are two distinct maps engraved on the two sides of a ston[...]
tablet in 1136, called "Yuji tu" 禹跡圖 (The Tracks of Yu) and "Huayi tu" 華夷[...]
(Map of Chinese and Non-Chinese Territories) (see Fig. 6).[30]

Along with the maps in *Lidai dili zhizhang tu*, the "Yuji tu" and "Huayi tu" ar
among the earliest surviving maps that portray all of China. In particular, "Y
tu", which was engraved on the front side of the tablet, is the earliest extan
map to use a grid. The text of the map clearly states that the grid served as
general measure of distance, saying that "[a side of] each square converts t
one hundred *li* 里".[31] The map proves that the Chinese cartographers employ
a surprisingly high level of map-making skill and mapped their own territory
quite accurately. The development of the grid system is credited to Pei Xiu 裴
(224–271), considered "the father of geography" because his systematic
principles for drawing precise maps were adopted by later geographers. Ther
have been scholarly debates on the question whether his six standards for m
making included the use of a grid system, yet available evidence suggests th
the use of a grid as a general measure of distance developed perhaps even
before Pei Xiu lived. In any case, the method was continuously adopted by
Chinese cartographers in later periods.[32]

The next prominent geographer to follow Pei Xiu's principles was Jia Dan, wh
probably used a grid system for his map-making. We can, therefore, trace ba
the origins of geographical information: Jia Dan's cartographic information a
techniques influenced later mid-Song-period maps like the *Lidai dili zhizhang*
the stele maps, and late Song-period maps like "Dong zhendan dili tu" in *Fo*
*tongji*.
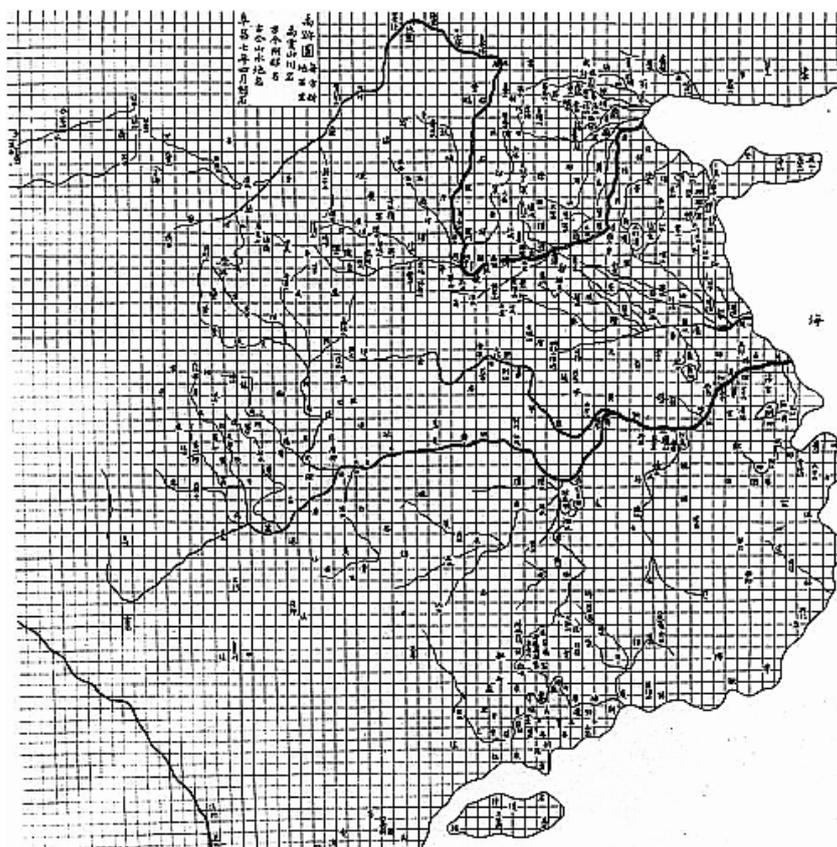
Fig. 6: Ink-line sketch of "Yuji tu" (left) and "Huayi tu" (right), stone tablet
engraved in 1136. 79 cm long and 78 cm wide.

Although "Yuji tu" provides a fairly precise sketch of coastline all the way to
Indochina and the outlines of river systems,[33] it does not contain specific
geographic information about foreign places. In contrast, "Huayi tu", the ma
engraved on the backside of the 1136 tablet, lists foreign place names on its
margins.[34] Interestingly, a note at the bottom-right corner of the Song-perio
"Huayi tu" mentions clearly that the mapmaker took the place names for we
known foreign sites from Jia Dan's "Hainei huayi tu".
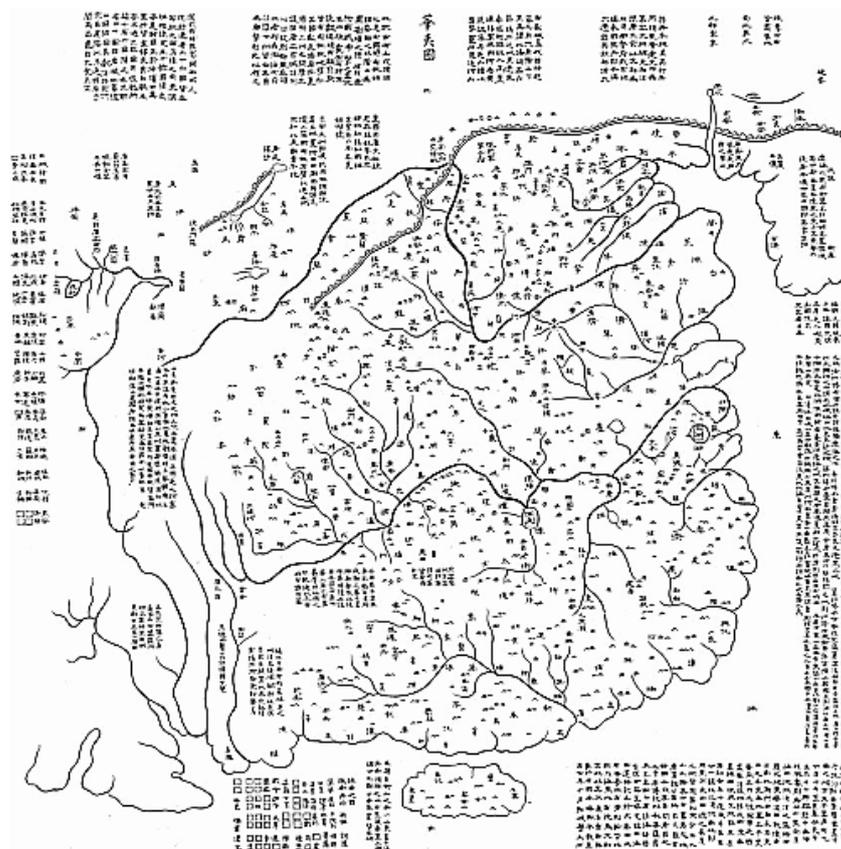
By comparison, a note on "Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu" mentions that the
lists only the most important foreign places out of the hundreds of names lis
by Jia Dan. These two notes from two different maps serve as two independ
pieces of evidence that Jia Dan's "Hainei huayi tu" was indeed big and
comprehensive, and served as the foundation for all later Chinese maps of
China and foreign countries. We can find similarities between these two
surviving maps as well. For example, the upper left-hand note about foreign
places supplementing the map is similar to that found in "Huayi tu", an
indication that they used the same foundational map.[35] The coastline of Chin
and depictions of rivers in the two maps are also similar to each other, as th
are to the later "Dong zhendan dili tu".

"Dong zhendan dili tu" was not simply a copy of maps from the 1130s: it
incorporated updates from the early thirteenth century as well. The twenty-e
circuits (lu 路) shown in the map were established only in 1225, which provic
the earliest date for the map's composition. This map was drawn between 1
and 1270.

The map's foreign place names are also up to date. Among a total of 430 pl
names, about 20 are the names of foreign countries. Except for the Korean
Peninsula, the foreign countries are all drawn as islands in the surrounding
western sea. These foreign place names include those found in "Huayi tu" an
Lidai dili zhizhang tu, such as Fusang 扶桑, Japan 日本 (Japan), Ezo 蝦蛦 (mod
蝦夷), Ryūkyū 流求 (today written 琉球), Sanfoqi 三佛齊 (the base of the Strai
of Melaka centered Srivijaya realm at Palembang), Champa 占城 (mid-southe
Vietnam), Jiaozhi 交趾 (Northern Vietnam), Zhenla 眞臘 (Cambodia), Dashi 大
(Arabia), and Shepo 闍婆 (Java). These also include Baida 白達 (Baghdad)[36]
Lumei 盧眉 (Rūm: The Roman [Byzantine] Empire) that do not appear in the
previous maps, yet they are described in contemporary written sources as
important foreign countries in the west with which China enjoyed trade
relations. For example, the two most important Song-period sources about
China's maritime relations, Zhou Qufei's 周去非 Lingwai daida 嶺外代答 (Notes
from the Land beyond the Passes) [1178] and Zhao Rugua's 趙汝适 Zhufan z
諸蕃志 (Description of the Foreign Lands) [1225], both have sections that
describe countries in the Western Indian Ocean, including Baghdad and Rūm
These accounts, which provide rich information about trading countries, trad
goods, sailing navigation, and the geography of sea routes, show that the so

of Chinese participation in foreign trade rose high during the period. Clearly, Buddhist author of "Dong zhendan dili tu" incorporated recently acquired Chinese knowledge about foreign countries that he found in contemporary geographic works and used to update this map. It also suggests that books containing this kind of geographic information circulated widely. The "Dong zhendan dili tu" and its contemporary sources may be taken as a hint that t extensive circulation of geographical books arose from the development of Chinese woodblock-printing publication.

3 The Contribution of Chinese Woodblock Printing to the Wide Circulation of Zhipan's Map

"Dong zhendan dili tu" was published in the *Fozu tongji*, a Buddhist compendium that was not printed under the sponsorship of the Chinese government or any influential scholar-official. However, the map received a genuine opportunity to circulate widely thanks to the large distribution of *Fo. tongji*. In the postscript (刊板後記) of the great Buddhist record, the mapmal Zhipan explains how the editor complied and printed the book. He explains t the number of printed copies of *Fozu tongji* numbered more than 200,000, a clear indication of its wide circulation among literati.[38] The earliest surviving version preserved by the National Library of China is one made between 126 and 1270 during the Southern Song period. It is not surprising to see the m circulate through printing because book-publishing using woodblock-printing technology had been developed for centuries by the time *Fozu tongji* was produced.

What do we know about other types of maps that used different methods of dissemination? An abbreviated version of Jia Dan's map examined above wa engraved on a stone tablet in 1136. Stone tablets can definitely endure mucl longer than silk or paper maps, of course. People could have looked at the original stone maps in their location, but reproductions could also be made easily by making rubbings. The important Song-period encyclopedia *Yuhai* 玉 (Sea of Jade), compiled by Wang Yinglin 王應臨 (1223–1296), mentions an interesting episode about a copy of "Huayi tu" that the Song-dynasty Emper Xiaozong 孝宗 (r. 1162–1189) tried to make on a folding screen at his palac Although we do not know if this map was a printed copy of the engraved ma of the same title, we can assume that similar maps with the same title and similar contents were widely circulated by reproduction and that they were connected with each other. We have another copy of "Yuji tu" (which was engraved on the front side of the same tablet that contains "Huayi tu" in another surviving stone tablet that was set elsewhere in 1152, and is almost identical to the earlier tablet of 1136. The two copies of "Yuji tu" both contai the territories of the sixteen prefectures near Beijing taken by the Jurchen Ji dynasty (1115–1234), which probably reflects the strong desire of the Song literati to take back these Jurchen-ruled northern territories.[40]

With regard to the quantity of printed maps produced, printing by rubbing c not have matched woodblock printing. Most of the earliest surviving maps in China from the Song period are woodblock prints, and they were often inclu in books that circulated widely through numerous reprints. The earliest survi woodblock printed maps are those found in the *Lidai dili zhizhang tu*, which dates back to ca. 1098–1100. A Song author named Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (c 1183–1262) mentioned in his *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題 (Zhizhai's Bibliographical Introduction of Books) that Emperor Zhezong 哲宗 (1085–110 ordered Shui Anli 稅安禮 to compile the atlas. Chen Zhensun continues sayin that Shui Anli died before he was able to formally submit the compilation to emperor, and the publisher printed it without mentioning Shui's name and without his preface, making thus the authorship unclear.[41] This episode shov how this government-sponsored atlas was published and distributed for a broader readership. We are not sure how many different versions of the atla existed, but according to Song-dynasty references, several different sets of blocks were created. The earliest Song-dynasty block-print version of the tex dated 1265–1270, is currently preserved in Japan. The earliest surviving bloc printed version preserved in China was printed during the Ming Dynasty, and differs from the Song version with regard to both content and spelling. [42] Because this type of cartographic work was carved in a small woodblock, ead map is simplified and less detailed than that of the larger stone tablet maps. However, these wood-block printed maps and paper-prints of various version of the map collection could lead to its larger distribution and ultimately contribute to wider circulation of geographic knowledge. This atlas, along wit

other geographic works, was among the list of books that people had to rea
preparation for the civil service examinations from the Song dynasty on.[43] V
can assume that the Song literati used the maps not only to learn geograph
about the Chinese Empire but also to discuss political issues such as the
northern territories lost to the Jurchens.[44] All of the evidence hints that the
maps was printed massively many times over and circulated widely among
literati, leading to the wide dissemination of geographic knowledge about Ch

All the extant maps from the later Song dynasty show that, while map
productions were led mainly by government during the Tang and early Song
dynasty, this trend changed by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and map
production became largely the domain of local elites, a trend that ultimately
to a gradual increase in geographic knowledge about wider regions at broade
class levels.[45] While most of these maps apparently helped Confucian schola
to perceive China's geography from a sinocentric perspective, maps of other
types created by some specific religious groups distributed less biased
knowledge about China and beyond by incorporating elements from other
cultures. "Dong zhendan dili tu" serves as a representative case of the effect
of Buddhist influence. Other cases, such as maps produced from Daoist
perspectives, another dominant philosophical and religious tradition in East A
that originated in China, will have to be left for future studies.

Thanks to the woodblock printing of all these maps which favoured their larg
distribution, substantial geographic knowledge circulated widely throughout
China at the beginning of the second millennium. Chinese literati were not th
only ones who benefitted from this chance to read the work and enlarged th
geographic knowledge of China and other countries. *Fozu tongji* was among
many works that were exported to other countries in East Asia, especially
Japan.

4 The Transmission of the Map to East Asia at Large

Contemporary Japanese sources testify to the import of geographic works to
Japan. According to an entry in a diary written by Fujiwara Yorinaga 藤原賴長
(1120–1156), in 1150 a merchant from the Song dynasty, Liu Wenchong
劉文冲, delivered two sets of *Lidai dili zhizhang tu* to the government.[46] The
earliest extant copy of the Song-Dynasty *Lidai dili zhizhang tu* can be found
Japan's Oriental Library (Tōyō Bunko 東洋文庫). Other significant maps surviv
into the present only by virtue of their preservation in Japan; one example
includes "Yudi tu" 輿地圖 (General Map of China), which was preserved in
Kuritoge Abbey 栗棘庵 in the Tōfuku Temple 東福寺 in Kyōto, Japan.[47]

All the above cases serve as clear examples of the transmission of culture a
knowledge between the countries that had extensive contacts. The *Fozu ton*
was no exception. The Japanese monks in Namzen Temple 南禪寺 in Kyōto
reprinted an entire copy of *Fozu tongji*.[48] There is no doubt that "Dong zhen
dili tu" was circulating in Japan at the same time, to some degree. An
interesting demonstration of the influence of Buddhist cosmological and
geographical knowledge on the Japanese worldview can be witnessed in a w
entitled *Jin'nō Shōtō ki* 神皇正統 (Chronicle of Gods and Sovereigns), publishe
in 1339 and 1343) by Kitabatake Chikafusa 北畠親房 (1293–1354).[49] In it,
Kitabatake Chikafusa writes:

Even though Shintan 震旦 [He uses the Sanskrit name Zhendan, pronounced
Shintan in Japanese] is a huge land, it must be a tiny land compared to Tenj
天竺.

He describes that

[…] at the center of Senbushū 瞻部洲 is Mount Anutachi 阿耨達山 [probably La
Anavatapta 阿耨達池], and […] at its top is Lake Munetsu 無熱池.

All of his information draws on *Fozu tongji*.

Another means by which a more widely circulation of the *Fozu tongji* was be
brought about when it was inserted into the Chinese Tripiṭaka (chin.: Da Zan
Jing 大藏經), a large collection of Buddhist texts, that has been reprinted sev
times since the Song period. Different versions of the Chinese Tripiṭaka were
transmitted to Korea and Japan from the thirteenth century on. One of the r
widely used standardized versions of this text is the Taishō Tripiṭaka (Taishō
Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經), published in Tōkyō between 1924 and 193

which is based on earlier Chinese, Korean and Japanese versions. It contains the *Fozu tongji* and – as part of it – the "Dong zhendan dili tu" (see Fig. 7).


Fig. 7: "Dong zhendan dili tu" (in the Taishō Tripiṭaka version of *Fozu tongji*

In the course of being integrated into a large-scale printing of the Buddhist canon, some parts of the map in the Chinese Tripiṭaka version stated above were blurred and some place names were written with mistaken characters. Nonetheless, due to its insertion into the Buddhist Canon the map was provi with a significant opportunity to be circulated more widely.

We can assume that those who read the *Fozu tongji* also learned from this map: where they live, what their world is like, who their neighbors are and where their societies were located. They also learned that they did not live a the center of the world. The geographic and cosmological information to be gained from the *Fozu tongji* provided the Chinese with a non-sinocentric geographical perspective of the world. The concrete example found in one of earliest surviving maps of China demonstrates that Chinese geographers possessed broad geographic knowledge about China and lands beyond, knowledge that had been accumulated for centuries, and they thus received opportunity to gain a new cosmological interpretation from a different perspective and to circulate it widely – all thanks to the development of woodblock book printing. Knowledge became a commodity to be shared and stored.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have briefly explored one of the means by which the Chine during the premodern period accumulated geographic knowledge through contacts with other societies, and how that knowledge further spread, modifi and settled into receiving societies. Both early and contemporary geographic treatises and maps, as well as woodblock-printed books and stone tablets, reflect a general geographic knowledge about China that cartographers share during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Tang-dynasty geographer Jia Dan first systemized this knowledge in the early ninth century. The developr of the woodblock-printing technology allowed the production of multiple copi which further expanded the potential. Not only did Song authors draw upon earlier maps in order to construct their maps, they but also modified them, based on geographic knowledge about other cultures and on contemporary influences. All of these complex dynamics are accurately reflected in one ma "Dong zhendan dili tu". This particular woodblock-printed map suggests that Chinese cartographers had access to maps that showed the basic administra divisions of Chinese territory and that they drew another type of map from t perspective of Buddhism. In the Buddhist worldview, China was no longer situated at the center of the world but to the east of the center of the world the title of the map indicates.

Evidence for many copies and versions of printed maps suggests that

geographic knowledge, once systemized by cartographers, actually spread ar
circulated among a certain group of literati who were readers of various kinc
texts. The number of surviving copies of the earliest woodblock printed maps
small, yet they wielded great influence through their wide distribution, which
helped to spread geographic knowledge throughout China and East Asia. The
Chinese continued to produce woodblock-printed maps of various types,
including regional maps. Maps were also inserted into local gazetteers to ass
readers in understanding texts about geography easily.[51] In conclusion, the
Song period woodblock printed maps only mark the very beginning of the
flourishing printing culture of maps and the wide distribution of geographic
knowledge in Chinese history. "Dong zhendan dili tu" especially shows the
creativity and dynamism that some Chinese cartographers under the influenc
of Buddhism incorporated in producing a new type of map, a map that did n
show China at the center.

Glossary of the Maps Discussed in this Article

"Dong zhendan dili tu" 東震旦地理圖 (Geographic Map of the Land of China to
East)

"Gujin huayi quyu zongyao tu" 古今華夷區域摠要圖 (General Survey Map of
Chinese and Non-Chinese Territories from the Past through the Present)

"Hainei huayi tu" 海內華夷圖 (Map of Chinese and Non-Chinese Territories in
World)

"Han xiyu zhuguo tu" 漢西域諸國圖 (Map of the States in the Western Regions
during the Han Dynasty)

"Huayi tu" 華夷圖 (Map of Chinese and Non-Chinese Territories)

"Sanqian daqian shijie tu" 三千大千世界圖 (Map of the Entire Universe)

"Shengchao Yuanfeng jiuyu tu" 聖朝元豊九域圖 (Geographic Map of the Reign
Yuan Feng)

"Shijie mingti zhi" 世界名體志 (An Account of Places and Shape of the World)

"Xitu wuyin zhi tu" 西土五印之圖 (Map of the Five Indian States in the West)

"Yudi tu" 輿地圖 (General Map of China)

"Yuji tu" 禹跡圖 (The Tracks of Yu)

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Zhou Qufei 周去非. See Yang Wuquan (1999).

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[1] Cao Wanru (1990), fig. 152 (Original in the National Library of China).

[2] For a partial English translation of *Fozu tongji*, see Jan Yün-hua (1996).

[3] The description of the nine domains of the Zhou dynasty (with the royal capital at the center) in the oldest Chinese geographical document, *Yugong* (Tribute of Yu), included in the canonical *Shujing* 書經 (Book of documents, dating from at least the fourth century BCE), clearly shows this traditional conception. See Needham (1959), 502-503, and Yee (1995), 207.

[4] *Zhendan* is the Chinese transcription of *Cīna-sthāna*, meaning "the land of China" in Sanskrit. In other Buddhist texts, this term means China. Zheng Xihuang (1990), 83. Also see Ohji Toshiaki (1996), 122. The term also occasionally influenced other types of literature. For example, the Japanese collection *Konjaku Monogatarishū* 今昔物語集 (Tales of Times Now Past), compiled between 1130 and 1140, uses this word to mean China.

[5] Jan Yün-hua (1996), 8-9. See also Zheng Xihuang (1990), 81-84.

[6] Nakamura Gen (1989), 702b-703a.

[7] Cf. footnote 15.

[8] For Buddhist maps of the cosmos in medieval China, see Dorothy C. Wong (2008), 51-79.

[9] *Fozu tongji* (a), 31.16b-17a. Because Zhanbu zhou 瞻部洲 is located south Mt. Meru, it is also called "Nan Zhanbu zhou" 南瞻部洲. "Nanzhou" 南洲 encirc in the diagram is an abbreviation of "Nan Zhanbu zhou". Nakamura Gen (19 81a.

[10] Zheng Xihuang (1990), 81-84.

[11] Cao Wanru (1990), fig. 153 (Original in the National Library of China).

[12] *Ibid*., fig. 154 (Original in the National Library of China).

[13] For the sections about Han-era western regions, see *Shiji* 史記 (Records o the Historian) by Sima Qian 史馬遷 (ca. 145–86 BCE), *Hanshu* 漢書 (History the Former Han) by Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE), and *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (Histor the Later Han) by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445 CE). On the *Da Tang Xiyou ji*, see Xianlin (1985).

[14] Tianzhu means "Sindhu" in Sanskrit, which is an old name for the Indus River. Nakamura Gen (1989), 592b.

[15] *Jam-bu-dvīpa* had originally been translated as *Yanfu ti* 閻浮提 in Chinese. Nakamura Gen (1989), 81b-82a.

[16] For a discussion on Buddhist worldview and its conflicts with the Chinese-centered worldview during the Tang period, see Sen Tansen (2003), 8-12. F detailed discussion about the Buddhist worldview and its gradual acceptance Chinese, see Unno Kazutaka (2004), 18-30. To see maps with India at their center, see Unno Kazutaka (1996), 19-21.

[17] *Fozu tongji* (a), 32.8.

[18] For a discussion about Daoist cosmology, see Huang Shih-shan (2010), 5 90.

[19] *Fozu tongji* (a), 32.8b-9a.

[20] For a detailed analysis of the map's geographic information, see Zheng Xihuang (1990), 81-83.

[21] Hilde de Weerdt examines these maps, along with other contemporary surviving maps, to argue that the genre of empire-wide maps in China reach a broad readership of literate elites during the Song period and came to be used by politicians to discuss political strategies in their relations with northe dynasties. In this paper I use de Weerdt's English translation of the original Chinese map titles in this atlas. See De Weerdt (2009), 145-167. For a repri of the original, see Tan/Cao (1989); see also Cao Wanru (1990), 31-34, and Unno Kazutaka (2004), 59-64.

[22] Use of the term "Dashi" in Chinese documents to refer to Arabs or Arabia began in the Tang period. Literally "big eat", the term "Dashi" is a transcript of the Persian word "Tajik" or "Tazi". This originally referred to an Iranian tri but came to mean the country of the Arabs later. According to Ulving (1997) the pronunciation of Dashi around the eighth century is d'âi-dźįək, which wa similar to "Tajik" or "Tazi".

[23] Cao Wanru (1990), 42-44.

[24] For the earliest Chinese extant maps that show regional areas, see Steinhardt (1997), 10 (also footnote 2).

[25] *Xin Tangshu* 166.5083-5085.

[26] It is one of the six routes connecting China with foreign regions originally introduced in his lost work *Huanghua sida ji* 皇華四達記 (Record of the Imper Glory Reaching Four Directions); *Xin Tangshu* 48.1506. See also Park Hyunh (2008), 51-58.

[27] The term *hainei* 海內 should be translated as "in the world" or "under the Heaven". See Ogawa Tamaki (2001), 571.

[28] Three *zhang* 丈 in width and three *zhang* three *chi* 尺 in length; *Xin Tangs* 166.5083-5085. Another source for Jia Dan's map can also be found in poen of the Tang dynasty. See De Weerdt (2009), 155-157. Also see Unno Kazuta (2004), 113.

[29] *Lidai dili zhizhang tu*, 8-9. See also Cao Wanru (1990), 32.

[30] Cao Wanru (1990), Maps 56 and 62. Another engraved copy of "Yuji tu", which used a different Chinese character with the same pronunciation and meaning for the word "tracks", was carved and set by Yu Chi 愈箎, a governmental official and also master of the school under Zhenjiang Prefectu 鎮江府府學 in Jiangsu province in 1142 during the Song dynasty, based on th original Chang'an copy of 1136. The two maps are almost identical except th the later one depicted waves in the area of the sea. This map was probably attached to a wall of a school hall, thus did not have the other side carved. a detailed discussion on this map, see Unno Kazutaka (2004), 178-191.

[31] Cao Wanru (1990), fig. 57-59: 每方折地百里。Cf. Yee D.K. (1995), 124. Se the entire article for what mensurational techniques the Chinese cartographe developed to draw precise maps.

[32] Pei Xiu's six principles of cartography are described in *Jin shu* 4.1039. Pei set the foundation for Chinese cartographic techniques in the third century C For more on debates whether Pei Xiu first developed the square grid in Chin mapmaking, see Wang Yong (1958), 18-24, Needham (1959), 538-543; Yee D.K. (1995), 110-113; and Steinhardt (1997), 10-11.

[33] On a detailed discussion about the stone tablets of "Huayi tu" and "Yuji tu engraved in the Song dynasty, see Aoyama Sadao (1963), 569-593.

[34] Cao Wanru (1990), 41-45.

[35] Cao Wanru (1990), 32.

[36] According to Ulving (1997), Baida 白達 is pronounced b´wâng-d´ăt.

[37] For Baida 白達 (Baghdad), see Yang Wuquan (1999), 100, and Yang Bowe (1996), 109-110; for Lumei 蘆眉, see the section about Lumei 蘆眉 in Yang Bowen (1996), 116, and the section about Meilugudun [mji-luo-kuət-tuən] 眉 骨惇 Yang Wuquan (1999), 110-111 (Yang Bowen says Lumei 蘆眉 is Meilugu 眉路骨惇); There are debates about which place Rūm denotes precisely, but according to the descriptions in the texts it probably indicates Asia Minor, especially Constantinople. The people in the Byzantine Empire called their empire the Roman Empire. Rūm also appears in Arabic geographic accounts.

[38] Zheng Xihuang (1990), 81.

[39] *Yuhai* 91.16b. The emperor also ordered the ministers to place another co in the Shangshu sheng 尚書省 (Secretariat for State Affairs). See Fan Sheng (2008), 117, and Unno Kazutaka (2004), 113-114.

[40] Unno Kazutaka (2004), 67.

[41] There have been many debates about the author of the map. Some contemporary authors assumed that the author was the famous Song-period scholar Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036–1101), an assumption which made the book more popular. But Japanese scholars, as e.g., Ogawa Takuji 小川琢治, Unno Kazuta 海野一隆, and Miya Noriko 宮紀子 all argue that accounts in contemporary sources – such as that in *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 138.3278 – suggest that the author was Shui Anli, rather than Su Shi. The map clearly contains informati about the period after Su Shi's death, and the Chinese writing style is not as excellent as that in most of Su Shi's works. Yet one thing that cannot be de is that most of the maps (except for the last one) were all drawn by an auth

dating from the Northern Song. For discussions on the authorship, editions a
contents of the atlas, see Unno Kazutaka (2004), 53, 59-60, 64; Miya Norik
(2007), 143-144; Cao Wanru (1990), 31. For Chen Zhensun's original text, s
Zhizhai shulu jieti 8.233.

[42] For more discussions about the two different versions, see Cao Wanru
(1990), 31.

[43] Miya Noriko (2007), 143.

[44] Drawing on contemporary references to maps among the literate elite, De
Weerdt (2009, 157-164) argues that the maps produced during the Song
dynasty had gained a broad readership of literate elites and came to be use
politicians to discuss the pros and cons of negotiated peace with the Khitans
and the Jurchens in the north. Ohji Toshiaki (2007, 143-144) also remarks t
although Kaifeng was already taken by the Jurchens when "Gujin huayi quyu
zongyao tu" was produced, Kaifeng is still named as the eastern capital
(Dongjing 東京) and placed approximately at the center of the map, and the
actual capital Hangzhou 杭州 was only shown as Hang 杭. It shows the map
makers' desire of recovering the lost territories in the north.

[45] Fan Sheng (2008). From this, we can naturally assume that these kinds o
maps had been circulating in local-elite levels by the mid-Song period. This
process of localization may go along with the general transformations from t
Northern Song and the Southern Song in political and social spheres. See
Hartwell (1982), 365-442, and Hymes (1986).

[46] It is *Ukai Nikki* 宇槐記抄 (Dairy of Ukai). It is cited in Unno Kazutaka (200
63.

[47] Aoyama Sadao (1963), 595-617; Huang Shengzhang (1990), 56-60.

[48] Miya Noriko (2007), 178. Some Chinese woodblock technicians traveled to
Japan and reprint of various kinds of books to develop Japanese literary cult
which is called the Japanese Literature of the Five Mountains (*Gozan Bunka*
山文化, 1287–1387). Ōba Osamu (1996), 336.

[49] *Jin'nō Shōtō ki* is devoted to explaining the principles of legitimacy in the
imperial succession. For more details on this episode, see Unno Kazutaka
(2004), 24-25.

[50] *Fozu tongji* (b), 32.312.

[51] For the reprints of numerous woodblock printed maps produced during the
Song-Yuan period, see Sheng Bo (2008).

Crossroads 1/2 (2010)

Annex 540

Carlos Quirino, *Philippine Cartography: 1320-1899* (2010)

❧ FILIPINIANA CLÁSICA ☙

PHILIPPINE CARTOGRAPHY

## 1320 - 1899

THIRD EDITION

CARLOS QUIRINO

Edited by

Leovino Ma. García, Ph.D.

vibal
FOUNDATION

Tratado de la doctrina de la Santa Iglesia by Fr. Juan Cobo (1593). Predating the more famous work of Fr. Matteo Ricci by two years, this is the first book on Western sciences such as astronomy and geography to be written in Chinese, and one of the first books to be printed in the Philippines. The map is oriented with south at the top and north below. Along the lower edge, from left to right, Mexico, Japan, China and Java are depicted, while the black shape on the right side is labeled "Eastern Sea Luzon." The writing near the center line of the equator translates as "This place is very hot; densely populated by men," while at the northern and southern extremes it says "This place is very cold and man cannot inhabit it." (Translation by F. Villaroel)
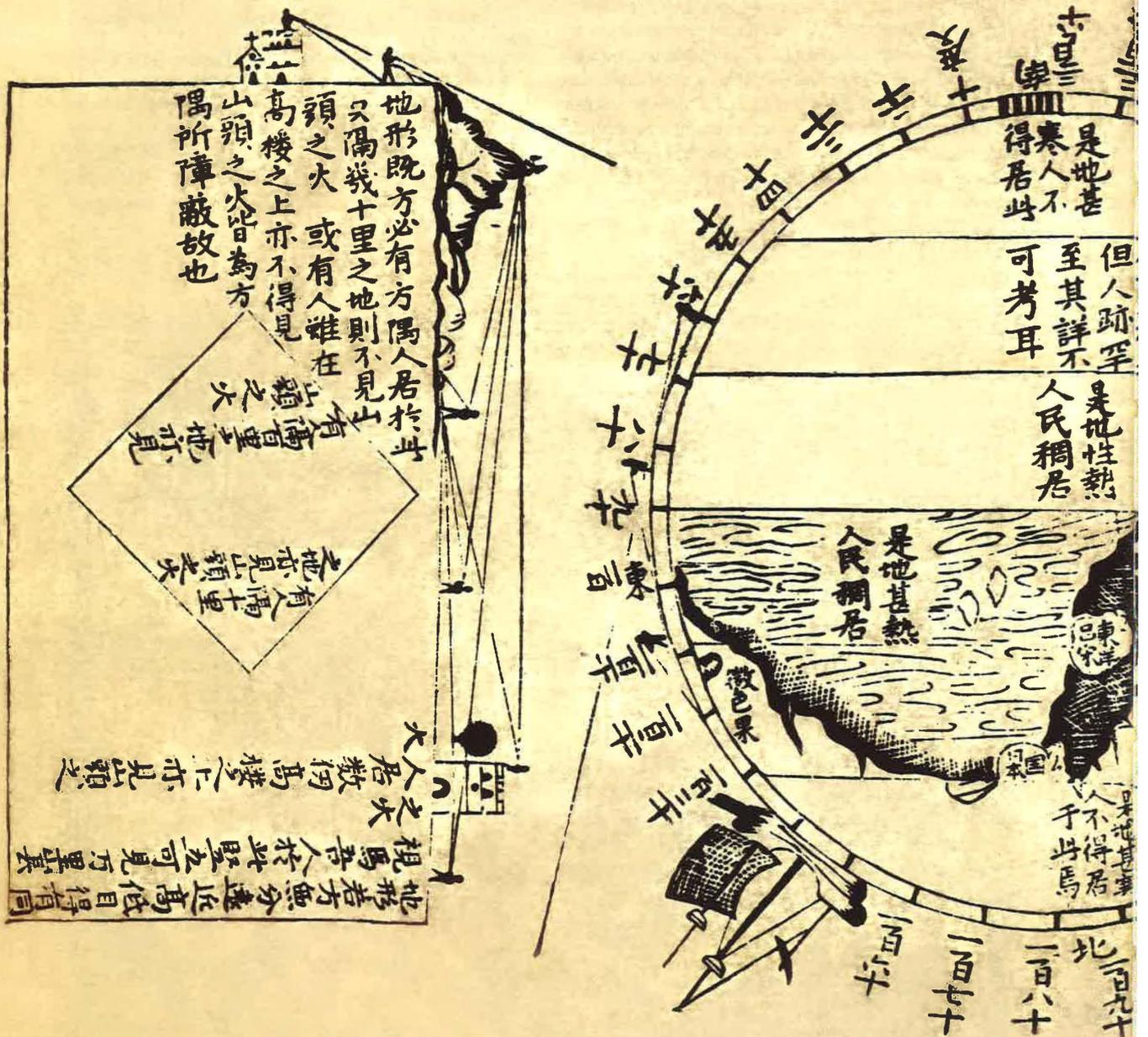
II CHINESE AND THE SOUTHERN ISLES
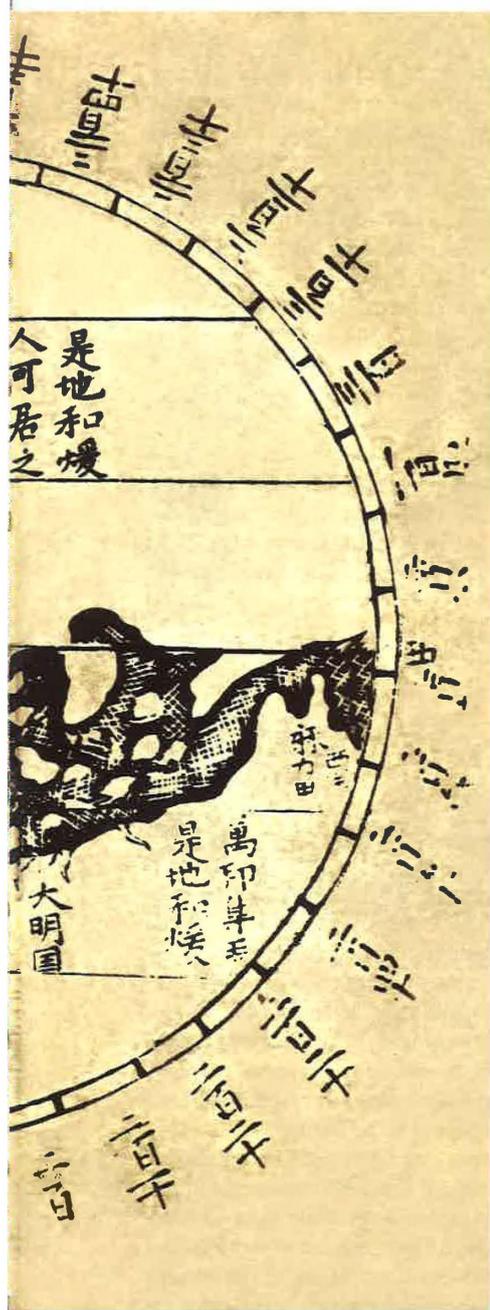
LTHOUGH ARAB travelers, Javanese sailors, adventurers from Champa or southern Annam, Japanese warriors and Chinese traders had been sailing periodically to the Philippines during the Christian era prior to the arrival of the Portuguese and the Spaniards, only the Chinese left a cartographical imprint of their visits to the archipelago.

The first recorded reference to the islands was the arrival of an Arab ship at Canton with a boatload of native goods from Mindoro in the year 982 AD.[1] A Chinese geography book was written by Chau Ju-kua, superintendent of the sea trade in the coastal province of Fukien from 1277 to 1287, titled *Chu-fan-chih*, copied mostly from older records.[2] Chau called the Philippines Ma-yi, the ancient generic name for the archipelago, although one of the islands was called Lin-hsin which, according to the coauthor[3] of the most extensive historical collection about the Philippines, sounded like Lin-hsing, a Chinese name "corresponding to their name for modern Luzon." The Visayan islands were termed San-hsü or three islands.

Chinese interest in the Philippines increased after the Sung rulers were forced to move south of the Yangtze river in 1127 AD.[4] Chinese ceramic wares and other trade goods began to flow into the Philippines after the Sung dynasty had established their southern capital at Hangchow, as evidenced by the large number of artifacts turned up by archeologists in old village sites and ancient burial grounds in the Philippine coastal areas.

The Madjapahit empire[5] from Java, which brought parts of the archipelago under its control during the fourteenth century, was replaced by an equally short-lived attempt at domination by the second Ming emperor, Yung Lo, in the early fifteenth century. A vast Chinese fleet under Admiral Cheng Ho, said to consist of more than sixty vessels and 27,000 men, visited Lingayen and Manila bays, Mindoro and Sulu around 1405 to 1410 and sailed in later voyages as far west as southern India and the Persian Gulf. A Chinese governor named Ko-ch'a-lao was even appointed for the island of Luzon, but with the death of Cheng Ho in 1435 and the passing of the Yung Lo regime, political control over the islands disappeared and the purely commercial relationship of earlier eras returned.

A century earlier, famed Muslim traveler and chronicler Ibn Battúta was said to have reached some part of the Philippines.[6] In his manuscript book on his travels, Battúta claims to have visited circa 1345 the king-

7

dom of Princess Urdujá, ruler of an Amazonian country somewhere north of Java. Although modern commentators, like Sir Henry Yule and Sir Hamilton Gibb, have doubted the veracity of this account—for Battúta could easily have been confused, so vast a region did he cover—this kingdom could have been located either somewhere in Indo-China, north Borneo or the Philippines. The great Dr. José Rizal, Filipino scholar and hero, was the first to indicate in 1889 that it might have been the Philippines.[7] Prof. Austin Craig advanced the theory that the princess' domain was in the province of Pangasinan, in northern Luzon island, and since then romantically-inclined Filipino writers have persisted in spreading this legend.

The first extensive account of Luzon appears in Chapter 323 of the *Ming Annals*, where it is referred to as Liu-sung. It is of record that the first embassy from the Philippines visited China in 1372, four years after the Ming dynasty had ascended to the Dragon Throne. A second one went in 1408, after the first visit to the archipelago by Cheng's fleet. Among the presents brought by the Filipino envoys were "small but very strong" horses, while the celestial emperor reciprocated with gifts of silks, strings of copper "cash," porcelain, and other wares. Chinese merchants brought gifts to the "king of Luzon," although the island was ruled by regional chieftains rather than by a single powerful overlord. In 1349 a Chinese writer noted that "Sulu pearls are whiter and rounder that those of India. Their price is very high. The Chinese use them for head ornaments."[8]

Thus, the first Chinese map to include the Philippines was most probably that of Chu Ssu-pen, a dominant figure in the cartography of that country whose representation "essentially held until the last decades of the nineteenth century."[9] Even as a young man, he was interested in geography, and for nine years starting in 1311 when he was thirty-eight years old, he prepared his great map of China and border countries. The map had no special title, although it was simply called "yü-t'u" or terrestrial map. No copies of his map have reached us, although revised forms were made some two centuries later by Lo Hung-hsien. Prof. Muroga Nobuo, however, disagrees with the view that the first Chinese map to include the Philippines was "most probably that of Chu Ssu-pen," on the grounds that the latter's preface states he had excluded "the regions northwest of the [Gobi] Desert and the islands southeast of the Ocean [China Sea]." As our knowledge of the earliest Chinese maps which include the Philippines is merely by inference, we cannot reach a categorical opinion on this subject.

The three oldest maps from the Sung dynasty (960-1279 AD) do not show the Philippines at all, according to Dr. Walter Fuchs.[10] These are carved on stone and are existing today. The archipelago appears, however, on the manuscript map *Hun-i chiang-li li-tai kuo-tu chih t'u* (Map of the entire empire and frontier [countries] with the capitals of the successive dynasties) which was drawn by a Korean named Koŏn Kŭn (Ch'üan Chin, in Chinese) in 1402, based on older Chinese maps. The original has been lost, but a copy dating from about 1500 is preserved at the Ryūkoku University in Kyoto, Japan.[11] The Philippines appear under its Chinese appellation of Ma-i or Ma-yi and San-hsü for the islands of Luzon and the Visayas (the islands mentioned by Chau Ju-kua), respectively.

Around the middle of the sixteenth century the Chinese scholar Lo Hung-hsien (1504-1564) prepared an enlarged and revised form of Chu Ssu-pen's maps under the title of *Kuang-yü-t'u*. All of the earliest known copies of the atlas of 117 sheets contain a new map of Southeast Asia where the Philippines appear on map number 43; these editions were made after 1553, and the printed copies about 1555. Other editions were printed, and undoubtedly it was on one of these editions that the Jesuit cartographer Martino Martini based his first European atlas of China entitled *Novus atlas Sinensis* which appeared in Amsterdam in 1655.

Lo Hsung-hsien was helped considerably in his depiction of the areas south of China by the voyage of Admiral Cheng Ho, who must have sent back reports of his overseas expedition to the Ming court. "I now believe that Chu Ssu-pen's map had contained Southeast Asia, but its representation must have been different—much less accurate and less detailed—from map 43 by Lo Hung-hsien," stated Dr. Fuchs.[12]

Succeeding Chinese maps in the sixteenth century depict the Philippines at about the time the Spaniards were consolidating their conquest of the islands. These maps were the *Ch'ou-hai t'u-pien* of 1561-1562, the *T'u-shu-pien* of 1583-1585, and the *Cheng k'ai-yang tsa-chu* before the end of that century. The *T'u-shu-pien* is the title of a voluminous Chinese book, a general encyclopedia which contains, among other things, a number of maps including a rough one of the Philippines.

Following the pattern started by Chu, Lo also divided his land maps into small squares for easier reference and greater accuracy in drawing, while the seas were depicted by wavy lines. Although the size and location of the offshore islands Formosa, Hainan, the Philippines, Japan and Bali are highly inaccurate, they are
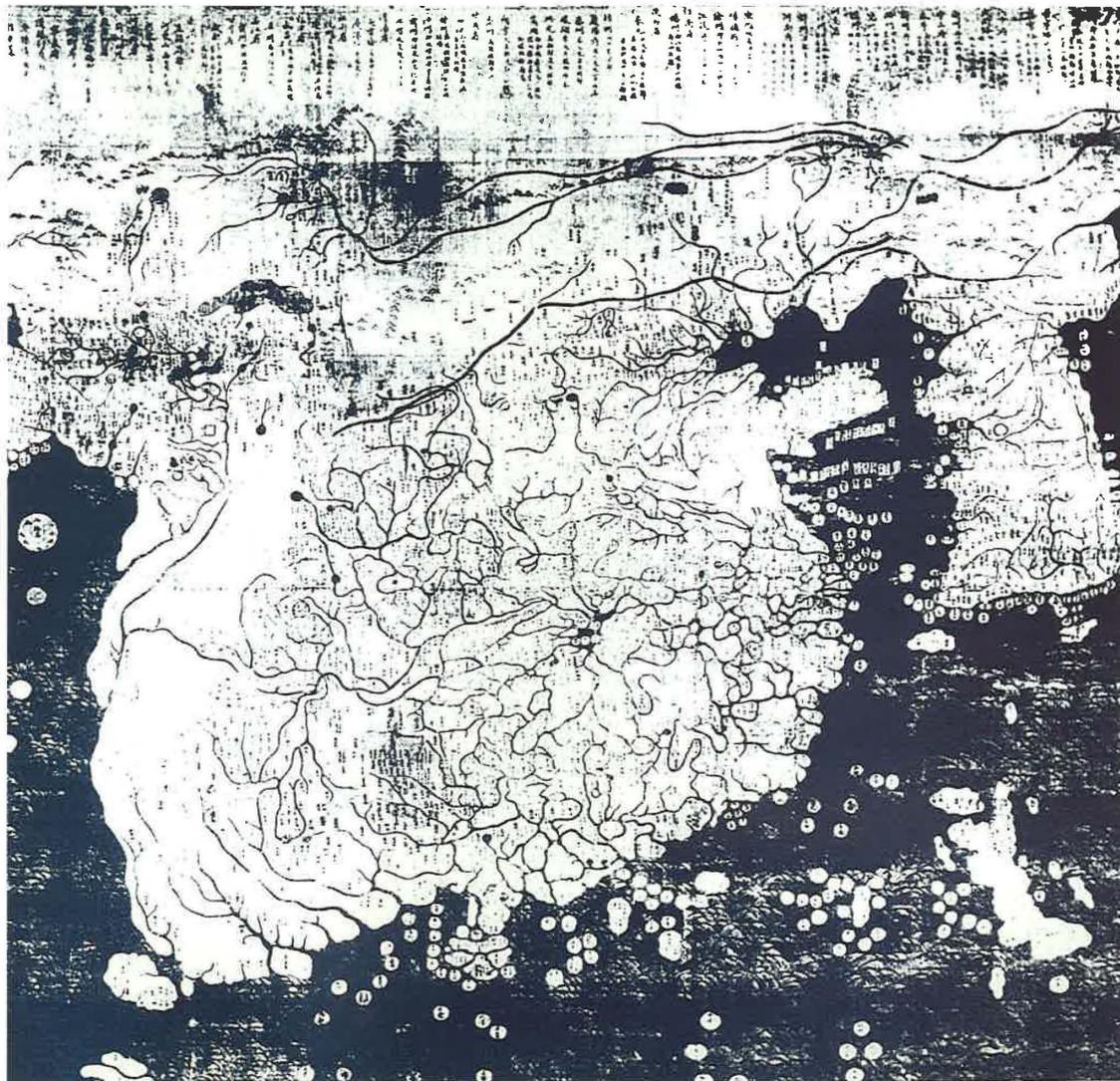
Hun-i chiang-li li-tai kuo-tu chih t'u by Koŏn Kŭn (1402). Considered "the most valuable cartographic document in East Asia." The Philippines appear at the lower right.

not more so than in the works of European cartographers of that era.

Further light on these early Chinese maps has been furnished to the author by Prof. Muroga who states that the *Hun-i chiang-li li-tai kuo-tu chih t'u* map, according to a prefatory note in 1402 by Koŏn Kŭn, a Korean courtier, was made by Kin-shiko, Ri-mo and Ri-kwai on the basis of Li Tshê-min's work entitled *Shêng-chiao kuang-pei t'u* and Ts'ing Tsün's *Hun-i chiang-li t'u*. It is said that this map depicts the features of the maps of the

Yüan dynasty (1280-1368) because both Li Tshê-min's map and T'sing Tsün's map, which are not extant, were made at the time of the Yüan dynasty. As already mentioned, this map is preserved at the Ryūkoku University Library in Kyoto, and facsimiles are reproduced herein in its entirety and that particular region where the Philippines is has been included.[13]

"There are many mistakes on this map," Muroga warned. "There is bound to be confusion, and it will be a considerable task to identify all the names of these is-
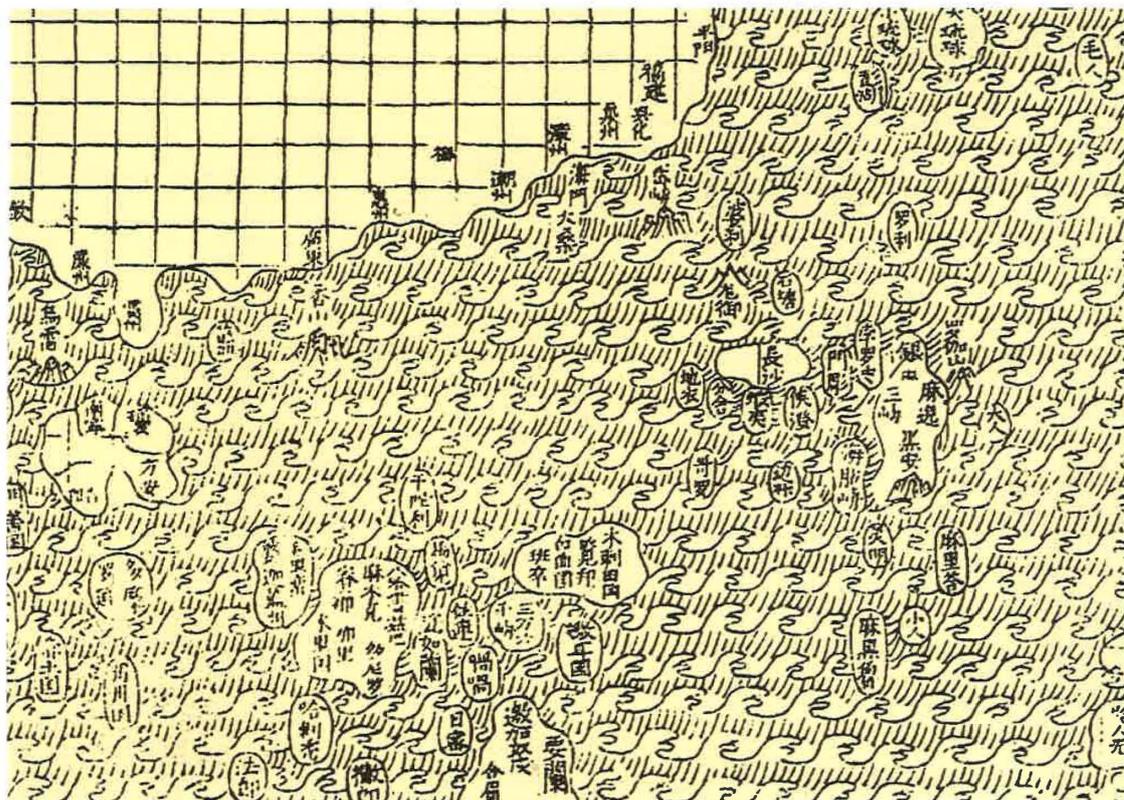
Southern coast of China and the Philippines, from the atlas of Lo Hung-hsien titled *Kuang-yü-t'u* (ca. 1555) based on older Chinese maps, notably that of Chu Ssu-pen who drew a map in ca. 1320 showing the Philippines.

lands in Southeast Asia with all the actual appellations, even for a specialist on the subject."

The author of the *Hun-i* grouped several islands of the Philippines under one big island inscribed with different names: Yin-li which Prof. Wada Sei, the Japanese authority[14] on pre-Magellanic Philippines, has identified as the island of Hermana Mayor off the coast of Zambales in central western Luzon; Ma-i or Mindoro; San-hsü or the three islands (Visayas); and Ts'i-feng and Sheng-shan, which are both assumed by Prof. Wada to be small islands near the coast of Palawan. The island immediately west of this big island is labelled Hai-chan-sü, presumably named after Hai-tan ("sü" means island) or Aëta, the aboriginal pygmy inhabitants of the archipelago. Curiously, southwest lies an island marked Ma-li-lu which the late Prof. Fujita Toyohachi posited as marking Manila in his commentary on *Tao-i chih-lüo.*[15]

Another edition of the *Kuang-yü-t'u* is of interest to students of Philippine cartography because of the changes made therein, although seemingly no basic alterations are noticeable. This particular page is entitled *Tung-nan hai-i tsung-t'u* (A general map of the barbarians in the southeast seas). Since Lo Hung-hsien based this map not only on the earlier 1320 map by Chu Ssu-pen but on Li Tshê-min's map (ca. 1330) which was reproduced in the *Hun-i* map, the islands in Southeast Asia in both maps bear a close resemblance to each other, including common errors. Chinese cartographers, like their counterparts in Europe and elsewhere, were great copyists—even when repeating mistakes.

In this connection it is interesting to know that the first book in Chinese on Western astronomy, geography and diverse subjects, in a very elementary form, was written by a Spanish Dominican friar in Manila in 1593. This Chinese book, whose existence in the National Library in Madrid was discovered only in 1952, is entitled *Tratado de la doctrina de la Santa Iglesia.* The translation was made by Fray Juan Cobo, author of the first *Doc-*

trina Christiana en letra y lengua China, and likewise printed in Manila that same year in 1593. One of the pages in the *Tratado,* reproduced here, shows the American continent with Mexico to the right and Asia (China and the Philippines) at the left; it also depicts how distances or heights are measured by the degrees in angles. Together with the *Doctrina* in Spanish and Tagalog, they are the first books ever printed in the Philippines.[16] The *Tratado* contains the oldest cartographic sketch printed in the Philippines.

"With the discovery of this book, it is no longer possible to maintain that it was Father Matteo Ricci who was the first Westerner to impart knowledge to the Chinese about Occidental sciences," asserts Carlos Sanz, a Spanish historian.[17] The Cobo book antedates that of Ricci by two years.

Notes

1. Dr. H. Otley Beyer wrote a two-volume work, in manuscript form, entitled *The Philippines Before Magellan.* See his introduction to E. Arsenio Manuel's *Chinese Elements in the Tagalog Language* (Manila, 1948), ix-xxv. Also his article in *Asia* magazine for October and November 1921.

Detail from the *Hun-i* where several islands of the Philippines have been grouped under one big island.
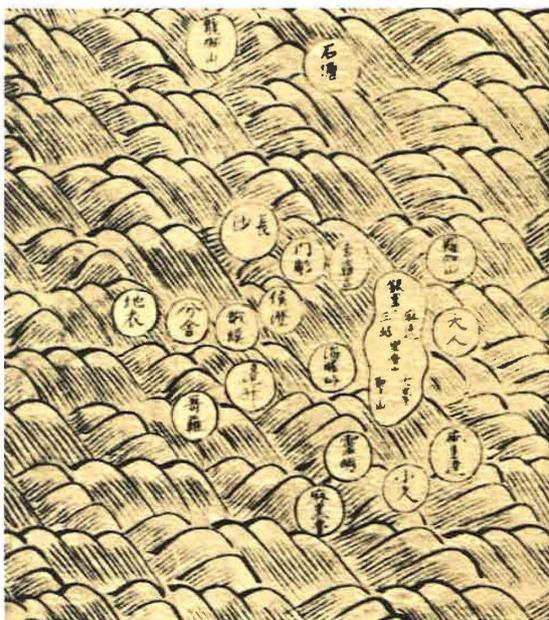
2. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands,* 34:183-191. This book, according to Dr. Walter Fuchs, was finished in 1225—a date which seems inconsistent with the above decade.

3. Emma Blair. The Hirth-Rockhill version (1912) calls it Liu-sin; it is a more extensive work than the Blair and Robertson reference.

4. The Southern Sung dynasty was followed by the Yüan (1280-1368) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties.

5. Researches tend to show no such political control existed, although there might have been some commercial relations between Java and Philippines.

6. Hamilton Gibb, *Ibn Battúta* (London, 1957), 279-281, 368.

7. José P. Apostol, "Rizal on Tawasili," *Journal of History* 6, nos. 2 & 3 (1958). See Nicolás Zafra's exhaustive article on the same subject in the *Journal of History* 2, no. 1 (January 1952).

8. H. Otley Beyer and Jaime C. de Veyra, *Philippine Saga* (Manila, 1952), 31-32.

9. Walter Fuchs, *The 'Mongol Atlas' of China* (Beijing, 1946), 7.

10. In a letter to the author, dated 4 August 1958, from Berlin.

11. In another letter dated 30 November 1958. This section of the map has been reproduced in the Japanese journal *Toho Gakuho* (Tokyo, 1938), vol. 8, map 2 behind p. 152, and again reproduced herein. The original, which measures 161.8 cm in width and 131.5 cm in height, is painted in color on silk and "is the most valuable cartographic document in East Asia."

12. In his second letter, dated 30 November 1958.

13. The close-up of the region where the Philippines appear was not taken from the original owned by Ryūkoku University but from a replica made by the Institute of Geography at Kyoto University, and has been used here because of its greater clarity for reproduction purposes.

14. Wada Sei, "Philippine Islands as known by Chinese before the Ming Dynasty," which appeared in *Toho Gakuho* (Oriental Studies), 1921. The English translation appears in the *Memoirs of the Toyo Bunko,* no. 4 (Tokyo, 1929).

15. Literally translated as "general description of the barbarous islanders." The *Tao-i* was written by Wang Ta Yüan, and although the date is not known, the preface bears the year 1350. This book describes the islands to the south of China, from Formosa to Persia, including Mindoro and probably Manila.

16. See Edwin Wolf II in his introductory essay to *Doctrina Christiana* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1947).

17. Carlos Sanz, *Primitivas relaciones de España con Asia y Oceanía* (Madrid, 1958), 239-246.

An indigenous eighteenth-century map of Southeast Asia on parchment captured from a pirate sailboat. The distances are given in European measurements and the compass rose uses a fleur-de-lis to point north, indicating that this map was most likely copied from a European portolan chart. The inaccuracy in the depiction of the Philippines suggests that the mapmaker only knew the islands through hearsay.
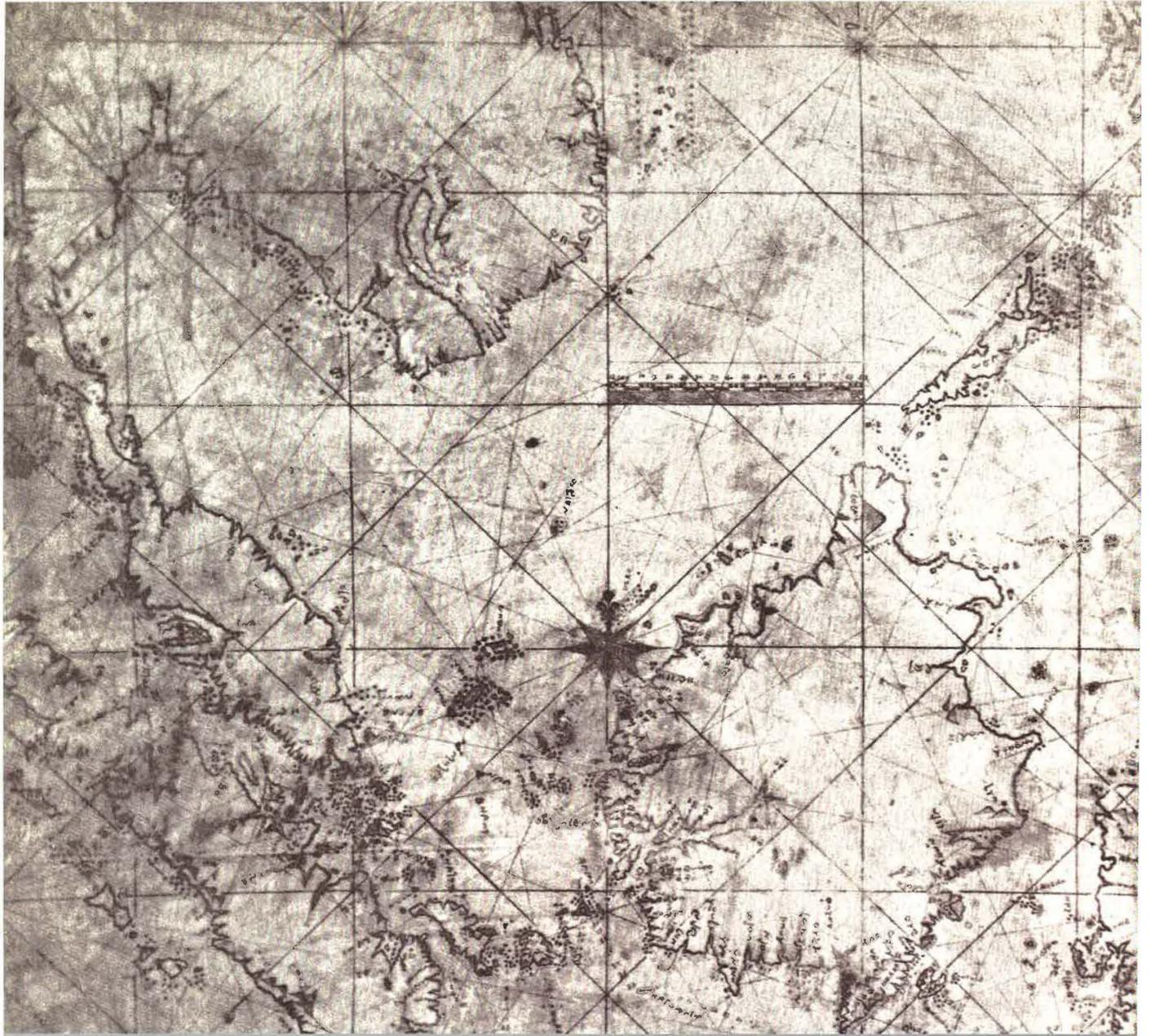
III THE PORTUGUESE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

HISTORY ATTRIBUTES the discovery of the Philippines to Ferdinand Magellan. In reality, however, the first Europeans to touch Philippine soil were probably the Portuguese. Late in 1511 the great Afonso de Albuquerque, governor-general of India, dispatched a fleet of three ships to the islands of Banda and the Moluccas. There were one hundred and twenty persons aboard this fleet—of about the same size as that of Vasco de Gama to India or of Christopher Columbus to America—who were led by Antonio de Abreu and Francisco Serrão, a cousin and bosom companion of Magellan. They reached the island of Ceram, south of the Moluccas group, and on their return Serrão and his crew, who were aboard a captured Chinese junk, were shipwrecked on a shoal off Lucipara island in the Banda Sea.

"From there," relates Dr. Cortesão, "he went back as far as the island of Midanao [Mindanao?] with nine or ten Portuguese who were with him, and the king of the Moluccas sent for them. These were the first Espanhoes [Portuguese] that came to the Clove Islands, which lie from the equinoctial towards the north one degree, where they stayed seven or eight years."[1]

Abreu returned to Malacca a year later, in December 1512, but Serrão spent the rest of his life in Ternate where he died in 1521.

Does it seem possible that Serrão could have visited Mindanao? Between the Banda Sea and Mindanao lie a thousand miles of open water and hundreds of islands. The Portuguese chroniclers, Antonio Galvão and João de Barros, could have erred and mistaken another island for Mindanao. However, such are the vagaries of wind, tide and sea that the possibility of Serrão and his companions having reached the southernmost island of the Philippines must be taken into serious consideration.

The first European to mention an island in the Philippines was Tomé Pires, a Portuguese who in 1513 wrote a lengthy manuscript *Suma oriental* (Eastern account) whose original can be found at the Library of the National Assembly in Paris. A humble apothecary when he first arrived in India in 1511, he rose through his own merits to become the first Portuguese ambassador to China where he died about 1540. He was forty years old when he journeyed to India, where he was selected by Albuquerque to undertake the trip to Malacca and Java two years later as the factor and superintendent of the fleet. From there he sailed to Cochin-China, and
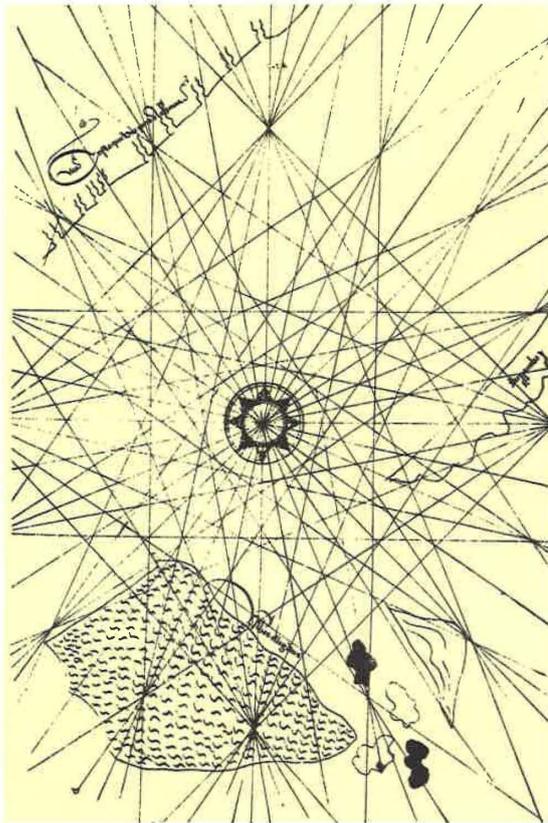
Sketch of part of the south coast of China and some islands, possibly the Philippines, by Francisco Rodrigues (1513).

in 1516 he was chosen and sent to China as Portugal's first ambassador because "although he was not a man of very much quality, being an apothecary, and serving in India to choose the drugs which should come to this kingdom, he was the most skilled for that mission and best fitted for it; for besides his distinction and natural inclination to letters, according to his ability, and his liberality and tact in negotiation, he was very curious in enquiring and knowing things, and he had a lively mind for everything."[2]

After a long description of the countries in Asia, starting with Egypt and moving towards the east including Japan and Borneo, Pires wrote:

The Luçoes are about ten days' sail beyond Borneo. They are nearly all heathen; they have no king, but they are ruled by groups of elders. They are a robust people, little thought of in Malacca. They have two or three junks, at the most. They take the merchandise to Borneo and from there they come to Malacca.

The Borneans go to the lands of the Luçoes to buy gold, and foodstuffs as well, and the gold which they bring to Malacca is from the Luçoes and from the surrounding islands which are countless; and they all have more or less trade with one another. And the gold of these islands where they trade is of a low quality—indeed very low quality.

The Luçoes have in their country plenty of foodstuffs, and wax and honey; and they take the same merchandise from here as the Borneans take. They are almost one people; and in Malacca there is no division between them. They never used to be in Malacca as they are now; but the Tomunguo whom the governor of India appointed here was already beginning to gather many of them together, and they were already building many houses and shops. They are a useful people; they are hard-working.

Of this family there are now the sons of the Tomunguo and his wife in Malacca, as well as his mother-in-law, and the Curia Raja and Tuam Brajy who married the Tumunguo's wife. In Minjam there must be five hundred Luçoes, some of them important men and good merchants, who want to come to Malacca, and the people of Minjam will not grant them permission, because now they have gone over to the side of the former king of Malacca, not very openly. The people of Minjam are Malays.

Pires's embassy to Beijing came to an unfortunate end. He was imprisoned and banished to northern Kiangsu province where he died about 1540 at the age of seventy. He sent the governor of India a book on China, but no trace of this important work can be found today. "After terrible sufferings, anxieties, humiliations and miseries, he died unknown, forgotten and hopeless in some town of far-distant China."[3]

This is the first European reference to the Philippine archipelago, called Luçoes from its largest and northwesternmost island, Luzon. The Philippine Islands are called "by the Indians Luçon, from the principal island which is called Luçon," as Pyrard de Laval says he learned from the Portuguese. Galvão informs us that in June 1545 a Portuguese called Pero Fidalgo left the city of Borneo on a junk, and by contrary winds was driven towards the north, where he found an island in nine or ten degrees, which they called dos Luçoes, because its inhabitants were thus named. This voyage is recorded in the atlases of Luis and Dourado, in an inscription on a fanciful drawing named *Costa de luçoes* (Luis, 1563) or

OS LVCOIS (Dourado, 1580), which reads: "costa de luçoes e laos por omde p° fidalgo vimdo de borneo num jumco de chis e coreo com temporal ao lomgo della foi tomar llamao" (Luis; similarly in Dourado).

Leaving aside the possible representation of Luzon by the Llouçam inscribed by Rodrigues (map fol. 36) as a port on the north coast of Borneo, this is the first time Luçoes appears on a map, though the southeast part of the Philippines had already been represented on (García de) Toreno's map of 1522, as a consequence of Magellan's expedition. After that the Penrose map and the map of ca. 1540 have a much better representation of the southern part of the archipelago, which gradually improved in successive maps. Galvão gives the date of the first known Portuguese visit to Luzon, but it is quite likely that some other Portuguese ship on the China voyage had called before at the Luçoes, either on purpose or by accident. The *Account of the Genoese Pilot* (Leone Pancaldo) says that when, in March 1521, Magellan's expedition arrived at the small island of Malhou,[4] in the southeastern Philippine Islands, the natives informed them that "they had already seen there other men like them," which suggests that possibly even before 1521 the Portuguese had visited the archipelago.[5]

Bound in the same codex as that of Pires's account is a book by Francisco Rodrigues, pilot and cartographer who lived in India and Malacca during the same period. The book, in the handwriting of Rodrigues, takes up almost two-thirds of the codex; it consists of a rutter, a nautical manual, panoramic drawings and an atlas which were drawn about 1513 or at the time Pires was writing his *Suma oriental*. Although a contemporary of Pires, Rodrigues was a much younger man; he was in his twenties when he was included in the expedition of Antonio de Abreu and Francisco Serrão to the Spice Islands in 1511. As a matter of fact, he was the pilot of the

Asia by Giovanni Botero (1599). Juana Madriaga García-Natividad Galang Fajardo Map Collection.

Asie by André Thevet (1575). Juana Madriaga García-Natividad Galang Fajardo Map Collection.

third vessel, a caravel, and was selected by Albuquerque precisely because he had been a pilot in India "and he knew very well how to make a map if necessary." It was Rodrigues who piloted de Abreu back to Malacca after the hazardous voyage to the Banda Sea and could therefore well claim on the cover of his book to have been the "pilot-major of the armada that discovered Banda and the Moluccas."

Then followed an expedition to the Red Sea, duly recorded through maps and rutters in the said book, and a trip to the Canton river in China in 1519 where he again met Pires. Aside from the fact that Rodrigues was born in the Azores, not much is known about him. His book, however, ranks him among the great cartographers of that era—he is the first European to have drawn and identified the archipelago now known as the Philippines.

Rodrigues admittedly was aided by maps and rutters made by Javanese pilots. Writing to the king of Portugal in 1512, Viceroy Albuquerque sent him a map taken from

a large map of a Javanese pilot containing the Cape of Good Hope, Portugal and the land of Brazil, the Red Sea and the Sea of Persia, the Clove Islands, the navigation of the Chinese and the Gores,[6] with their rhumbs and direct routes followed by the ships, and the hinterland, and how the kingdoms border on each other. It seems to me, Sir, that this was the best thing I have ever seen, and Your Highness will be very pleased to see it; it had the names in Javanese writ-

ing, but I had with me a Javanese who could read and write. I send this piece to Your Highness, which Francisco Rodrigues traced from the other, in which Your Highness can truly see where the Chinese and the Gores come from, and the course your ships must take to the Clove Islands, and where the gold mines lie,[7] and the islands of Java and Banda, of nutmeg and maces, and the land of the king of Siam, and also the end of the navigation of the Chinese, the direction it takes, and how they do not navigate farther. The main map was lost in *Frol de la Mar*. With the pilot and Pero de Alpoim I discussed the meaning of this map, in order that they could explain it to your Highness; you can take this piece of map as a very accurate and ascertained thing, because it is the real navigation, whence they come and whither they return.[8]

That the Javanese were skilled pilots possessing maps of the region is not to be wondered at. The Malays were great seafarers and their descendants crossed the uncharted seas of the Pacific to settle in Polynesia and the Hawaiian islands: it is said that they had a sea compass, based on a floating magnetic needle, long before Westerners invented their own. Two centuries before the Portuguese sailed to the East Indies, the mighty empire of the Madjapahit in Java flourished, extending its influence from Siam and Indo-China south to the Malay peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo, the Moluccas, the Philippines and as far north as Formosa. All this vast area could be controlled only through the sea lanes, and it is not to be wondered that Javanese pilots possessed maps of the region long before Europeans dreamt such a place existed.

On plate 20 of Rodrigues's book he draws part of the south coast of China and a large island he marked "Ilhas allagadas" (Surfy islands) which "may correspond to the vast archipelago of reefs and islets of Palawan," with four smaller islands to the east and part of two to the south, which "seem to correspond to the Philippines." The eminent authority on early Portuguese cartographers, Dr. Cortesão believes that Rodrigues might have been referring to Luzon island (the Luçoes in Pires's account) and we are inclined to agree with him.

NOTES

1. Armando Cortesão, *Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires* (London, 1944), 1:81. For a fuller, though more imaginative account, see Charles Mckew Parr's *So Noble a Captain*, 122-124.

2. Quoted by Cortesão from Barros, in *Suma oriental*, 1:28.

3. Cortesão, *Suma oriental*, 1:63.

4. Called Humunu by Pigafetta: actually called Homonhon today, an islet at the southernmost tip of Samar island in the central part of the archipelago.

5. Cortesão, *Suma oriental*, 1:133-134.

6. As the Ryukyus were then called.

7. Could this refer to the island of Mindoro, just south of Luzon which the Spaniards had named after the words "mina de oro"? It would lie across the route from the Ryukyus to the Spice Islands.

8. Armando Cortesão, *Cartografia e cartógrafos Portugueses dos seculos XV e XVI* (Lisboa, 1935), 2:125-126, and reprinted in his *Suma oriental* 1:78-79.

IX MURILLO VELARDE'S FAMOUS CHART

THE BEST-KNOWN map of the Philippines is that of Father Pedro Murillo Velarde, SJ, whose *Carta hydrographica y chorographica de las Islas Filipinas* was published in Manila in 1734.

Starting with the eighteenth century, cartographical curiosity over the archipelago had increased tremendously as mapmakers began to more accurately delineate the various countries of the world. The Spaniards under Miguel López de Legazpi had finished the conquest of the islands by the end of the sixteenth century, giving a truer indication to the outside world of the extent and shape of the various bodies of land and water that composed the archipelago. Knowledge about astronomy, geometry, trigonometry, longitudes and latitudes had become diffused during the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, cartographic knowledge about the Philippines remained woefully inexact and vague as ever.

To be sure Spain had sent experts in this line to its furthest colonial outpost: men like Juan de Siscarra, a military engineer who drew the fortifications of Manila and Zamboanga; and Juan Luis de Acosta, chief pilot who made a map of the Cagayan river in northern Luzon. But not until the regime of Governor-General Fernando Valdés y Tamón did cartographic activity in the Philippines flower.

In 1727, two years before Valdés took office, a map of the islands was published in Madrid by Admiral Francisco Díaz Romero and Sergeant Major Antonio de Chandia titled *Carta chorographica del archipielago de las Islas Philippinas*. Measuring 60 x 38 inches, it was by far the largest that had ever been edited in the islands: the Philippines occupies a space at the left center measuring 23 x 27 inches. The Marianas Islands, following the Spanish trend since the time Villalobos had rechristened the Philippines after the young crown prince, were now called the Isles of St. Lazarus. "This map," according to John Bach of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, "is distinguished for its painstaking draftsmanship of intrinsic features boldly pictured, its new and extensive geographical data proclaimed by a noteworthy multiplication of names, and its descriptive notes of a maritime and political nature which testify to an unusual advance in this respect."[1]

Sailing tracks of the Manila galleon to Acapulco and back are indicated on this chart. A note at the right top border advised navigators: "Those who navigate in this sea should proceed with great caution, because many unknown shoals and islands

Carta hydrographica y chorographica de las Islas Filipinas by Fr. Pedro Murillo Velarde (1734). Biblioteca Nacional de España. The borders depict native scenes and plans of Manila and Zamboanga. These were drawn by Francisco Suárez and engraved by Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, two Filipinos.

Annex 540

Topographia de la ciudad de Manila by Antonio Fernández de Roxas. 82.5 x 59.6 cm. Filipinas Heritage Library.

have been discovered on which many have perished according to reports on various occasions." Another note adjoining Formosa stated that this island was originally included in the conquest of the Philippines, but was later captured by the Chinese pirate Limdon (Limahong or Coxinga?). A third note in the southeastern part revealed that two priests and ten sailors aboard a ship dispatched from Manila in 1714 to explore the New Philippines (Palau) were massacred by the natives on one of the islands. The Díaz Romero map suffered two material defects: Mindanao was represented as rectangular in shape and Dinagat island (in northeastern Mindanao) was omitted.

Governor-General Valdés showed an active interest in maps. In 1730, the year after he assumed his post, a topographical map of Manila appeared, prepared by Antonio Fernández and engraved by Fray Hipólito Ximénez; another by the pilot Enrique Hermán depicting the new route taken by the Manila galleons; and another by Juan Antonio Cantova, the governor's chaplain, of Dolores island in the Caroline group. Valdés's interest was spurred by an order from King Philip V directing him to prepare a map of the archipelago.

In the year 1733 came an order from our Catholic monarch to prepare a map of these islands, and having been placed in charge of it, there came out (such a map) in 1734. In it I placed all the towns, points, coves, ports, shoals, reefs, routes, courses, rivers, forts and distances, as was possible in so difficult a matter and within the scale. And in a description of a few lines, and in the figures at the margin like Egyptian hieroglyphics, I have related the most memorable (events) therein, the most extensive possible under such a minimum of words and figures. And if anyone deems this to be boasting, let him undertake the work itself and he will see that it is more difficult to handle the pen and do this work than to stand by and criticize it.[2]

Undoubtedly, Father Murillo either had his map finished or very nearly so when the royal order came. T. H. Pardo de Tavera believes that this fact was known to Governor-General Valdés and prompted the latter to

entrust the task to the Jesuit—"otherwise, he could not have completed it in such a perfect manner in such a short time."[3]

This map, measuring 27 x 42 inches, was the most accurate and largest ever drawn of the archipelago and became a model copied by other cartographers for the remainder of the eighteenth century. As stated by John Bach:

This map shows a remarkable completeness in the names of coastal towns and an abundance of interior topography: sailing courses leaving Manila for New Spain (Mexico) are plotted via San Bernardino Strait as well as Cape Bojeador, while a course is also shown leaving Manila in a southwesterly direction for Spain. Magellan's sailing tract of 1521 is also laid out, but unfortunately a mistake was made in placing it along the east coast of Mindanao, instead of having it approach Samar in a westerly direction and touching the island of Homonhon, where the celebrated Portuguese made his first landing.[4]

As this work of Murillo was not only a map but also a sea chart,[5] a number of compass roses are symmetrically arranged on a large circle, the center of which is a compass rose representing a picture of the sun (drawn southwest of Burias island). Radiating from these roses is a complicated network of lines that cover the whole water area after the fashion of portolan charts on which

sea pilots followed and plotted their positions and courses.

On the medallion in the southwestern part of the chart appears an abridged history of the archipelago as follows:

On 10 August 1519, Ferdinand Magallanes left Seville, arrived in Cebu on 7 April 1521, and was killed on Mactan. Miguel López de Legazpi arrived in 1565 and on 24 June 1571 began founding Manila, capital of the Philippines, named after Señor Felipe II. These islands are numerous and rich: they have gold, wax, sugar, honey, tobacco, ginger, indigo, sibucao or Brazil-wood in a variety of colors, siguey, balate, cotton, cacao, civet, shell, ima, sulphur, pitch, rice, salt, wheat, maize, lemons, oranges, bananas and many fruits and edible roots, palo Maria, tamarind, cassia trees, Catbalogan seeds, dragon blood, lignum vitae trees, coconuts, bamboo, rattan and many kinds of palms, mahogany, tindalo and excellent lumber for ship; horses, carabaos or buffaloes, cows, pigs, deer, chicken and much fish.

In Mindanao, cinnamon and pepper grow wild; in some places there are pearls, amber, pinchbeck and iron. The land is very productive if it were cultivated.

They have an archbishopric and three bishoprics, one chancellor, three governments, twenty-one provinces or jurisdictions, eighteen *presidios*, an artillery foundry, factory of gunpowder, printing houses, etc.

Vue de Cavite dans la Baie de Manille (View of Cavite in the Manila Bay) by Jean F. de la Pérouse (1792). 17 x 11.5 cm. López Museum. Note how Filipinos have been depicted as Europeans by the French artist.
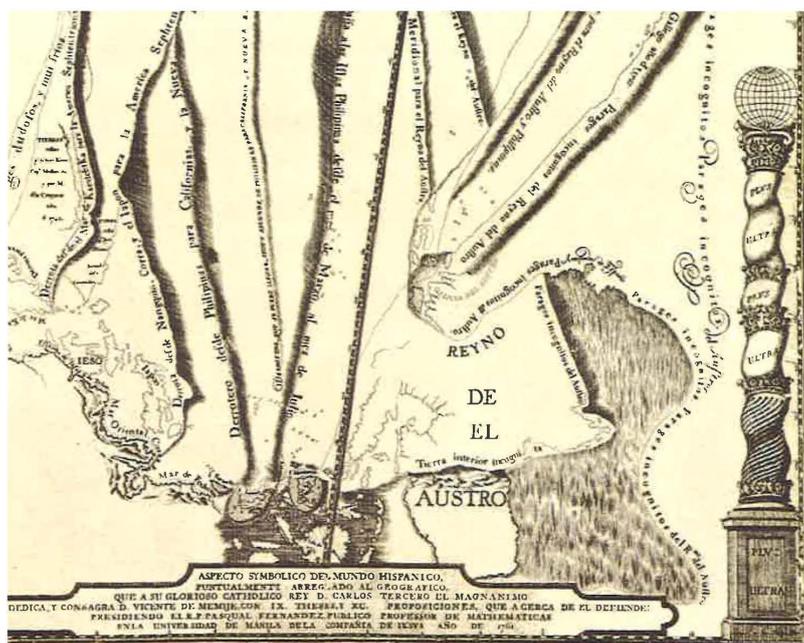
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Aspecto geographico del mundo His
Photographic copy supplied by He

The secular clergy have four dioceses totaling 142 towns and 131,279 souls. The Dominicans have fifty-one towns and 98,780 souls among the Tagalos, in Pangasinan and Cagayan. The Franciscans have sixty-three towns and 120,000 among the Tagalos and in Camarines. The Augustinians administer to Tagalos, Pampangos, Ylocos and Panay in 115 towns with 252,973 souls. The Jesuits administer to Tagalos, Bisayans and in Mindanao in eighty-eight towns and 160,199 souls. The Recollects have Mindoro, Caraga, Bisayas and Calamianes with 105 towns and 53,384 souls.

Remarkable is the growth and cultivation of these new Christians; they are ministered to in the Spanish language, in Tagalo, Sangley or Chinese, Pampango, Ilocano, Pangasinan, Cagayano, Bisaya, Camarines, etc.

The natives or *indios* are well built, good featured, brown in color, and much inclined to religion; to the Spaniards they are capable and turn out to be good writers, painters, sculptors, engravers, silversmiths, embroiderers, sailors, etc.

Below the medallion is a drawing of the *Victoria,* the *nao* "that was the first in the world to traverse the entire sphere." The title itself, at the right hand top corner, is a work of art in accordance with the prevailing style: it represents the Spanish coat of arms beautifully engraved and heralded by two cherubs whose trumpets each display a ribbon with these words: "Tibi servit et ultima tellus" (Even the furthest earth serves you) and "Pontus quoque subditur illi" (The ocean likewise is subject to him). A legend has been inscribed on a curtain supported by two female allegorical figures reading: "Carta Hydrográphica y Chorográphica de las Yslas Filipinas Dedicada al Rey Nuestro Señor/Por el Mariscal d. Campo D. Fernando Valdés Tamón…Hecha pr el Pe Pedro Murillo Velarde dla. Compa de Jhs. Cath. d. Canones sobre las Mapas y Relaciones mejores que han salido, y observaciones del Autor…En Manila, Año 1734…"

"Its claim to being a hydrographic chart in the modern sense of the term is supported by several sailing routes, a number of anchorages, and various outlying shoals. Judging from the many pictures of Spanish galleons, Chinese junks, and Moro *vintas,* one is impressed by the general aspect of peace and prosperity that flourished in these islands during a lull in Spain's frequent conflicts with England"—and yet, less than three decades later, Manila was to fall like a ripe plum for the asking in the hands of the British.

The annotations made by Murillo on the map itself are of interest to us more than two centuries later. In the

Aspecto geographico del mundo Hispanico by Vicente de Memije (1761). Photographic copy supplied by Hellen Wallis, British Museum.

northern part of Luzon, he wrote that a road existed on which a person could travel in three days to the remote valley of the Cagayan—an observation he omitted in the next edition because he found out that he had made a mistake. He noted that the only water to be found in the Cagayan islets, between Palawan and the Visayas, came from coconuts; and that the large island of Leyte was named Tandaya for the native chieftain of that place who had helped the Spaniards in 1543 when the ill-starred expedition of Villalobos reached those shores. Significantly, this map traces an inland water route from Lingayen in Pangasinan province through the Río Grande of Pampanga province and down the northern end of Manila Bay. An English manuscript map of about this period traces an inland canal along approximately the same route, and there can be no doubt that small vessels could navigate this water route two centuries ago. The accumulation of mud and silt with the years has clogged such a passage, although at high tide a slender *banca* or dug-out canoe can still negotiate the trip. On the southern part of Mindanao Murillo wrote that St. Francis Xavier, Jesuit apostle of the Indies, had been there. Subsequent research has disproved this claim, but the belief was prevalent at the time and even the *Cabildo* or cathedral chapter of Manila had erred in holding the same view.

What kind of a man was Father Murillo Velarde? The inscription on the map itself makes careful mention that he was a "cathedrático de canones sobre las mapas y relaciones mejores que han salido"—a university professor in canon law and on maps and the best chronicles that had appeared in the archipelago. In other words, he was *the* authority on maps, superseding his two good friends and contemporaries, Admiral Díaz Romero and Chandia, authors of the 1727 map of the western Pacific. He enjoyed the esteem of Fray Juan Francisco de San Antonio, chronicler of the Franciscan order in the Philippines, whose three-volume work contains a good summary of maritime geography in the archipelago. When Admiral José González Cabrera Bueno, one of the foremost navigators on Philippine trade routes, published his *Navegación especulativa práctica* in that same year of 1734, it was Murillo who placed the official seal of government approval and censorship on it, besides writing a brief summary of the exploits of such early navigators as Bartolomé Díaz, Vasco de Gama, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, Pedro Cabral, Ponce de Leon, Ferdinand Magellan, and Sebastián del Cano. This book is a technical treatise on the science of navigation in all its phases. It gives detailed instructions for the astronomi-

Annex 540
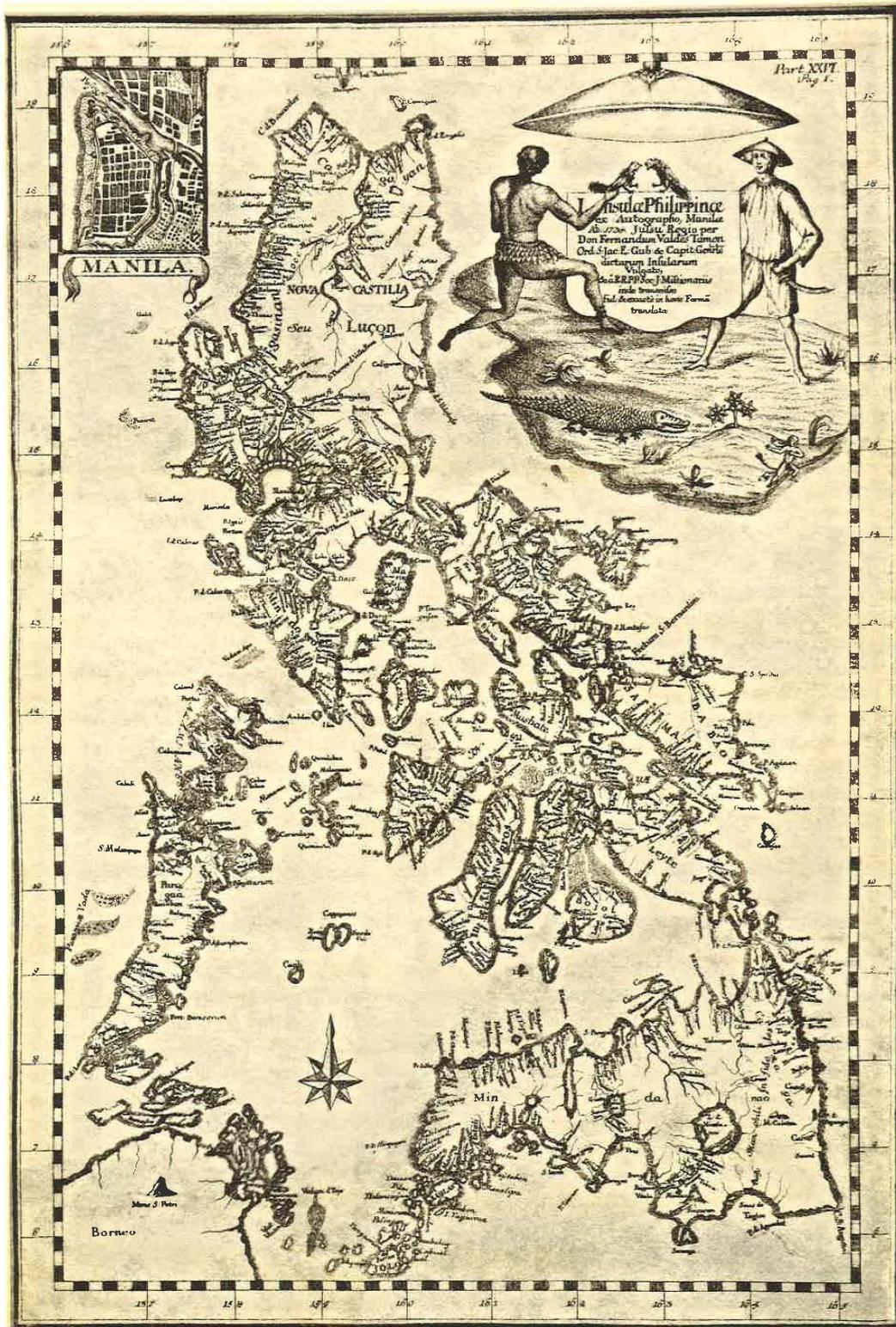
cal determination of latitude and longitude, carefully explains the construction of nautical charts, dwells upon the use of geometry and trigonometry in modern survey methods, and devotes several chapters to coast pilot notes and overseas sailing directions. A lengthy chapter is devoted to shipbuilding, an important factor in navigation, accompanied by an elaborate engraving of a full-rigged, three-masted, double-decked frigate with a list of all its different parts and necessary accessories.[6]

Pedro Murillo Velarde was born in the province of Granada, southern Spain, on 6 August 1696. His father was a sergeant major in the army that conquered Central and South America, while his mother was a descendant of Pedro de Valdivia, conqueror of Chile. He studied at the Jesuit schools in Murcia and Toledo, and from there passed on to the Universities of Granada and Salamanca where he graduated as a *bachiller* in sacred law. By that time, he was definitely decided on a religious career, and in 1718 he entered the Jesuit novitiate. Five years later, he was ordered to the Philippines where he occupied various posts in several parts of the archipelago. He left Manila in 1749 for Rome, and died in Spain just as he was about to start on his return journey, on 30 November 1753.

Even as a youngster, according to his first biographer and superior Father Bernardo Pazuengos, he evinced great interest in maps. While at Toledo the young Jesuit never forgot the map collection owned by the widowed queen of Spain, some made of silver, where towns, mountains and rivers were engraved with clarity and artistic feeling. "It is not presumptuous to believe that he executed the large variety of maps that adorned the corridors of the College of St. Ignatius of the Jesuits in Manila," stated the late Father Miguel Selga, SJ, a director of the Manila Observatory.[7] Unfortunately, this college was burned during the liberation of the city in 1945 at the termination of World War II.

Selga painted Murillo as a liberal who did not see eye to eye with the friar orders and conservative elements in the islands. In Murillo's *Historia de la provincia de Philipinas de la compañía de Jesus*, published in 1749 in Manila, he attacked the vested interests of those who maltreated the Filipinos, and came to the defense of the natives of Silang in Cavite and San Mateo in Morong against exploitation by the Spaniards. He was particularly critical of the horde of Spanish adventurers who came to the Philippines not to settle down but merely as "birds of passage"; and lamented that this type leaves no more a lasting imprint than the "waves of the sea." Selga

Insulae Philippinae by Fernando Valdés Tamón/Leopold Kaliwoda (1734). Copper engraving. Mariano Cacho Jr. Map Collection.

could not help adding: "If this was true of the Spaniards in 1734, it is a hundred thousand times truer of the Americans in 1934."

Father Murillo related in his *Historia* how, by standing on the bridge across the Pasig river, a spectator could see representatives of "all the nations of Europe, Asia, America and Africa passing by." One day, he relates, he heard a great commotion and on approaching found a Sangley, an Armenian and a man from Malabar conversing heatedly. "They all spoke in Spanish, but I understood no one, because I had not studied their languages," he said.

Manila, as the entrepôt of trade and commerce with China and Mexico, had indeed acquired a cosmopolitan flavor by 1734 as evidenced by the diverse groups of foreigners residing there at that time.

How the island of Luzon derived its name is subject to conflicting theories. Murillo Velarde believed with Antonio de Morga, Leonardo de Argensola and Francisco Colín that the word Luzon is derived from *lusong*, the Tagalog word for wooden mortars used in pounding husked rice. Fray Juan Delgado in his *Historia general* believed that the name is of Chinese origin, which the Spaniards gave to the island upon hearing that name from Chinese traders.[8] "These merchants," he said, "named this island with the name of Luzon, in the same manner they named Sonson the great China whence they came from, which properly signifies solid earth. Thus they came to Luzon from Sonson, which is the name they call China, as we have several times inquired from them…" Delgado asserted that the name Luzon has been confused by some historians with the wooden mortars thus called by the Tagalogs.

Prof. Wada Sei, leading Japanese scholar on pre-Magellanic Philippines, revealed that the name of Liusung appeared for the first time in Chinese official annals in 1375. Father Martino Martini, Italian Jesuit who advanced Western knowledge about China that was initiated by Father Matteo Ricci, drew a map entitled *Imperii Sinarum nova descriptio* published in Amsterdam in 1659, wherein the northern half of Luzon appears. Significantly, the name has been written on the map as Liusung.

On Japanese maps, the Philippines used to be represented by the word Ruson which is pronounced in Chinese as Lü-sung. The literal meaning of Lü-sung, according to Prof. Muroga Nobuo, has nothing to do with rice. Tomé Pires, the Portuguese chronicler who wrote about the East Indies, China and India in 1513, mentioned a country named Luçoes located at "about ten days sail beyond Borneo," probably after hearing about

Annex 540

it either from Javanese or Chinese pilots and travelers.[9] Among the European cartographers, Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville, royal geographer to King Louis XIV, was probably the first to introduce the correct sound of the name of Luzon by using the French cedille in the spelling of Lucon on his map *Les Iles Philippines* printed in Paris in 1652.[10]

At the right hand bottom of the last frame (Intramuros) appears in small letters: "Fran'co Suarez, Yndio Tagalo, la hizo." The name of this artist escaped both Pardo de Tavera and Father Miguel Selga, because the reproductions of the panels they obtained were not sufficiently magnified to reveal his name. Who was Francisco Suarez? Outside of the fact that he was a native Tagalog, we know next to nothing about him. Presumably, he must have been the outstanding artist-illustrator of his generation and he must have made other drawings for the Jesuits of which we have little record. His illustrations show a high artistic competence, and in the fidelity of his illustrations he excels over the drawings of European artists of that epoch who had never been in the Philippines but drew only from the sketches and descriptions of the authors and travelers. In this category are the drawings illustrating the voyage of Jean-Françoise de la Pérouse, the French navigator who visited Manila in 1787, which are technically proficient but the scenes and subjects are basically European in appearance and concept.[11] Suaréz's drawings rank next to that of an earlier unknown Chinese artist who in 1593 illustrated the manuscript codex of Governor-General Luis Pérez Dasmariñas now in the possession of Prof. C. R. Boxer of London University.[12]

Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, a Tagalog, not only engraved the Murillo Velarde map but was also its printer. This fact is duly noted by tiny letters at the right-hand bottom part of the map—"Lo esculpio Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay Indio Tagalo en Man. Año 1734."

Cruz was the outstanding engraver of his generation; from 1731 to 1788, according to Father Selga, he engraved at least twenty-three plates used in various books published in the islands. A minute examination of these plates shows the careful draftsmanship and fine execution of the subject matter. As Fray Juan Francisco de San Antonio has fittingly observed, Filipinos are "excellent makers of metal plates whose engravings have no equal in all these Indies, and I would even say more if I were immodest, as it can be patently seen from the many and fine plates they make every day."

Ascribed to Cruz as a printer are thirty-seven books, dating from 1743 to 1768. He was the official printer of the Jesuit press in the Philippines at that time, and in a statement revealed that the College of St. Ignatius was owner of the press, with half of the profits going to the institution and the remainder to press officials and laborers. Profits, he added, were little—at the most, 300 pesos a year; sometimes sixty pesos, and on the average, 100 pesos annually. A signed official document dated 23 September 1755 is the only written record we have of his personal circumstances. Here he stated he was a native of Tambobo, Binondo, that he was fifty-three years old and chief printer of the Colegio de San Ignacio de la Sagrada Compañía de Jesus. The *escribano* or clerk noted that Cruz did not need an interpreter, for he spoke Spanish with "sufficient fluency." With the expulsion of the Jesuits from the islands in 1768, and the consequent abandonment of their press, we have no record of Cruz having printed other books. Apparently, discouraged by the fate of his patrons, he retired from the printing—though not engraving—trade.

As a printer, Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay is a worthy successor of the first Filipino typographer, Tomás Pinpin, whose books are highly esteemed today by all collectors not only because of their rarity but for their neatness and legibility.[13]

Father Murillo Velarde was apparently not satisfied with having produced a chart subsequently described by Pardo de Tavera as "a beautiful work not only from the geographic point of view but also from the artistic taste shown in its composition and in the mastery and art of the engraving work," for he also had the map accompanied with engraved illustrated panels at the sides of the map. A French historian and geographer, Gabriel Marcel, discovered the existence of these drawings in a second copy of the original chart at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.[14] The most famous European cartographers of the preceding two centuries had been publishing maps with such borders—rather small, it is true, but they served to awaken the layman's interest in maps of far-off places of the world. These illustrated panels are not an integral part of the map—they consist of four separate parts which could be pasted at the sides—and that is probably one reason why only one original copy has been found in the world. As a whole they can be considered as a true index of native life and customs, flora and fauna, and a faithful picture of the various inhabitants that then lived in the Philippines. Each part consists of three frames separated by a line, with each frame measuring nine inches (23.7 cm) wide by seven

Various inhabitants of the islands drawn by Francisco Suárez to accompany the Murillo Velarde chart.

Sangleyes, ò Chinos.

Chriſtiano.   Gentil principal.   Peſcador con chanchuy y ſalacat. Cargador con pinga.

Eſpañol con payo alto.   Negro guiſando criollo de tierra   Indios peleando gallos

Cafres.   Canarin. Lascar.

Armenio ò Perſa chupando tabaco   Mogol   Malabar

Chriſtianos.   Mardicas. Japon.

Indio con tambon e India con   India con chinina y tapis, q   Biſaya con balarao
Abito para ir ala Igleſia   trae guayabas fruta ſilueſtre

Annex 540

inches (17.7 cm) high. A brief description of each frame follows:

1. Chinese residents, called *sangleyes*, are pictured in the first frame: a converted Christian with beard and flowing locks, looking very much like a European except for the shoes; a trader carrying a fan in one hand and a bag of gold in the other; a fisherman wearing a palm-leaf raincoat and helmet; and a laborer with his staff for carrying loads. The last three all wear their hair in pigtails or braids.

2. The appellation *cafres* or *kaffirs*, natives of Africa, has been given to a group of four, three of them wearing bells on their ankles and apparently dancing. Fully dressed natives of India are termed *canarin* for inhabitants of Canara, an ancient kingdom near Mangalore, and *lascar*, the generic term for Indian mariners.

3. The *mestizos*, a family of mixed Spanish and Filipino blood, are drawn in detail, including the woman's jewelry. Then appears a *mardica*, or native originally of Ternate in the Moluccas, complete with sword, spear and shield. After the withdrawal of Spanish forces in the Moluccas in 1662, the residents called *mardicans* emigrated to the towns of Maragondon and Ternate in Cavite, on the southern shores of Manila Bay. A Japanese with shaved head and samurai sword is a poor likeness.

4. A Spaniard appears fully dressed after the manner of Louis XIV, complete with greatcoat, lace cuffs and curled wig; behind stands a manservant with a high parasol to protect him from the tropical sun. This figure makes fun of such Spaniards, for Murillo held in contempt these proud, petty tyrants in official posts. Then appears an island-born negro, a creole, dressed like a dandy. By a negro, Murillo meant a person of brown hue, but not so dark as the indios. Two indios or natives are engaged in the common sport of cockfighting; behind are drawn a pair of Aëtas, "or mountain savages," complete with bow and arrow.

5. An Armenian has been confused with a Persian and is shown smoking a water pipe; followed by a *mogol*, "not as dark as those from Hindustan," wearing a beard and turban; and a native of Malabar in India with turban and earrings. All three wear sandals with pointed toes that curl upward.

6. A typical street scene is depicted: a barefoot indio with a *lambon* or black cloak and a native woman covered by a veil and wearing a scapulary around her neck, on their way to the church; a female street vendor selling guava fruits in a basket perched on top of her head; two boys, one naked and the other with a loincloth, car-

rying a piece of bamboo (probably containing vinegar or milk) and a crab; to the right is a Visayan with a dagger and a *balarao* or regional knife. In the background are three natives: one playing on a mandolin and a couple dancing the *comintang*, an ancient Filipino dance.

7. Rural life in the islands is shown in the next two frames. The first one shows a Filipino on a ladder cutting down some bamboos from a grove, with the observation that scaffolds for houses are made from it; followed by a farmer riding on a carabao or water buffalo; a boy holding a huge bat "with a head like that of a dog"; and monkeys climbing a coconut tree "from which is derived water, wine, oil, *tuba* (fermented drink) etc." In the background are papaya and jackfruit trees bearing fruits; a *bonga* or areca nut palm tree from which *buyo* or betel nut is derived and which is chewed by natives "just like tobacco"; an albino monkey; and a man carried by two bearers on a rattan stretcher or *hamaca*.

8. A fierce-looking crocodile with sharp teeth is drawn—"the rivers are full of these"; a boa constrictor or python, the tail wrapped around a pig and the other end around a branch to give it traction; a farmer behind a crude plow pulled by a water buffalo in the rice field; another farmer with his carabao pulling a bamboo sled; a nipa hut on four stilts; a white raven; a cacao tree; and a banana tree with the fruits dangling. Finally, in the left background, a woman is pounding rice in a wooden mortar called *luzon* after which, Murillo claims, "this island of Luzon has been called."

9. A plan of the Fort of Zamboanga in Mindanao has been drawn with meticulous detail, showing the residence of the governor, the barracks, chapel, stores, hospital and the Jesuit house.

10. The fort and peninsula of Cavite in Manila Bay occupies the next frame. The small towns along the coast to the city of Manila are named, such as Cavite Viejo, Binacayan, Bacoor, Parañaque, Malate, Ermita. A score of sailing vessels of all sizes and types dot the waters of the bay.

11. With the title *Ysla de Guajan* written on a ribbon at the top, this frame depicts the island of Guam in detail. "There are people only on the islands of Guam and Rota," states the caption, "with a population of three thousand souls." Two large Spanish ships and two native boats with outriggers have been drawn on either side of the island.

12. Lastly, the walled city of old Manila with nearby suburbs is pictured in the last frame. Only one bridge,

Rural scenes and plans of Cavite, Zamboanga and Manila, engraved by Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay (1734).

CARTE REDUITE

DES

ISLES PHILIPPINES

POUR SERVIR AUX VAISSEAUX

DU ROY

Dressée au Dépost des Cartes Plans
et Journaux de la Marine
Par Ordre de M. Rouillé Ministre et
Secretaire d'Etat ayant le Departem.t
de la Marine
1757

REMARQUES

ISLE FORMOSE

ISLES DE BASHI

Isles Babuyanes ou Balanes

NOUV.le CASTILLE
ISLE LUZON
OU LUZ

PANAY

ISLE BOHOL

MINDANAO

QUILAT

PARTIE DE
L'ISLE DE
BORNEO

called Puente de España, is shown leading to the south along a *calzada* or drive to Bagumbayan. The suburbs of San Miguel, the Parián, where Chinese were congregated, Santa Cruz, Quiapo, Binondo and Tondo are marked, likewise the hospital for sangleyes or Chinese residents along the northern banks of the Pasig River. The walled city is congested with buildings, official and private; among the latter are a dozen churches, schools and convents. The redoubts on the huge limestone forts bristle with cannons aimed against possible enemies from sea and land, while the citadel of Fort Santiago to the left at the mouth of the river contains a formidable assortment of armament. A wide and deep moat surrounds Intramuros, as the Spaniards called it, and the shore facing the bay did not extend for more than a hundred yards. A comparison with earlier sketches of Manila shows how the city and population had grown during the seventeenth century.

The map de la Cruz Bagay made for Murillo was not the only one he engraved in his lifetime. We have a record of a map of 1761 that bears his name: *Aspecto geographico del mundo Hispánico, que a su glorioso Catholico Rey D. Carlos Tercero el magnánimo dedica y consagra D. Vicente de Memije con IX theses y XC proposiciones que acerca de el defiende, presidiendo el R. P. Pasqual Fernandez, público professor de mathemáticas en la universidad de Manila de la compañía de Jesus, año de 1761.* As the title indicates, Memije had advanced certain postulates in the preparation of this map which he had defended at a public meeting presided by Father Fernández and held at the Jesuit university. The neat lines of the map and the polished strokes of the engraving enhance the prestige of Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay as the foremost engraver of maps that the Philippines has ever produced.

This map, however, is not as interesting as the companion drawing of the same year by Laureano Atlas titled *Aspecto simbólico del mundo Hispánico, etc.*, which represents the Spanish empire in the figure of a woman, her head being Spain itself and her feet the Philippines.[15] She holds a flaming sword cutting across England (in anticipation of the war with that country?)[16] and a chalice borne by two cherubs on the space occupied by Europe. The Latin inscription on the sword has been taken from the Bible (Psalm 58:13): "And they shall know that God will rule Jacob and all the ends of the earth." (In other words, Spain and not England was the chosen

Carte reduite des Isles Philippines pour servir aux vaisseaux du Roy by Jacques Bellin (1734 [1752]). Malacañan Museum Collection.

one to bring the word of God to primitive peoples.) The folds of her dress are the various routes across the Pacific Ocean taken by the Manila galleons during different months of the year. The equinoctial line becomes her staff from which flies a standard consisting of the Spanish coat-of-arms. For a necklace she wears a compass rose on her breast. The various regions of Spain are inscribed on the crown. Two pillars with a globe perched on top flank the bottom part of the map with the words "plus ultra" inscribed three times on the columns and the base. The legend appears at the central bottom part of the map. By far, this is the most imaginative map of the Spanish empire we have seen. Laureano Atlas is indeed a worthy companion to Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay as an artist and an engraver.

To the native artisans who helped him in the preparation of his maps and books, Murillo pays this magnificent tribute: "The Filipinos are extremely capable in any handicraft—there are excellent embroiderers, painters, silversmiths and engravers whose work has no equal in all the Indies, and could be considered elegant in Paris and Rome. I have seen paintings, drawings and maps from pens more beautiful, neater and handsomer than those taken from Paris."[17]

Ten years later in 1744, Murillo printed the second edition of his chart in Manila. This edition, one-fourth the size of the preceding work, was more a map than a sea chart: the title had been replaced by the medallion which used to be at the lower left-hand part of the earlier edition, and the historical description shortened. The dedication to the governor-general was omitted, probably because the incumbent official Gaspar de la Torre was neither liked nor respected by the Spanish colonials. In the place of the medallion appears the figure of St. Francis Xavier, "prince of the seas" with the Jesuit flag attached to a cross, riding on a shell pulled by seahorses and the apocryphal crab clutching a crucifix. Legend had it that St. Francis had lost the crucifix during a storm in the Moluccas. Twenty-four hours later, while walking on the sandy beach, a giant crab emerged from the sea carrying aloft the cross to return it to the Jesuit missionary. Obviously, Murillo was not averse to perpetuating a charming legend of his order.

A reprint of this second edition was made for Murillo's *Historia de la provincia de Philipinas de la compañía de Jesus* published by the Jesuit press in Manila in 1749. Although the printer remained Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, the person who engraved the frontispiece was another prominent artist of the epoch—Laureano Atlas, also a Tagalog. This fine engraving shows the two virgins, de

la Rosa of San Pedro Makatí and de la Paz y Buenviaje of Antipolo, standing on two pedestals, surrounded by clouds and cherubs, with the figure of the Holy Ghost as a dove at the top center. Naturally, finer and thinner paper was used for this reprint of the map so that it could be folded conveniently as a part of the book.

With the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Philippines in 1768 and in keeping with the general order of Carlos III banishing them from Spain and all her colonies, the properties of the order including its press passed into the hands of the archbishop of Manila, who opened a printing press under the diocesan seminary of San Carlos using the same machines and types formerly owned by the Jesuits. An inventory of the Jesuit property at the time of their banishment revealed that only seven of the Murillo maps remained for sale in Manila: one large (1734) edition, and six (1744) smaller ones, priced at two and one and half *reales,* respectively. (Eight reales were equivalent to one peso.)

Forty-four years later Fray Juan de la Concepción published his monumental fourteen-volume work *Historia general de Philipinas,* and included another reprint of Murillo's map of 1744. Since Concepción belonged to the Recollect order of the Augustinian friars, it did not seem proper to use a map made by a Jesuit whose order had been banned throughout Spain and her colonies; so erasures and changes were made on the copperplate— the line below Murillo Velarde's name, "de la Compañía de Jesus," was replaced by an ornament; the lion on top of the title was replaced by the Spanish coat-of-arms; two globes at the bottom of the title were eliminated and a ribbon added. The Jesuits, after their return in 1858, recovered the plate for the 1744 edition and tried to restore the original wordings for a map in their *Cartas de los P. P. de la compañía de Jesús la de misión de Filipinas.*[18] From this same plate the National Library of the Philippines printed hundreds of copies in 1934, together with the illustrated panels of 1734, on the occasion of the second centenary of its original publication.

The plates for the first or 1734 edition had as colorful a history—but without the same happy ending.

When the British captured Manila after its fall in 1762, Admiral Cornish sent to Lord George Anson[19] of the Admiralty "some Copper Plates of the Philippine Islands that were found in Manila." The London correspondent for *Scots Magazine* in Edinburgh reported on 21 April 1763:

There were found at the Manilas, among many other curiosities, and brought here by Col. Draper,[20] eight copper-plates on which are engraved a most particular map of the Philippine islands, adorned with the customs and habits of the inhabitants of those parts, which was done by order of the governor, in 1734, and dedicated to his Catholic Majesty. By an advertisement since inserted in the papers, some few impressions are proposed to be taken of these original copperplates.

Emma Blair and John Robertson reported in 1907 that:

what is probably one of these impressions was sold recently by the firm of Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, London, to the Library of Congress. This is the celebrated Murillo Velarde map. The map is printed in four sheets, as are also the pictures (three [frames] to a sheet) of the "customs and habits of the inhabitants," and are so arranged that the map is in the middle with the pictures grouped on its right and left sides. The map as sold by the above firm was arranged in two large sheets with a margin left so that the sheets could by easily joined. The whole map if pasted on one single sheet with the pictures would measure about 1,170 mm wide and 1,082 mm high. The difference in height between the two halves seems to be due to the lines not being drawn quite true on the plates, although shrinkage of paper may affect it slightly.[21]

A reprint of the 1734 map was therefore made in London, sometime after 1763. Unlike the original consisting of four sheets plus four panels, this reprint consisted of only "two large sheets"—which is the distinguishing difference between the two impressions. Not many copies of this reprint must have been made; and of the original, probably not more than a hundred or so must have been printed in Manila because of its unwieldy size. Probably less than a dozen copies are extant of the 1734 Manila edition.

The two copies to be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, as well as those owned by the author, consist of four sheets pasted into one large map; and judging from the photographic copy of the illustrated panels in Paris, each panel consisting of three frames form a separate piece. Each section of the map measures 14 inches (35.5 cm) wide by 22 inches (56.5 cm) high (outside printed dimensions). The lower half is one inch shorter: this seeming discrepancy can probably be explained by the fact that the lower halves of the map should have a blank margin at the top for its proper in-

Isole Filippine by Antonio Zatta (1785). Juana Madriaga García-Natividad Galang Fajardo Map Collection.

ISOLE
FILIPPINE

VENEZIA 1785
PRESSO ANTONIO ZATTA E FIGLI
Con Privilegio dell' Eccmo Senato

Nord, o Tramontana

Sud, o Mezzodì

Ovest, o Ponente

Est, o Levante

MAR DELLA CINA

MAR DEL SUD

sertion and pasting underneath the upper halves. The illustrated panels each measure 9.2 inches (23 cm) wide by 21.5 inches (54 cm) high; all four panels have a margin of at least an inch to permit pasting at the sides of the map, two on each side. Thus, there were eight copperplates: four for the map, and four for the illustrated panels.

Where are these plates today? The eight copperplates used in the Murillo Velarde of 1734, which were sent to London by Admiral Cornish after the capture of Manila by the British in 1762, cannot be found at the Hydrographic Department or the Admiralty in London. Dr. R. A. Skelton, then superintendent of the Map Room, British Museum, who made inquiries on behalf of the author, believes that "it is extremely probable that the plates were rubbed down for re-use at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Admiralty was beginning a large chart publication programme. This was a very common practice in view of the high cost of copper."

The Murillo Verlarde chart exerted a big influence on European cartographers. Many of them acknowledged their debt to the Jesuit mapmaker, but some blithely published it as their own with minor changes. A list of these maps follows:

1. *Plan de las Yslas Philippinas*, a manuscript map by an unknown author, dated circa 1742. The original is in the Museo-Biblioteca de Ultramar in Madrid, and a photographic reproduction appears in vol. 47 (frontispiece) of Blair and Robertson's *The Philippine Islands*.

2. *Mapa de las Yslas Philipinas hecho por el padre Pedro Murillo Velarde, etc.* Size 12½ x 19½ inches. Reproduced by Alexander Dalrymple, the English explorer, in his *Charts* published in London in 1744, vol. 2, p. 61.

3. A certain Leopold Johann Kaliwoda printed in Vienna in 1748 a reduced copy of the 1734 chart titled *Insulae Philippinae ex autographo Manilae* in the *Beschreibung deren Philippinischen Inseln*. A copy is to be found in the British Museum.

4. *Insulae Philippinae ex autographio, Manilae, aʼo:1734* appeared in *Der welt-bott Neue* published in Augsburg und Gratz, from 1726 to 1758. The author is not known, but he copied the 1734 chart, measuring 10½ x 15½ inches. This is probably a copy of the preceding map.

5. *Carte hidrogaphique et chorographique des Isles Philippines, dressée par le P. Pierre Murillo Velarde a Manile, en 1734.* George H. Lowitz of Nuremberg copied the 1734 edition with some changes and in a reduced form. The firm Heirs of Homann published it in

1760. The map measures 21 x 36 inches or about 6 inches less than the Manila chart.

6, 7 and 8. *Carte reduite des Isles Philippines* by Jacques Nicolas Bellin, the celebrated French geographer, Paris, 1752, 55 x 88 cm. Bellin notes in his map that his was not a "servile copy" of that by Murillo. He simultaneously published a memorial highly praising the work of the Jesuit, although he criticized the way the longitude for Manila had been reached. Murillo countered that he had based his calculations on the work of Spanish pilots and on that of Magellan himself. This chart formed map 98 of the *Hydrographie française* ordered by the Ministry of Marine. Simultaneously, or shortly thereafter, he made another smaller copy in two sheets, sizes 6 x 8 and 8 x 11 inches, to accompany the *Histoire générale des voyages* published at the Hague between 1747 and 1779. These sheets appear between pages 220 and 221 of volume 14. The same maps were used in *Le petit atlas maritime* published in Paris in 1764.

9. Using the reduced maps of Bellin, Jean François de la Harpe published his *Abrégé de l'histoire générale des voyages* in Paris in 1780.

10. *Isole Filippine*, by Antonio Zatta ę figli, Venezia, 1785. Size 29 x 38.5 cm. Outline is colored and no acknowledgment to the Murillo map is made.

11. Fray Concepción, as we stated previously, used the 1744 edition for his *Historia.* The copperplate for this edition must have escaped the attention of the British occupation forces; it must have remained with the printing press of the Seminario de San Carlos, which printed in 1788 the first four volumes of the *Historia*. The paper used in this edition was much inferior to either the original or reprint by Murillo in 1744 and 1749, respectively, and present-day collectors have a most difficult time keeping it intact and from falling into pieces.

12. *A Chart of the China Sea and Philippine Islands*, by Robert Carr, London, 1794. Size 29 x 23 inches. This map was "composed from the original drawing communicated by Capt. Robert Carr, and compared with the map of Pedro Murillo Velarde…as well as with the surveys of several British navigators." This has been reproduced by Blair and Robertson in the frontispiece of vol. 51.

13. Fray Juan Delgado in his *Historia general* includes a "faithful reproduction of the first map published in the Philippine archipelago" between pages 944 and 945, measuring 13¼ x 20¼ inches. This was taken from the 1744 edition.

14. In 1897, the French geographer Gabriel Marcel reproduced a greatly reduced form of the 1734 chart of Murillo, in the 1 November 1897 issue of the *Bulletin de*

géographie historique et descriptive published in Paris, bringing to public attention the existence of the illustrated panels depicting the inhabitants, customs, flora and fauna of the archipelago.

15. As we have previously noted, the Jesuits reprinted numerous copies of the 1744 map in their *Cartas* and in loose form, after their discovery of the lost plate, and 1934 on the second centenary of its publication, the Philippine National Library reissued from the same copperplate hundreds of copies together with poorly-done facsimiles of the illustrated panels.

16. The 1734 chart was reproduced together with the panels at the sides by the Bureau of Printing in 1921 in its pamphlet *Celebración del cuarto centenario del descubrimiento de Filipinas por Fernando de Magallanes*, a collection of speeches delivered in Manila on that occasion. The sequence followed in the panels in this and subsequent reproductions is, in our opinion, erroneous; judging from the photographic facsimiles furnished us by the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, and based on the location of the signatures of the artist, Francisco Suárez. The caption erred in claiming that this chart was the first complete geographic representation of the islands—for the Romero-Chandia map of 1727 or that of Colín in 1699 certainly antedated it—and that it consisted of two leaves, when it actually was made up of four separate sheets pasted together.

17. The Spanish Falangist party magazine, *Vértice*, published in 1946 a facsimile of the 1744 edition as reprinted by Concepción, on the occasion of the grant of Philippine independence. A colored facsimile, with the coloring done by Desmarvil de Almadén, was probably made simultaneously.

So important is Pedro Murillo Velarde's map to Philippine cartography, so meticulous is the engraving and so faithful are the illustrations, that in all likelihood it will continue to be reproduced periodically in the years to come.

NOTES

1. John Bach, "Philippine Maps from the Time of Magellan," *Military Engineer*, July-August 1930, 356-357.

2. Murillo, in Juan de San Antonio's *Chrónicas de la apostólica provincia de San Gregorio de religiosos descalzos de N.S.P. San Francisco de las Islas Philipinas, China, Japon, etc.*, vol. 1 (Sampaloc, 1738-1744).

3. T. H. Pardo de Tavera, "Notas para una cartografía de Filipinas," *Cultura Filipina* (Manila, November 1910), 141.

4. Bach, 357.

5. This difference between maps and sea charts has been stressed by Father Miguel Selga, SJ in his *Los mapas de Filipinas por el P. Pedro Murillo Velarde SJ*, no. 4, vol. 2 (Manila Observatory, 1934).

6. This is one of the rarest books printed in the Philippines and from the typographic point of view of considerable interest because of the reproduction of logarithms and other difficult technical tables. The bibliographer Wenceslao E. Retana calls Cabrera a "veritable sea wolf" while the historian Martin Fernández de Navarrete praises him highly.

7. Although Selga's work is comparatively recent, copies are rare because of the widespread destruction in the Philippines caused by the world war.

8. Juan J. Delgado, *Historia general sacro-profana. política y natural de las islas del poniente llamadas Filipinas* (Manila, 1892), 14.

9. Armando Cortesão, *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires* (London, 1944), 1:133-134.

10. Nevertheless, Cortesão points out that in the atlases of two Portuguese mapmakers, Lázaro Luis (1563) and Fernão Vaz Dourado (1580), the inscription "Luçoes" appears.

11. Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de la Pérouse, *Voyage de la Pérouse autour de monde publié conformement au decret du 22 avril 1791*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1797). Plates 41, 42, 58 and charts no. 39, 43 and 46 of the atlas concern the Philippines.

12. C. R. Boxer, "A Late Sixteenth Century Manila MS," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (April 1950). The portions and illustrations about the Philippines have been discussed by the author (jointly with Mauro Garcia) in his monograph "The Manner, Customs and Beliefs of the Filipinos of Long Ago" printed in the *Philippine Journal of Science* 87, no. 4 (December 1958).

13. Wenceslao Retana in his *Aparato* reproduces some of the notable works of Cruz Bagay, Francisco and Luis Suárez, and Laureano Atlas; he is lavish in his praises for the excellent work done by these Filipino craftsmen.

14. In his *La carte des Philippines du Pere Murillo Velarde* (Paris, 1898), an offprint from the *Bulletin de géographie*, no. 1 (1897).

15. The originals of these maps are to be found in the British Museum in London, and we acknowledge our gratitude to Dr. Helen Wallis, assistant keeper of the Map Room, for having secured photographic copies of these and other maps appearing herein.

16. King Carlos III of Spain entered into a pact with the Bourbon rulers of France on 25 August 1761, foreshadowing the break in diplomatic relations between Spain and Britain in January of 1762. See José Montero y Vidal, *Historia general de Filipinas* (Madrid, 1894), 2:12.

17. In his *Geographía historíca de las Islas Philipinas* (Madrid, 1752), 8:37.

18. No. 5, printed in Manila, 1887.

19. The same George Anson who captured the Manila galleon *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* off San Bernardino Strait in 1743 during his voyage around the world.

20. William Draper, commander of the British land forces that took Manila. He was later knighted for his exploits.

21. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 49:63.

Capture of Manila galleon by Baron George Anson (1743). Anson's seizure of the *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* off Samar was part of the British campaign of naval piracy against Spain during that period.
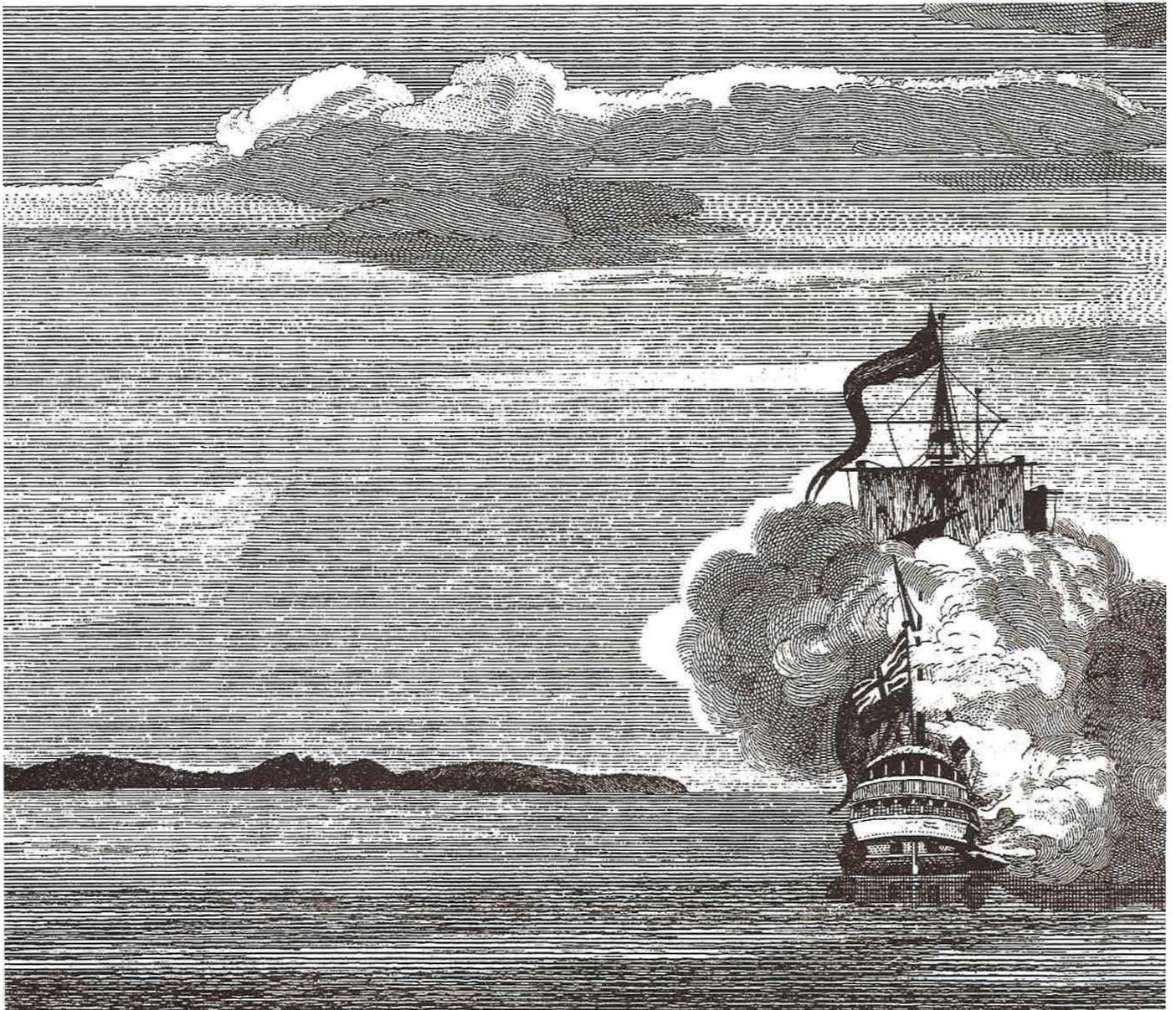
X HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES
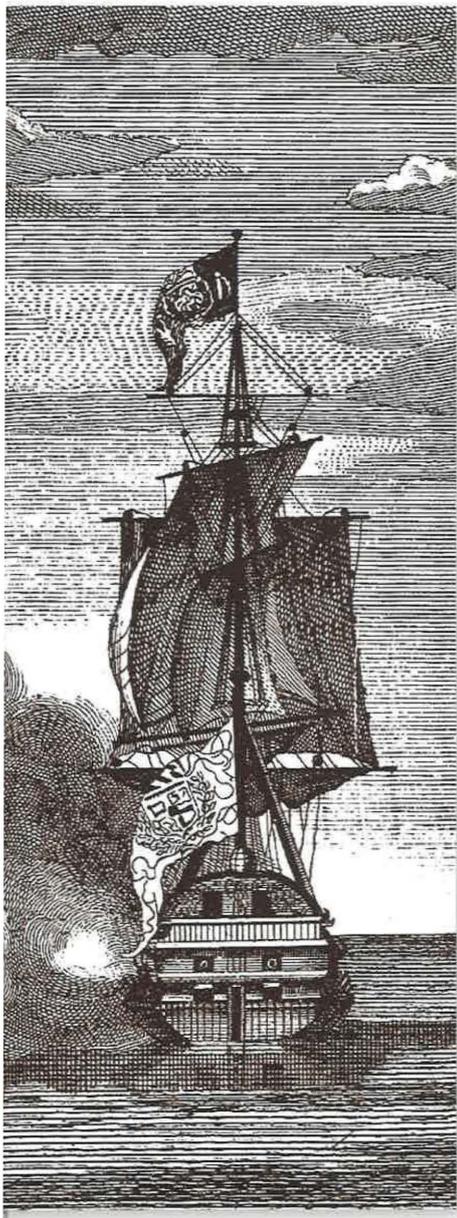
A S THE EIGHTEENTH century came to a close, Spanish authorities made a concerted effort to chart the various waters of the Philippine archipelago. The Comisión Hydrográphica Española entrusted the professional charting of the islands to Alejandro Malaspina who in 1793 completed a preliminary study of the hydrographic map of the archipelago. As a result of this reconnaissance, a general chart of the Philippines was published in Madrid under the title *Carta general del archipiélago de Filipinas levantada en 1792 y 93 por los comandantes y oficiales de las corbetas Descubierta y Atrevida, durante la campaña Qe Rl Orn hicieron con este objeto, enriquecida de nuevos reconocimientos que han practicado después de otros oficiales de la armada. Construída de órn superior en la direccion hidrográfica. Publicada en 1808.*

This chart is representative of the new conceptions in cartography that prevailed as the nineteenth century started. Map publications were now divided into two distinct classes: nautical charts belonging to navigation only, and therefore excluding all land features not essential to navigation; and topographic maps covering land studies independent of the water area which was left in blank. This tendency had been gathering momentum in the preceding two centuries, slowly but true enough. With this separation a new era started in the nineteenth century: mapmakers tried to best their predecessors by promoting higher standards of accuracy, and withdrawing the ancient usage of elaboration, such as the inclusion of flora and fauna, vessels and human figures.

The *Carta general* divides the entire archipelago into small squares. A number of sailing courses are indicated. It confirms the location of the Scarborough Reef to the west, and verifies the nonexistence of three large shoals drawn for many decades to the west of Cape Bolinao in central Luzon. Heavy shorelines indicate where reconnaissance had been effected, while the hairlines signify districts that had not yet been subjected to explorations. A note in the title points out that astronomical observations of latitude and longitude were made at Manila, Palapa (northeast extremity of Samar island) and Zamboanga. The so-called "geometric plan" of the passage in San Bernardino Strait is included in the northeastern corner of the map, showing the tracks actually followed by the two corvettes. The mountain shown in the inset is the active volcano Mount Bulusan.

73

The Malaspina expedition to the archipelago proved unfortunate to its leader. He was jailed soon after his return to Spain and exiled. Another member of the group, Colonel Antonio Pineda, famed as a naturalist, died of liver trouble in Badoc, Ilocos Norte, in June 1792. Aside from the scientific members of the expedition aboard the two corvettes, the *Descubierta* and the *Atrevida,* the complement carried artist Fernando Brambila. He has left behind more than a dozen pen-and-ink drawings of Manila and its environs, including illustrations of Zamboanga, Sorsogon and Samar, as well as typical inhabitants of these places. Another artist, a painter named Juan Ravenet, executed the death scene of Pineda from which an engraving was made in Madrid in 1795 and included in the book titled *Viaje politico-científico alrededor del mundo por las corbetas Descubierta y Atrevida al mando de los capitanes de navío D. Alejandro Malaspina y D. José de Bustamante y Guerra desde 1789 á 1794.* The originals of these illustrations may be found at the Museo Naval in Madrid.

M. de Guignes, French sinologist and ambassador to Beijing who visited Manila in 1797, described the memorial to Col. Pineda in the suburb of Malate as beautifully designed and "more of a fountain than a mausoleum." De Guignes's *Atlas* carries two maps of the archipelago; one of them, the Bay of Manila, is credited to Malaspina.

"The Voyage of Malaspina is the most brilliant testimony that our (Spanish) government gave in the previous century of its praiseworthy interest in augmenting scientific knowledge about our globe," according to Spanish historian Martín Fernández de Navarrete.

For the rest of the nineteenth century, the Spanish navy carried out the hydrographic charting of Philippine waters under the supervision of La Comisión Hidrográfica in Madrid, where from time to time new charts were published.

In 1849, Francisco Coello, a lieutenant colonel in the Spanish corps of engineers, published the first of three sheets of the Philippines on a scale of 1:1,000,000. The other two appeared in 1850 and 1852, and are part of a map series called *Ultramar posesiones.* Each sheet measures about 30 x 42 inches, and together form the largest map ever published of the archipelago. Its preparation is credited to Antonio Morata and the historical information accompanying it to Pascual Madoz. While the topographical data are of doubtful accuracy, according to a later authority, the lengthy report on the natural conditions, resources, inhabitants, industries, commerce, and political and religious subdivisions of the islands is both instructive and interesting. Undoubtedly, Coello was imitating earlier the style of Murillo Velarde in including detailed information about the islands.

British interest in the Philippines arose with the capture—for the first time—of a Manila galleon off the tip of Lower California in 1587. A young English nobleman, Thomas Cavendish, after obtaining a royal commission from the lord high chamberlain and mortgaging his ancestral estates to outfit three ships, followed in the footsteps of the renowned Sir Francis Drake by preying on Spanish shipping in the colonies. After plundering the *Santa Ana* of her gold, silver, silks and other valuable merchandise, he sailed across the Pacific Ocean on a course set by Alonsó de Villadolid, pilot of the Spanish galleon.[1] He also impressed into his service three Filipino seamen and two Japanese, probably the first Asians to serve under the British flag. Presumably the sea charts of the galleon were confiscated by Cavendish who made excellent use of them. Reaching Capul, an island at the southernmost tip of Luzon in San Bernardino Strait, he revictualed his ship. Then he paused at Arevalo on the south coast of Panay to burn a new galleon which was then being built at the shipyards there, but he was repulsed. Cavendish, finding that his armed forces were insufficient to attack Manila, headed instead for Jolo, the Malay archipelago, and later on home to England where he was feted by Queen Elizabeth as a returning hero. His visit to the islands was duly recorded by Dudley in one of the charts contained in *Dell' arcano del mare* printed in 1646.

The exploits of Morgan, Drake and Cavendish inspired other English corsairs, notably William Dampier, to try and capture another galleon; but not until 1709 was the *Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación* captured by Woodes Rogers near Lower California. The expedition of George Anson in 1740-1744 was conducted by the British navy—this time, it was no longer a private venture, but a national undertaking. The wily British commodore, instead of lying in wait off the California coast, crossed the vast Pacific on his flagship the *Centurion* and in May 1743 captured the incredibly rich *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* off the Cabo de Espíritu Santo in Samar island. Among the prizes captured by Anson was "a chart of all the Ocean between the Philippines and the coast of Mexico which was made use of by the galleon in her own navigation."[2]

When Spain entered the Seven Years' War in Europe by allying herself with France in 1762, it gave the Brit-
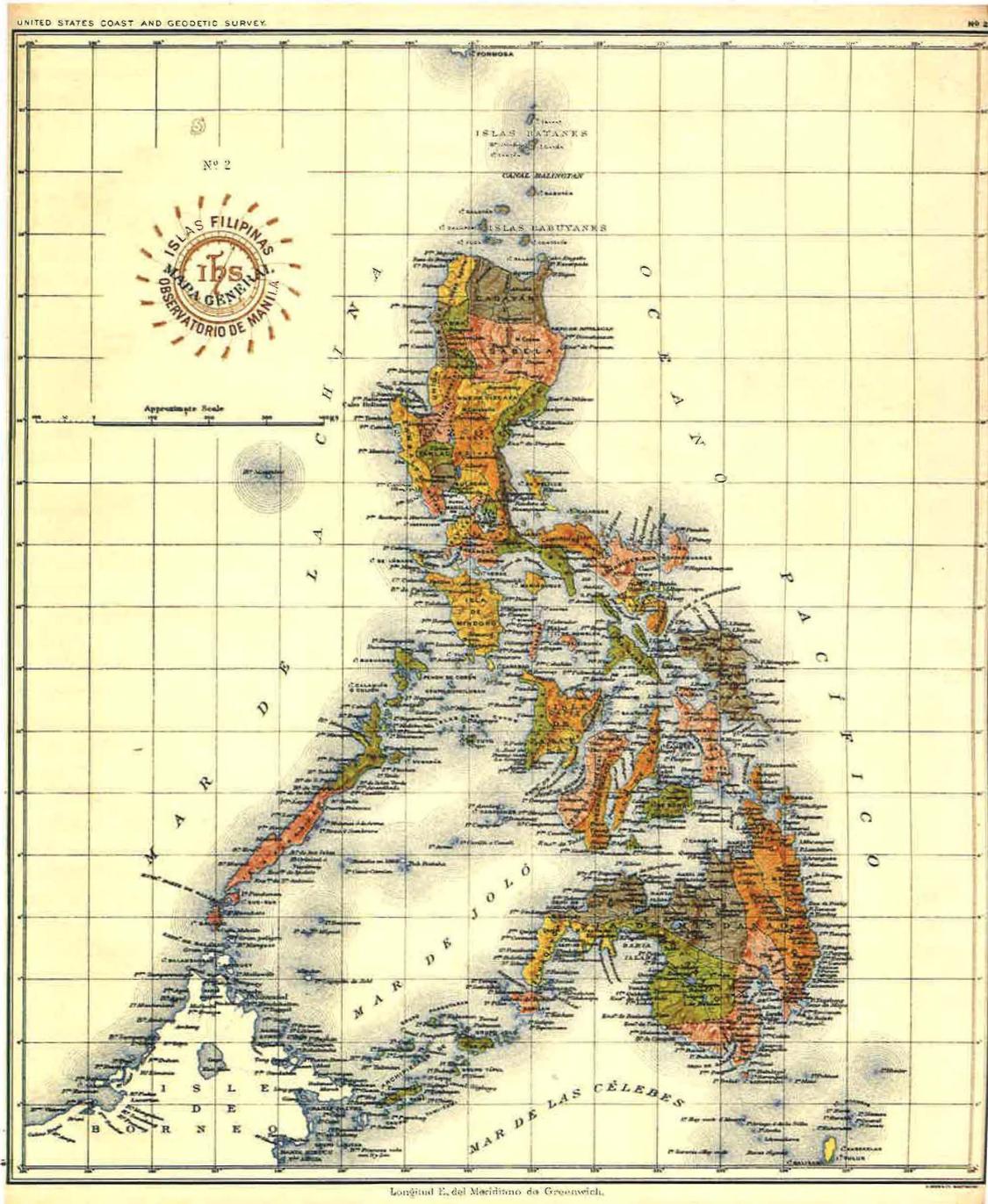
No. 2 mapa general. Islas Filipinas observatorio Manila by José Algué (1899). Vibal Foundation Collection. This was part of a colored atlas published in 1900 by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, and considered one of the most complete and accurate surveys of the islands at the time.
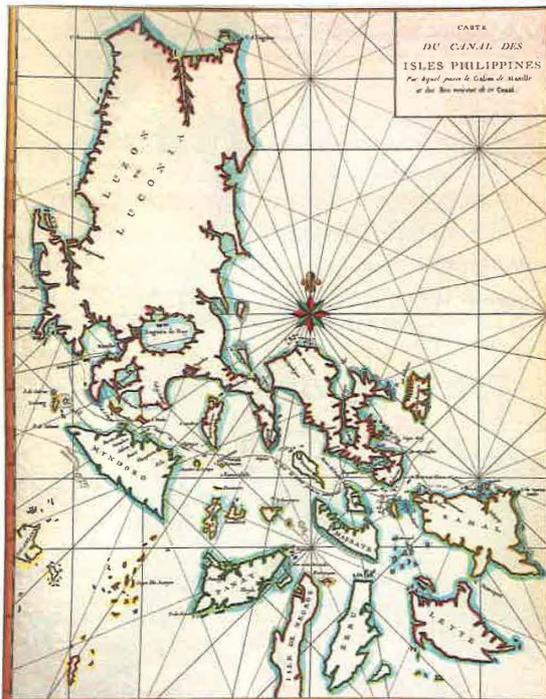
Carte du canal des Isles Philippines by Rigobert Bonne (1749). Juana Madriaga García-Natividad Galang Fajardo Map Collection.

ish an excellent opportunity to attack and seize Manila. Colonel William Draper from Canton, China had outlined a plan for the conquest and in September of 1762, with a fleet of eighteen ships commanded by Admiral Samuel Cornish and sepoys from India, the British forces occupied the city with very little resistance. As stated in the previous chapter, the copperplates of Murillo Velarde's chart and panels were dispatched to the British Admiralty in London. The huge 2,000-ton galleon *Santísima Trinidad* was captured a month later near the Cabo de Espíritu Santo, divested of her rich cargo, and towed to Plymouth for auction to the highest bidder.

One of Admiral Cornish's captains was William Nichelson who drew the nautical chart of Manila Bay that was not surpassed in accuracy for more than a century afterwards. The configuration of the shoreline was presented with such exactness and the depth figures agree so closely with recent surveys that this chart has been considered as practicable as any in existence today. The chart contains a large-scale plan of Manila and Cavite, a complete list of the British fleet, tidal data, and bearings about the dangerous San Nicolás shoal

between Corregidor and Cavite. The only fault was a minor error in the astronomical determination of the position of Manila: it came to within 4' of the true latitude and 39' of the correct longitude—unquestionably the best approximation made on maps of the Philippines up to the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The return by the British of Manila to the Spaniards proved, for one thing, that they had no colonial designs on the archipelago. But the events spurred the British admiralty into starting hydrographic surveys of the area around the islands. Alexander Dalrymple, who had explored the South Pacific at about that time, was the first hydrographer appointed to the British Hydrographic Office, and his numerous charts of the seas west and south of the Philippines are a tribute to his unflagging efforts.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the British admiralty made surveys of the west coast of Palawan: studies which supplemented those made by the Spanish Hydrographic Commission, and widely used until the first decade of the twentieth century when the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey conducted its own survey of this and other areas of the Philippines for the use and safety of ships and sailors at sea.

When the Americans occupied Manila on 13 August 1898, they found a manuscript atlas of the country by Enrique d'Almonte y Muriel, a Spanish mapmaker who had been occupied with that task for the preceding decade. This atlas contained twenty-three sheets, each 13 x 21 inches, and the entire archipelago was presented at a scale of 1:800,000. "This masterpiece of cartography may be regarded as the climax of maps bequeathed to posterity by the scores of Spanish geographers," stated Bach. "From numerous comparisons with the explorations which occurred during the American administration, it has been proven beyond a shadow of doubt that d'Almonte's atlas and his series of maps of the principal islands eclipsed both in accuracy and completeness all the other topographic maps of the period."

The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey did not see fit to publish this atlas, and instead printed in 1900 the *Atlas de Filipinas* by Father José Algué, SJ.

Upon the arrival in Manila of the Philippine Commission headed by Jacob Gould Schurman, it was learned that the Jesuit fathers had been preparing a collection of highly accurate maps of the archipelago. This collection was therefore published by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in Washington, D.C. in the form of an atlas in colors. The work of Algué, who was then the di-

rector of the Manila Observatory, received wide circulation and filled a long-felt want for good maps on the Philippines. It is interesting to note that the technical work was executed wholly by Filipino draftsmen, a fact duly acknowledged in the introduction to the atlas.

American interest in the Philippines, cartographically speaking, started with the voyage of Captain Charles Wilkes who headed a United States exploring expedition around the world. He visited Manila and Sulu in 1842, and in his book titled *Hydrography*, a two-volume atlas published in Philadelphia in 1861, he devoted several charts to the Philippines, notably Sulu. The victory of Commodore George Dewey in Manila Bay on 1 May 1898 suddenly focused American public attention on the Philippines, and in the next few years a steady stream of maps and charts were published by private and official entities. At first, the U.S. Navy printed the greater part of these charts, because interest in the archipelago started with a naval action, but as army contingents began to flow into the islands and military skirmishes became common the number of maps prepared and issued by the U.S. War Department reached an impressive volume. In the year 1899, about 90 percent of the maps published on the Philippines were made and printed by either the U.S. Army or Navy. The tendency continued in 1900 and 1901 as the Filipino revolutionary forces defied American troops, until with the capture of General Emilio Aguinaldo the restoration came to a close and the plethora of maps abated.

The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey took over the job of mapmaking, even before the last shot had been fired, on 1 January 1901. Large-scale individual and regional maps were published from time to time. The Philippine counterpart of this office, known as the Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey, assumed the work with the establishment of the third Philippine Republic on 4 July 1946.

The Algué atlas became the standard work on the Philippines for the first four decades of the twentieth century until 1941 when the Commonwealth government published vol. 5 of the 1939 Census Reports entitled *Census Atlas of the Philippines*. This work contained the following maps: one of the Philippines, twenty-four provincial maps on a scale of 1:500,000 drawn on a polyconic projection, two on the distribution of population, four on climate and weather, four on economic areas, and seven on the history of Philippine cartography. These seven reproductions are those of Pigafetta, Sanson, Colín, Antonio de Chandia, Murillo Velarde,

William Nichelson and Alejandro Malaspina. Each of the provincial maps measured 32 x 17 inches, or 55.5 x 43 cm.

This atlas revealed that the archipelago consisted of 7,100 islands, but only 462 comprise an area larger than one square mile. Furthermore, instead of the previous figure that the land area totaled only 114,000 square miles, the Philippines actually had an area of 115,600 square miles or 229,404 square kilometers. This work is valuable in that it gives a complete list of all the islands, lakes, provinces and municipalities in the Philippines in alphabetical order, together with their size. The maps were printed by the Philippine Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey in Manila, while the technical part of the work on the maps were made under the supervision of C. Lim and draftsman J. Diquiatco, both of the survey bureau.

This census atlas is the most complete ever published of the Philippines, containing meteorological, commercial and other data, and it would be difficult to excel it or add something new and substantial.

NOTES

1. William Lytle Schurtz, *The Manila Galleon*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1959), 309. This detailed narrative of the ships that plied between Manila and Acapulco for more than two centuries bears more than passing attention.

2. George Anson, *A Voyage Round the World in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV*, 15th ed. (London, 1776), 385.

Annex 541

Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (2010)

THE
TROUBLED
EMPIRE

CHINA IN THE YUAN AND
MING DYNASTIES

Timothy Brook

9

THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

GUAN FANGZHOU went to sea. This was not something he would ever have imagined doing earlier in life. He was a successful silversmith with a flourishing business in Suzhou, made more so by lucrative government commissions. This was in the late 1570s, when Chief Grand Secretary Zhang Juzheng was reforming the entire fiscal system by cashing out the old labor levies and converting them into silver payments. Silver had become the currency of the age, literally as well as figuratively. For a silversmith, it was a good time to be in the business, and Guan had become a wealthy man.

Guan had no obvious ties to the sea, but he would have known merchants who did. Though not itself a seaport, Suzhou was the commercial pivot of the entire network of land and sea trade radiating from the Yangzi delta. Wholesale merchants handling bulk exports assembled their cargoes here and then barged them down to the tidal harbors in Taicang, Shanghai, and Jiaxing, where they stowed them on the cargo ships heading down the coast or out to Japan. The lifting in 1567 of the ban that had crippled maritime trade for four decades gave the export business a huge boost. Trade to Japan was still under interdiction, but there was little difficulty in fudging cargo destinations with the customs officials. Guan would have been indifferent to the silks and ceramics going out. But he would have been watching with intense interest the arrival of the highly valued material captains were bringing back from every foreign trade entrepot around the South China Sea: his stock in trade, silver. Lifting the coastal ban meant that silver was entering the country at a far greater rate than the legal mines in Yunnan and the illegal ones scattered

throughout the south were producing bullion. The Jiangnan economy was flush with cash, as Zhang Juzheng well understood when he pushed the tax system onto the silver standard.

Guan would never have had to go to sea if he had not been found out. Everyone knew that a sharp silversmith had a hundred ways to trim the silver that came into his possession to his own advantage. Guan went too far, defrauding the government to the tune of a thousand ounces. When his embezzlement was exposed, he was thrown in the judicial prison of the Suzhou Guard to await a directive from Beijing on punishment. Should Guan be found guilty under article 487 in the Ministry of Works section of the Ming Code dealing with ordering more materials for a project than was needed? If so, that statute referred the judge to the scale of penalties in article 287 in the Ministry of Justice section dealing with custodians stealing money from state treasuries: if the theft was valued at the equivalent of forty ounces of silver, the penalty was decapitation. Or should the penalty be taken from the next article (288) on ordinary people stealing money from state treasuries? If so, the theft had to reach eighty taels before the penalty was execution, in this case by strangulation. As Guan's theft went well above that threshold as well, the only question was which form of execution should be applied. Article 487 imposed decapitation, whereas article 288 demanded strangulation. Strangulation was preferred, as it left the body intact and posthumously able to receive sacrifices and achieve rebirth. Guan enjoyed a temporary reprieve while local officials awaited the authorization.[1]

The warden of the prison, surnamed Wang, was related to Guan's son by marriage. It was a connection Guan was quick to capitalize on. Warden Wang was known to be an easy-going jailer in any case. Guan soon worked out an arrangement that allowed him to come and go from the prison pretty much as he pleased, so long as he was back behind a locked door every evening. Then came the day when Guan left the prison and failed to return by sundown. The imperial censor exploded when he heard of the escape and ordered that Warden Wang should bear whatever punishment the Ministry of Justice sent down for Guan on the principle that the crime had to be punished even if the original criminal was unavailable. The pressure was now on to find Guan before the sentence was carried out. Wang's family spent a fortune sending out spies all over the region to track Guan down.

There was widespread sympathy with the warden's plight, so a local official ordered his constables to join in the hunt. It was to no avail. The

only scent they picked up led to the sea. It seems that Guan had found his way onto a ship. The constables' best guess was that he had sailed down the coast, so they went in the same direction, scouring the ports of Fujian and Guangdong. Despite their best efforts, they came up empty-handed. Guan had disappeared without a trace.[2] But this, as we shall see, was not the end of the case.

Artifacts of Maritime Trade

At one end of the Eurasian continent, a silversmith slipped down a canal to a port on the south bank of the Yangzi River estuary, got on a ship, and headed out to sea. At the other end of the continent, a library in a town up the Thames River from the port of London took delivery of its first Chinese book. In the larger scheme of things, it was a precocious acquisition. The year was 1604. London's first shipment of Chinese tea, till then an untasted beverage in Elizabethan England, would not arrive for another five years.

The town to which the book was destined was Oxford. The university library had been founded barely four years earlier, the late-career project of a retired civil servant named Thomas Bodley (1545–1613). His timing was apposite. Gutenberg had adapted the Chinese technology of movable type printing less than a century earlier, and the uptake had been swift. Universal knowledge once required reading a limited number of books. Now that number was unlimited. No one person could own copies of everything. Scholars had to band together; common libraries were now necessary. Bodley had a particular interest in books published in what were then called "modern languages" to distinguish them from the classical languages of Greek and Latin. As a young man, Bodley recounts, he was "desirous to Travel beyond the Seas, for attaining to the Knowledge of some special Modern Tongues" and had spent four years in Italy, France, and Germany doing just that. He understood that his library's mission should be to acquire books and manuscripts in all languages, not just those he knew but other languages as well.[3] And so it was in 1604 that Bodley took receipt of his first Chinese book.

Bodley probably acquired it through one of his purchasing agents in Amsterdam, who in turn bought it from someone in the Dutch East India Company. The VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie) had been incorporated just two years earlier. Its creation was a masterstroke of the Estates General, the fledgling Dutch government, which forced the first

generation of Dutch merchants trading in Asia to compete with the Portuguese and the Spanish rather than with one another. Within a decade, Amsterdam replaced Lisbon as the point of arrival for goods coming from the East. Books were rare objects among the early goods offloaded onto Amsterdam's wharves. They were mere curiosities, as no one in Holland or England could read Chinese. But Bodley saw the point of buying them, for one day, he was sure, someone could unlock the knowledge they contained.

Chinese books were random acquisitions in Bodley's day. In 1635 the Bodleian Library, as it became known, received a few volumes from its first major gift of Asian books, one of several donations from William Laud (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of the University. Laud liked to collect a range of Asian books and manuscripts, he too being confident that English scholars would eventually master these languages. Three years earlier, Cambridge had appointed its first professor of Arabic; a year after the gift, Laud himself installed Oxford's first Arabicist. Laud's donation the following year included one more Chinese book.[4] Most of Laud's Chinese books are ordinary commercial printings of novels and primers, the sorts of books one might expect a sea captain's family to own as pleasure reading or instruction for his children, not what a Ming scholar would acquire for his library. But there is one book Laud donated that is more precious to historians than what the greatest Ming scholarly libraries owned. Presented to him in 1639 by a visiting Jesuit, it is a manuscript copy of a rutter, a navigator's guide (in words, not in maps) to sea routes connecting China to the world. Catalogued by the handwritten title on its cover, *Dispatched on Favorable Winds (Shunfeng xiangsong)*, it is known today as the Laud rutter.[5] Starting from the southern coast of Fujian, the rutter gives compass bearings for routes out to Ryukyu (Okinawa) and thence to Japan, to the Spanish port of Manila in the Philippines, down to Brunei, around Southeast Asia, and to ports in the Indian Ocean, principally Calicut (in the present-day state of Kerala), and from there to Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Derived at least in part from records of the voyages of Yongle's eunuch, Zheng He, it is unique.

The historian Xiang Da visited Oxford and prepared a modern edition of the Laud rutter published in 1961, yet it had little impact on how historians of that xenophobic era wrote Ming history. The rutter was treated as evidence that some Chinese went to sea, but it did not alter the prevailing understanding of Ming China as an agrarian empire indiffer-

ent to the rest of the world. In fact, the rutter tells a far more dramatic story that not only puts the people of the Ming on the ocean, but shows them actively engaged in weaving the threads of commercial webs that were tying the Ming to the rest of the world, and by so doing, creating the conditions for the rise of capitalist enterprise in Europe.

We now tell a different story about the Ming in the world, and the Bodleian Library is again supplying the evidence, this time in the form of a map donated to Oxford by John Selden (1584–1654). In addition to being a successful lawyer in London, Selden was Oxford's first scholar of rabbinic studies. His work on Hebraic law and Semitic mythology attracted the attention of many, including the poet John Milton.[6] In addition to being Oxford's first Orientalist, in the scholarly sense of the word, Selden was also a fervent advocate of what he called "the rights and privileges of the subject." His particular target was King Charles. Selden's attack in 1629 on royal import duties, which he regarded as an arbitrary abuse of power, sent him to Marshalsea Prison—from which none other than Archbishop Laud, who admired his scholarship though not his politics, secured his release the following year.[7] Selden championed the same issue in the Long Parliament of 1640, to which he was returned as the member for Oxford. The second of the declarations the Long Parliamentarians drew up in December 1640 may even betray Selden's voice: "that the king hath not power to lay any imposition upon forrayne (much lesse homeland) commodityes without Consent of Parliament."

Selden bequeathed his library, which included Oriental manuscripts, to the Bodleian. One of these manuscripts is a large wall map (Fig. 17).[8] Nothing like it exists in any other version or copy. Place names used on the map show it to be from the Ming (it shows the Ming province of Huguang, not the Qing provinces of Hubei and Hunan), but it is not really a map of the Ming. The Ming realm is jammed into the top two-thirds of the map, its northern half oddly truncated and distorted. The cartographer's real subject is maritime commerce, for he has traced a web of lines connecting one point off the coast of Fujian to all the other named places around the South China Sea. Wherever a route shifts direction, he has inscribed the compass bearings a mariner must use to reset his course. The map extends only as far west as the Bay of Bengal, but a cartouche over Kerala gives directions to Aden, Djofar, and Hormuz—all of which were visited by the eunuch admiral Zheng He.

The Selden map fits to the Laud rutter perfectly: the glove of cartography to the hand of the written text. The fit is at one level purely acci-
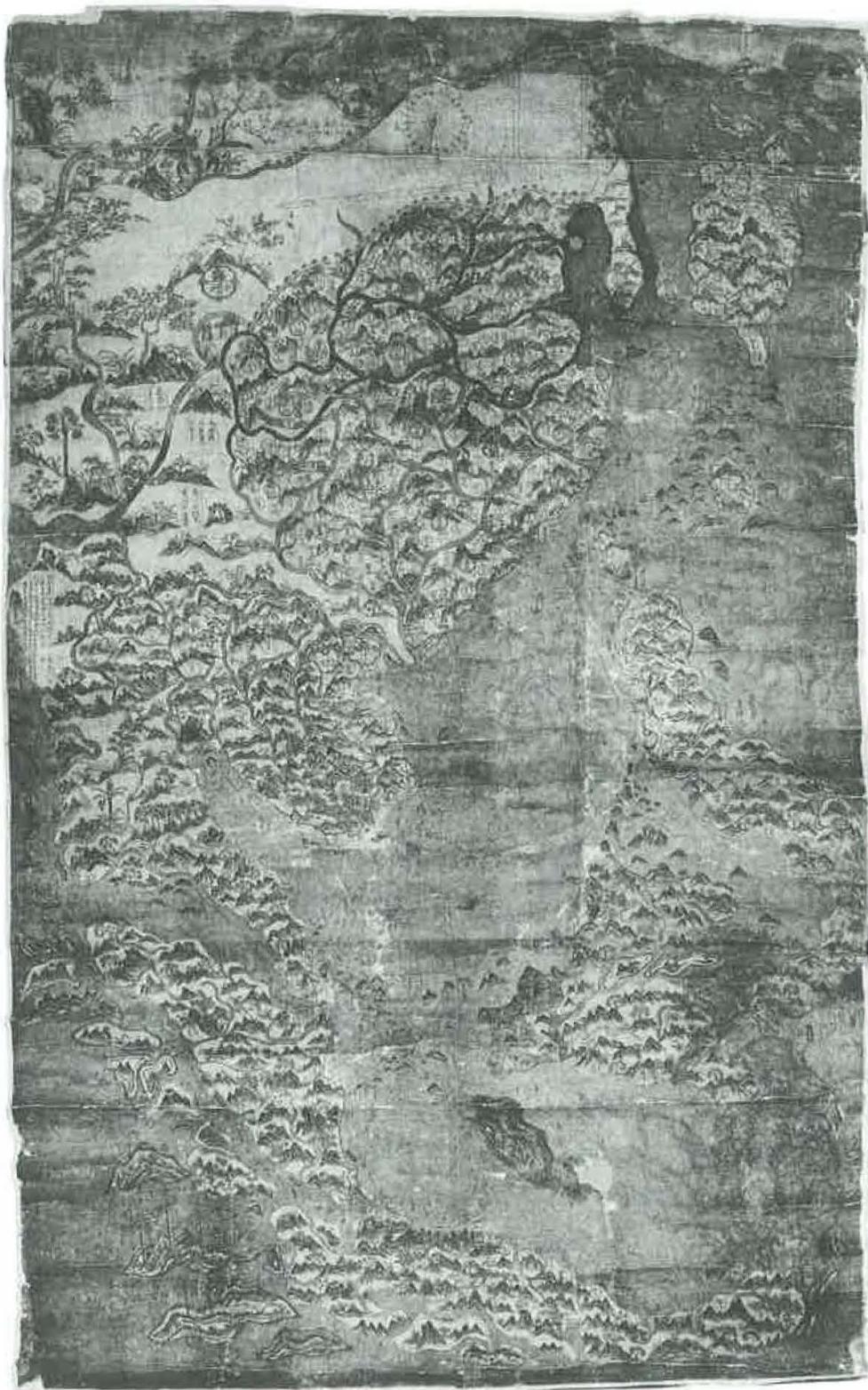
Fig. 17   The Selden map. This unofficial seventeenth-century wall map, donated by John Selden, depicts East Asia from Siberia in the north to Java in the south, and from Japan and the Philippines in the east to Burma in the west. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

dental, as the two objects arrived in Oxford from completely different sources. At another level, though, they converged at a key moment in the history they document: the linking up of European and Chinese trade.

Tribute and Trade

Since the Han dynasty, Chinese regimes have organized their relationships with foreign states through two mechanisms, one formal and the other only partly formalized: tribute and trade. The tribute system required foreign rulers to send embassies to China bearing tribute in the form of local exotica. The emperor in turn presented these emissaries with gifts of equal or greater value, which they took back to their rulers. The emperor also bestowed titles on tributary rulers, and might even name his favorite in a succession dispute. It was a device for mutual recognition and mutual legitimation that propped up China's claim to world hegemony. Though a fiction, it was one in which both sides happily participated. It gave China the international status it craved, and other states the opportunity to trade.

Even by the more relaxed standards of the Song dynasty, the Yuan was easy on matters of tribute and trade. Khubilai closed trade with Japan in order to prevent Chinese merchants from supplying the Japanese, with whom he was at war, but his ambition to dominate Southeast Asia sent Chinese fleets in that direction, and Chinese traders in their wake. As early as 1277, the Yuan set up four maritime superintendencies at Shanghai, Hangzhou, Ningbo, and Quanzhou. The three northerly offices were concerned with monitoring trade with Japan, though mariners on the Yangzi delta were soon building huge ships and sending them to Ryukyu, Vietnam, and Malacca as well as to Japan. Shanghai prospered so well that the court gave it county status in 1290. The southernmost office in Quanzhou focused on trade into the South China Sea, this being the most important trading port for maritime Muslim merchants from abroad.

The Yuan state imposed a government monopoly on oceanic voyages in 1284 in the hope of generating revenue, but relaxed it a year later, presumably finding that its capacity to manage maritime trade was not equal to private commerce. The imposition of a complete ban on overseas trade in 1303 was the beginning of a serious strangling of the coastal economy. The ban was lifted in 1307 for four years, reimposed, then lifted in 1314, though this time only for official voyages. The last ban in 1320 was lifted in 1322, and until the end of the dynasty, private merchants were free to

trade. One effect of the open coast was that the economy of Quanzhou in particular fell increasingly under the control of foreign merchants. Another was that the concentration of wealth in the port cities, rather than bringing prosperity to their hinterlands, undermined it, eventually driving the Fujian coast into rebellion in 1357.[9]

Few records commemorate any of this trade. One that does is a Yuan map that survives today only in Korean versions. The *Universal Map of the Frontiers* (Korean: *Honil kangnido;* Chinese: *Hunyi jiangli tu*) was drawn in 1402 on the basis of a map a Korean diplomat acquired while on a mission to the Ming three years earlier. This map is attributed to Qingjun, none other than the Buddhist master who officiated at Hongwu's plenary mass for the war dead in Nanjing in 1372. The only map by Qingjun that survives in Chinese sources, dated to 1360, stretches west only as far as Burma, though a cartouche off the southeast coast notes that the sea journey "from Quanzhou to Java takes sixty days, to Malabar one hundred and twenty-eight days, and to Hormuz over two hundred days."[10] Qingjun's map bears the title *Broad-Wheel Map of the Frontier Regions (Guanglun jiangyu tu)*. To it the Korean cartographer has added Korea on the right, hugely enlarged, and the rest of Asia and Africa on the left: an oddly elongated Saudi Peninsula, a shrunken Africa, and a clearly recognizable Mediterranean and Black Sea, based presumably on an Arab source.[11] The map is evidence that Chinese had wider knowledge of the world in the Yuan and early Ming than was once supposed.

The Hongwu emperor cared deeply about receiving tribute embassies. Every visit confirmed his right to rule, to potentates beyond his borders as well as to his subjects watching the foreign embassies enter the capital. No tribute missions arrived in his first year, but in his second he received tribute from Champa (southern Vietnam), Annam (northern Vietnam, known after 1428 as Dai Viêt), and Korea. In 1370 Champa again sent tribute, but so too did Java and the Western Sea, that is, Coromandel on the southeast coast of India. In 1371, Annam and Korean emissaries returned, but added to the list were ambassadors from Borneo, Srivijaya (Sumatra), Siam, Japan, and Cambodia. In 1372 the states paying tribute grew to include Suoli, Ryukyu, and Tibet. Hongwu was gratified by these missions, and late in his life was content to look back to the early years of his reign and recall, with some slight exaggeration, that "envoys came continually." He was also on high alert to every slight and shortfall. He rejected the Korean mission that showed up in 1379 with a gift of a hun-

dred catties of gold and ten thousand ounces of silver, which far exceeded what protocol required. In the following year, 1380, he rejected the Japanese mission on the grounds that it did not carry the correct documentation. Japanese feudal lords competed with one another over the right to send tribute missions, and one must have stepped in to preempt whoever had authorization.[12] This was the year when things went terribly wrong, and all because of the tribute system. When the embassy from Annam arrived, it was the prime minister, Hu Weiyong, who received them, not the emperor. Diplomatic theater it may have been for the tribute bearers, but for the emperor this was deadly serious politics.

The Yongle emperor looked to the tribute system for the same reassurance. The *History of the Ming* reports no tribute missions during the unsettled four years of the Jianwen era, but in 1403, once Yongle was on the throne, most of the usual states resumed sending tribute.[13] Yongle exceeded his father, however, by sending his Muslim eunuch Zheng He on expeditions to China's tributaries throughout the ocean they called the Western Sea, and we call the Indian Ocean. If the tribute system provides the framework for understanding these voyages, as we have seen, it also helps to explain their cancellation, for once it was fully functioning, the system did not require the extravagant return missions that Yongle had been sending. Although the expeditions were shut down, the knowledge they had acquired still circulated in Ming society, in the Laud rutter and Selden map, for instance, and in popular late-Ming encyclopedias.[14]

The association between tribute and maritime travel remained strong to the end of the Ming dynasty. The dragons agreed. While crossing to Ryukyu, an envoy from the Wanli emperor encountered not one dragon but three. "We were halfway there when a typhoon arose," writes Xie Zhaozhe, the grandson of the Fujian official who made the local arrangements for the envoy's travel and sailed with the mission. "Thunder, lightning, rain, and hailstones fell upon us all at once. There were three dragons suspended upside down to the fore and the aft of the ship. Their whiskers were entwined with the waters of the sea and penetrated the clouds. The horns on their heads were visible but below their waists nothing could be seen. Those in the ship were in a state of agitation and without any plan of action."

An experienced mariner on board came up with a way to understand the sighting. "This is no more than the dragons coming to pay court to the commissioner's document bearing the imperial seal," he insisted. Xie continues: "He made those attending on the envoy have the latter write a

document in his own hand declaring that the court audience ended at such-and-such a time. The dragons complied and withdrew at the time so indicated." Xie draws the necessary conclusion from the sighting: "the Son of Heaven has effective authority over the manifold spirits. It is a principle that cannot be doubted."[15]

The Coast as Border

Tribute and trade were able to sustain each other so long as state diplomacy and foreign trade did not run into conflict. When they did, it was usually because smuggling was placing pressure on state control—and customs duties. Emptying the coast was one response the Ming could take. Hongwu, for instance, ordered the coastal residents of Zhejiang to move inland in order to starve the Japanese smuggler/pirates who raided the coast, a diplomatic move that had heavy consequences for private trade. Similarly concerned, Jianwen forbade coastal residents from having private contacts with foreigners or from warehousing or selling foreign goods.[16]

The other situation that could put trade and tribute in conflict was the arrival of traders claiming ambassadorial status, which not only offended the Ming but could have serious political consequences back home. In 1493 while serving as supreme commander of Guangdong and Guangxi, Min Gui (1430–1511) appealed to the Hongzhi emperor to do something about the huge number of foreign ships landing in China without reporting their arrival to officials and without any regard for the tribute schedule, even when they happened to be authorized as tributaries. Min was not hostile to foreign trade; he was merely trying to address two budgetary concerns: the collapse of customs revenues and the expense of watching the entire Guangdong coast. He asked the emperor to issue a strong notice stressing the inviolability of the rules for submitting tribute. The emperor forwarded Min's request to the Ministry of Rites for an opinion.

In his response, the minister is about as unenthusiastic as he could be without actually suggesting the tribute system be abandoned. True, a lax border policy will just encourage more ships to arrive, but an overly strict policy could strangle the flow, and that would entail an economic loss for the region. He gently reminds the throne that "cherishing men from afar," the elliptical slogan for keeping foreigners at arm's length, should go hand in hand with providing a sufficiency for the country; in other

words, let the trade continue. Issuing a stern proclamation would just injure foreign relations and erode trade profits. The emperor should do nothing. Hongzhi agreed, though so as not to discourage Min for his vigilance, he came up with a split decision by promoting him to Minister of Justice the following year.[17]

A sure sign that trade was freely seeping around tribute is the surprising appearance of Folangji (Franks) on the short list of tribute bearers in 1520.[18] "Franks" was a term the Arabs had for centuries used for Europeans. The usage had slid east to name the Portuguese, who had recently arrived in Guangzhou and were trying to claim tributary status with the Ming court in the hope of opening trade. The Portuguese had moved into the South China Sea aggressively in the 1510s, their piratical activities driving the entire regional trading economy into a slump. From then right through the 1520s, Ryukyu—east of China and well out of Portuguese reach—was the only overseas state that submitted tribute with any regularity. The Portuguese bid to be recognized as a tributary was an attempt to gain entry to China in order to trade, and use that access to dominate trade all around the South China Sea. They did not succeed, but the disruption was sufficient to paralyze trade by others. Coinciding with attempts by feudal lords in Japan to force China into trade, the violence catalyzed anti-trade opinion at court. In 1525 the entire coast was shut down. No coastal vessel of two masts or more could put to sea, which excluded everything but small fishing boats. As a popular saying of the time put it, "Not a plank was allowed out to sea."[19]

Closing the maritime border was effective in the short term. The wave of piracy from 1504 to 1524 came to an end. The long-term impact, however, was to promote more piracy by driving traders into smuggling. As competition intensified among the smugglers, they armed themselves, thereby re-escalating violence along the coast. Pirate activity surged in 1548 and stayed high through the late 1550s and 1560s. Several officials won reputations for piracy suppression during these decades, but nothing could change until policy changed, and that had to await the demise of the main author of the coastal ban, the Jiajing emperor. Jiajing finally succumbed in 1567, probably the result of an accumulation of poisons in the longevity drugs his Daoist alchemists were plying him with. As soon as he was dead, requests to lift the ban poured in, as did petitions to improve the infrastructure for maritime trade, including elevating Moon Harbor, Fujian's principal import-export harbor, to county status. The new administration agreed. With the pointed exception of trade with Ja-

pan, maritime trade reopened in 1567. Within a year, the Chinese were fully back in the trade. There was one pirate attack near Quanzhou in 1568; thereafter, no major piracy disturbed the coast for the next sixty years.[20]

The ban on trade with Japan soon became a dead letter. Merchants from Canton all the way north to Chongming Island in the mouth of the Yangzi River near Shanghai were sending vessels to Japan and setting up agents there to handle foreign commerce. The scale of this trade can be imagined from the ship that a Jiaxing magistrate seized in the winter of 1642 on the charge of smuggling. It was carrying a cargo of ginseng, probably imported into Japan from Manchuria and then re-exported to China. The magistrate claimed that the cargo was worth a stunning one hundred thousand ounces of silver. The merchants handling the trade, who were not local but hailed from Shanxi province, filed a complaint with the delta's military commanders, hoping to recoup the cargo and stave off the huge loss that confiscation would impose. The magistrate managed to protect his action by giving out lavish gifts of ginseng to his superiors, but was cashiered when a new Grand Coordinator arrived from Beijing and exposed the corruption scheme.[21] The tension between tribute and trade thus marked what was as much a fault line in the relationship between public officials and private merchants as it was a gap between foreigners and the people of the Ming.

To open the coast or close it was a perennial question at court right down to the end of the 1630s. The argument for an open border that Christian convert and Vice-Minister of War Xu Guangqi made in the 1620s was that the Ming needed to have access to the newest improvements in European ballistics technology. His proposals excited angry debate at court. The question was who posed the greater threat, the Europeans and Japanese who came by water to the coast, or the Tungusic warriors, soon to take the name of Manchu, who were pressing on the northern border. Xu had no doubt: it was the Manchus the Ming should fear and prepare against, not the Europeans. Not everyone agreed. His opponents regularly strove to undermine his proposals by accusing him of protecting the Jesuits and selling out Chinese interests to the Portuguese in Macao, so that attempts to borrow European technology and expertise were always compromised and had little cumulative impact on the Ming's defensive posture.[22]

The strongest argument for keeping the coast open, however, was economic. So many people profited from the trade that, as one author commenting on Macao in 1606 gently phrased it, "I'm afraid that in the end

trade cannot be banned." By the 1630s, the Ministry of War estimated that a hundred thousand Fujianese shipped out annually to Manila for work. "The seas are the fields of the Fujianese, for the people living along the coast have no other way to make a livelihood," wrote a Fujian petitioner a year after the coast was once again closed in 1638. "The poorest always band together and go to sea to make a living. The moment coastal restrictions are tightened, they have no way to get food, so they turn to plundering the coast. Coastal people must helplessly stand by and watch all they have—their sons and daughters, their silver and goods—taken from them."[23] This was no exaggeration. The ban he was petitioning to remove reduced the number of junks sailing to Manila from 50 in 1637 to 16 in 1638. The collapse rippled through the entire coastal economy. Fortunately for the Fujianese whose livelihoods depended on the trade, the ban was lifted in time for 30 junks to catch the spring winds down to the Philippines—nowhere near the level in 1637 but enough to get trade moving again.

By the late Ming, the decision to raise or lower the barrier on foreign trade was no longer an internal matter. It depended on a host of external factors that interacted with internal concerns. And of these external factors, surely the most important were the changing patterns of global trade.

The South China Sea World-Economy

When Zheng He sailed around the South China Sea and into the Indian Ocean in 1405, he was moving through a zone of existing if dispersed trading networks. When the Portuguese captain Vasco da Gama entered the Indian Ocean in 1498, the same situation prevailed. Muslim merchants based in South Asia dominated the trade, but no one exercised exclusive control. The Zheng expeditions were still remembered around the Indian Ocean when the Portuguese arrived. The memory would have stuck because of the unusual scale of these expeditions, and also because of their unusual character, which seemed to indicate a different mode of operation, that is, a coordinated state-based alternative to the multipolar, segmented system of trade then in existence. The Portuguese were curious to hear that "white-skinned" foreigners—which is how South Asians remembered the Chinese—had once visited all the major ports around the Indian Ocean. As their ambitions in Asia grew, some looked to Zheng He as a model, whether that model was the wisdom of refusing to seize colonial possessions, as some praised Zheng for having done, or the insti-

tution of accepting tribute from port states willing to trade with the Portuguese.[24]

The Portuguese arrival in 1511 at Malacca at the western edge of the South China Sea was violent. When they discovered a Chinese commercial community already based there and handling a brisk trade, they decided to treat them as their main competitors and do what European traders as a general practice did to their competitors: kill them and take over their business. This discovery would be repeated over and over again. Wherever Europeans showed up, Chinese were already there. The Portuguese attempted to become a tributary of the Ming, but the Ming rejected the request, as it did all overtures to establish diplomatic or trade relations in order to protect the existing monopoly on maritime trade.

This is why the South China Sea became a critical zone for the eventual integration of the Ming economy with the global economy. The tribute system allowed foreigners to enter China as tribute bearers, but it also required them to exit. Foreign merchants were forbidden from residing in the realm on a permanent basis, and the Ming had the military power to enforce this condition. Anyone who wanted access to the Chinese market, whether to buy or to sell, had to go through state channels and establish a bilateral relationship, the terms of which the Ming always controlled. The only space for private trading was at offshore islands and in smugglers' coves—not a stable foundation for sustained exchange. And so a zone of circulation had to emerge to manage the sale of Chinese commodities leaving China and the foreign imports entering. What emerged around the South China Sea, and what the Portuguese became part of, was a network of multilateral exchanges among merchants tied for the most part to states that submitted tribute to the Ming, but who developed an intra-regional trade in which Chinese manufactures and grain were the leading trade goods.

This trading arrangement rested on one economic condition and one political condition. The economic condition was that the Ming economy had to continue producing goods of sufficient quality and reasonable price to be in huge demand elsewhere: China was the motor of this growth. The political condition was that the Ming state had to continue denying foreign access to its domestic market. Neither condition faltered. Indeed, we could say that the growth of the commercial economy through the sixteenth century, combined with a border-closure policy that only relented in the last third of the century, ensured the strength of this trading system. It was a network sufficiently robust to constitute what may be called a "world-economy."

The term, coined by the historian of Mediterranean Europe Fernand Braudel, does not mean the economy of the entire world. That has effectively existed only since the eighteenth century at the earliest. Rather, it designates a large region which, through regular networks of exchange, has achieved a high level of economic integration and sustains a relatively autonomous division of labor internally. This relative autonomy enables a world-economy to constitute its own "world," self-sustaining and resilient in the face of alterations, but capable of linking to more distant zones as the value of the goods it circulates grows.[25]

This is how we can imagine the South China Sea world-economy: as a relatively autonomous but internally integrated trading zone that came into being in the second half of the fifteenth century, thanks to the organized penetration of Chinese merchants coming from the north and Muslim merchants coming from the south (Map 7). The Zheng He expeditions deserve some credit for enlarging Chinese participation in this zone,
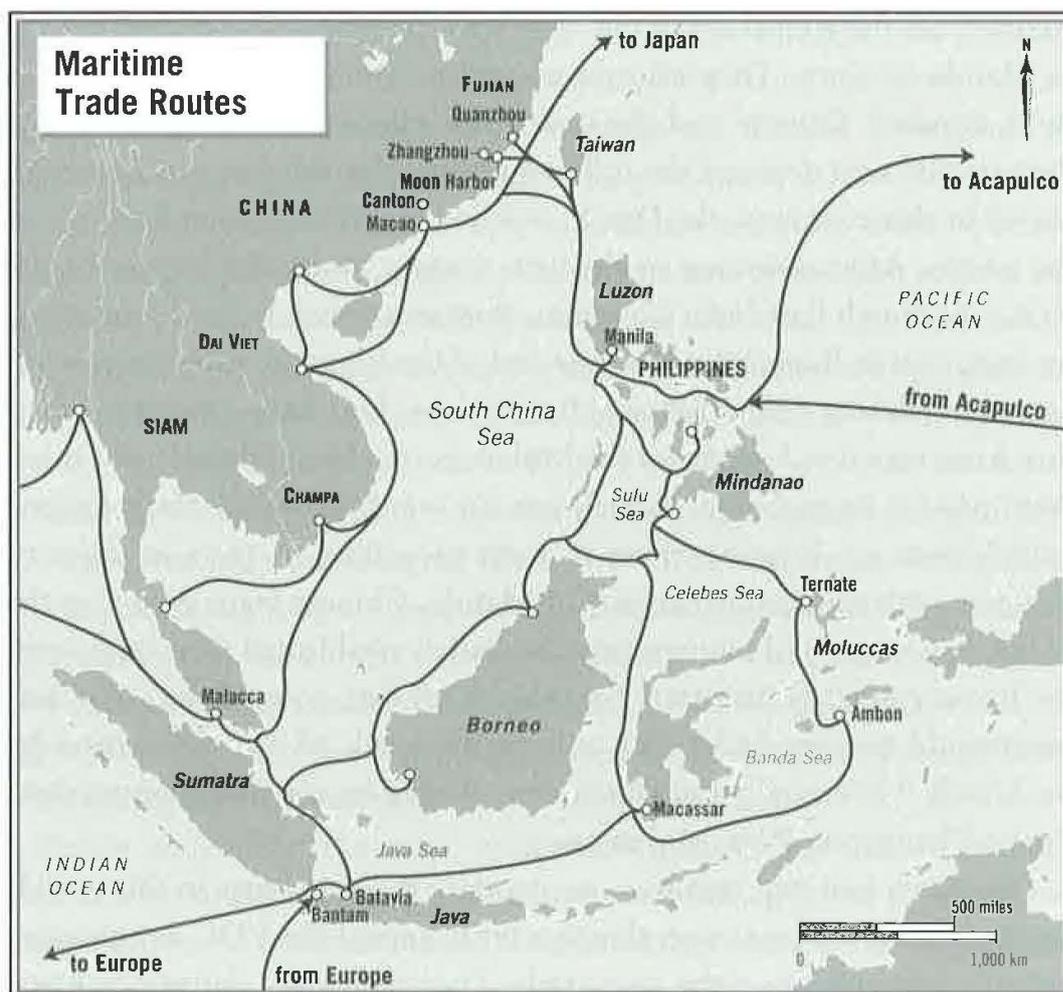
MAP 7

but no amount of state voyaging could have created this world-economy. Trade had to surpass tribute for this to happen.

The trade was organized along two main routes, both starting at Moon Harbor and Quanzhou. The Eastern Sea (Dongyang) route headed for the lee of Taiwan; there one spur ran north to Japan, but the main flow of trade went south to the Philippines, down through the Moluccas (the Spice Islands to the Europeans) and west to Java. The Western Sea (Xiyang) route hugged the coast of the mainland past Vietnam, across the Gulf of Thailand, and on to Malacca. When Moon Harbor native Zhang Xie (1574–1640) compiled his survey of maritime trade in the 1610s, he structured the book around the two routes, which is why it is called *Study of the Eastern and Western Seas (Dongxi yang kao)*.[26] Zhang mentions rutters as one of the types of written sources he has consulted; no surprise that the Laud rutter organizes its data in exactly the same way.

The world-economy preceded the arrival of Europeans, which is why they were able to take advantage of the regional trade once they came on the scene. The Portuguese, sailing in from the west, finally got their perch on the tiny peninsula of Macao in 1557. The Spanish, coming across the Pacific from the west coast of the Americas, discovered the perfect harbor at Manila in 1570. They also discovered a trading community of over three hundred Chinese and the court of a minor Muslim rajah, whom they tricked and deposed the following year. The third major European player in this economy, the Dutch, reached the South China Sea only in the 1590s. After returning in the new century under the banner of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company, they set up their base of operations on Java, first at Bantam on the west end of the island in 1609, then at Jakarta (which they called Batavia) further east. Java gave a strategic position from which to lock down the Moluccas (the Spice Islands), but it left them too far from China, though not for want of trying. Their longest toehold was on Taiwan, where they set up a base in 1623 in order to compete with the Spanish colony in Manila. Chinese were drawn to the island as farmers and hunters once the Dutch established their base, with the ironic result, as historian Tonio Andrade has pointed out, that Taiwan would become "Chinese" only as the result of its colonization by the Dutch.[27] Eventually the Dutch were ousted by the maritime warlord Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga) in 1662.

The Dutch had two resources to maintain their presence in this world-economy. One was violence; this was what gained the VOC a monopoly over the hyperprofits of the spice trade. The other was a deftness in oper-

ating an extensive intra-regional trade, such that the company moved more goods between sites within the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean than they did between Asia and Europe. The business was profitable so long as Jakarta could monopolize its regional markets. But monopolies are time-limited, as rules shift and competitors move in to contest them. The strengthening of Chinese commercial networks throughout the region meant that by the middle of the eighteenth century, Chinese merchants had a stronger grip on the trade than the Dutch or the Spanish. At the same time, the British were increasing their presence in the region, quite overshadowing the Dutch. Jakarta became peripheral to the main commodity flows in and out of the region, hanging on as a remnant of a time when gunpowder empires were still viable.[28]

Silver

The Spanish and Portuguese were quite as ready as the Dutch to fight their way into the region, but what got them into exchange networks and kept them there was a commodity over which they, the Spanish in particular, had near-monopoly control and what they thought was an endless supply. It was also the commodity that the Ming economy valued above all else as the medium of exchange: silver. It came from mines in the Spanish possessions in the Americas, principally Potosí (in modern Bolivia) and Mexico. The level of production from these mines was extraordinary, especially from the 1580s when a new refinement process using mercury increased the yield of silver ore, and into the 1630s, when the more accessible deposits were becoming exhausted and production slipped. During these decades, Spain controlled silver in volumes large enough to fund their empire as well as to buy their way into the South China Sea economy. Within a few years of setting themselves up in Manila, the Spanish were bringing silver down from the Andes to the coast of Peru, shipping it up to Acapulco, and stowing it on board the one galleon that made the Pacific crossing at the end of every winter. Roughly three tons of silver crossed the Pacific on the Manila galleon annually in the 1580s. By the 1620s the annual flow had risen to twenty tons, thereafter falling to about ten tons.

Fujian merchants responded with alacrity, loading as much merchandise as they could warehouse onto junks and sailing it out to Manila to exchange for the precious metal. The annual departure of the cargo junks was timed to coincide with the spring arrival of the Manila galleon. After

the ships had arrived on both sides, prices were negotiated, duties paid, and then the goods and silver switched holds. Both sides made sure to put to sea before the June monsoons created their annual havoc with ocean shipping. The bridge that connected Moon Harbor to Manila, Fujian to Peru, Ming to Spain, and China to Europe was made of silver.

The volume of silver that flowed out of Manila led to the rumor that the Spaniards had a mountain of silver in the Philippines. The imperial household eunuch Gao Cai, whom the emperor posted to Fujian to tax the overseas trade for his personal benefit, sent a mission in 1603 to investigate the truth of the rumor. He used the term everyone did, *jinshan*, silver mountain. *Jin* means "gold," but it was also the polite word for "silver," which is what Gao was looking for, not gold. The idea of a silver mountain at the edge of the South China Sea so obsessed the popular mind, even after its existence in the Philippines was disproven, that many Chinese destinations in the Americas and Australia earned the nickname Jinshan, conventionally mistranslated as Gold Mountain. San Francisco is still known in Chinese today as Old Gold Mountain. There was in fact a real silver mountain, but it rose above Potosí. Matteo Ricci marked it on the enormous world map he designed for his Chinese friends in 1602. He gave it its literal translation, Yinshan or Silver Mountain.

Silver was the perfect commodity from the European point of view. Its value when traded for gold was three times higher in China than at home, yielding arbitrage profits simply waiting to be plucked. In addition, the goods that the silver bought in Manila were acquired at a price far below what they sold for in Europe. The trade was also ideal from the Ming point of view, and for the roughly the same reasons, in reverse. The price differential was fantastic: a hundred catties of Huzhou silk in 1639 could be sold for a hundred ounces of silver in China but fetched two hundred from Spanish buyers in Manila.[29] And once the sale was completed, the costs of the transaction were over. The Chinese seller did not have to convert his pay into another currency or commodity. He could cash out his profits the moment the deal was closed.

These trading arrangements did not benefit everyone, of course. The investments necessary to work in this economy were so huge that the cost of failure became enormous. And when failures occurred, as they did regularly in a trade that depended on the happy conclusion of voyages across difficult oceans at vast distances, the effects could be catastrophic. Trade tensions in Manila in 1603 erupted into a full-scale battle between Spaniards and Chinese, which ended with the estimated deaths

of twenty thousand Chinese. The scenario was repeated in 1639. The return galleon had sunk the previous year after leaving Manila, and the outbound galleon from Acapulco in 1639 also went down in a gale—losses that followed a year when the Ming government shut down the coast and forbade merchants from sailing abroad. The strain of insolvency weighed so heavily on both sides that when a group of Chinese farmers in the countryside revolted against their Spanish overlord, the entire region ignited in rebellion, resulting in casualties on the same scale as 1603.[30] Business recovered within a year or two, however. There was too much to be lost on both sides—all of it measured in silver—for a massacre to derail the trade.

How did all this silver affect the Ming? Even before the Spanish silver arrived, the Ming economy was already undergoing a commercial explosion that meant prosperity for many and envy for the rest. Attributing the explosion of wealth to the arrival of all this South American silver reverses cause and effect. It was the prosperity of that economy that attracted European buyers in the first place and persuaded them to surrender much of their precious metal in order to acquire Ming goods. On the other hand, the volume of silver coming from Manila and Macao as well as from Japan, where it was being produced for a time in almost equal volume, was so great that the Ming by late in the Wanli era was literally awash in money. As this commercial wealth outstripped other sources of income, merchant families were able to surpass the gentry in conspicuous consumption, if not exactly in cultural attainment. The old fourfold status ranking that put the gentry on top and the merchants at the bottom was being inverted. Silver may have been regarded as a tasteless acquisition in polite circles, but everyone wanted to acquire it.

The last decade of the Wanli era, the 1610s, was when anxiety about the spendthrift habits and atrocious taste of the *nouveaux riches* reached a peak. It was also, not coincidentally, the time when gentry authors were instructing the newly rich in the cultural habits they were expected to master if they hoped to enter polite society. The manual for tasteful consumption that Wen Zhenheng completed at the end of that decade, *Treatise on Superfluous Things,* is full of warnings about silver badly spent. Wen knew whereof he wrote, being the great-grandson of the great Wen Zhengming. His guidebook is driven by the certainty that uninformed consumers can go badly wrong when spending their wealth, and stresses how necessary it is to stick to his rules if you did not want your wealth to make you appear a complete boor.

Take, for example, Wen's instructions on how to conduct yourself while hosting a gathering at your private teahouse. The example is apt, for only the wealthiest could imagine owning enough urban real estate to lay out a garden large enough to build a teahouse in.[31] Wen's first piece of advice deals with the servants. "Train a boy to the exclusive service of tea," he advises, otherwise you will end up fussing with the tea things and getting distracted from your main task, which is "to spend the whole day there in pure talk, and the chilly night in sitting there in a dignified attitude." An additional note stresses that the evening pose "cannot be dispensed with." Alas, some people could only be expected to act badly, spilling the tea and lounging indecorously. Wen is strict on so many other subjects—parrots, for example. They "must be taught short poems and harmonious phrases," which means taking care not to allow them into such low-class spots as markets, wells, and villages, since the chattering that goes on there is "a violent assault upon the ear." Furniture was also treacherous. Stay away from dragons, he advised. Table legs carved into dragons were the height of vulgarity.[32]

Style was not the only thing that escaped convention as the tide of silver washed into Wanli society. As new money eroded the old certainties about social status, new ideas about how life could be lived were espoused. A friend of Zhang Xie, the chronicler of the sea routes out of Moon Harbor, expresses this new consciousness in a preface he wrote for Zhang's book. The mariners of Moon Harbor, he writes, "look upon the huge waves under the open sky as though they were standing on a steady hill, and gaze upon the sights of strange regions as though they were taking a stroll outside their own homes." They are "at ease on the ocean's waves, sailing their boats as though they were plowing fields." They address foreign potentates "as though talking to the neighbors."[33] The hoary classical trope about men plowing and women weaving no longer applied to the people of Moon Harbor. These were not the lives they lived.

Zhang did not expect that knowledge of the maritime world he documents in his *Study of the Eastern and Western Seas* would alter everyone's perceptions, but he does make one strong statement in his preface which hints that it should. Discussing the challenges of anthologizing a wide range of material as he has done, he singles out authors who simply requote old texts without paying any heed to recent developments and accuses them of perpetuating ignorance rather than creating knowledge. He wants to create knowledge, which is why he interviewed sailors to find out everything he could about trade routes around the South China

Sea. The book was not much taken up by readers at the time and had little impact on the knowledge that most people of the Ming thought important. The Laud rutter and the Selden map suffered the same neglect, which may go some way toward explaining why the sole copies survive in a library up the Thames.

Europeans in China

The flow of silver into the South China Sea world-economy brought with it a flow of strange people, from opulently dressed Portuguese with their African slaves and pet monkeys to a randomly assembled proletariat of sailors, soldiers, and smiths drawn or dragged into the irrationally dangerous business of global travel from all over the globe. The people of the Ming were fascinated. "The irises of their eyes are a deep green, and their bodies as white as freshly cut lard," Shen Defu writes of the Portuguese ("Franks") in his 1606 commonplace book, *Unofficial Gleanings of the Wanli Era*. "Of all the armed men of the seas, they are in general the most clever at gaining wealth, and not entirely by plunder either." When the Dutch arrived, even the people of the Ming were unprepared for how outlandish they looked. "Their appearance and clothing were unlike those of the earlier Islanders," by which Shen meant those bringing tribute from the islands of the Eastern and Western Seas, here signifying the Portuguese. "Because their beards are completely red, they are called the Red Hair foreigners."[34]

What grabbed Shen's attention more than the color of Dutch beards was the accuracy of their cannon. He notes that Ming sailors were caught off guard the first time they encountered a Dutch ship in coastal waters, which he dates to 1601. "They were unaware of their technical capacities, and so just went ahead and fired on them with the cannon they ordinarily used." The Dutch responded in kind, with stunning accuracy and to chilling effect. "They saw only a thread of greenish smoke, and then in an instant were reduced to a pulp." Shen allows that the Dutch had reason to open fire to protect their cargo, but suggests that such technology moved naval engagements to a whole new level. The Dutch "didn't so much as fire one arrow, yet the dead among the sailors were innumerable. And so they spread terror across the sea."[35] This is why Xu Guangqi and others argued strongly that the Ming should hire European gunners to improve its defense of the northern border.

The silver brought other Europeans to the Ming realm, not just green-

eyed merchants and red-haired cannoneers but Jesuit priests. These members of the Society of Jesus—a militant elite Catholic organization at spiritual war with all that the Protestant Reformation stood for—surfed the tide of global trade, intent on introducing Christianity wherever it took them. Their mission was a product of the globalizing economy, in two senses. First of all, it would have been unthinkable had Europeans not been engaging in maritime trade, thereby providing missionaries with routes to travel, ships to sail in, and ports to house mission bases. The Jesuits were the first to pursue this new opportunity with avid determination, sending the Spaniard Francis Xavier (1506–1552) with Portuguese merchants into the South China Sea in 1549, the year the society was founded. As the historian Liam Brockey has noted, the first turning point for the mission came in 1557 with the acquisition of a commercial toehold on Ming territory. Macao "was more than beneficial for the China mission," he observes. "It was of crucial importance for all missions of the Society of Jesus in East Asia." Wherever Portuguese merchants went, missionaries went with them, whether up the Pearl River to Guangzhou or across the East China Sea to Japan. Mission did not just follow trade but benefited from it.[36]

The Jesuit mission to Asia was also the product of the globalizing economy in terms of its financial operations. Bringing Christianity to unbelievers, the Jesuits understood, was an expensive operation: there were priests to educate, transport, and feed; residences, churches, and colleges to be built; supplies to be purchased and shipped; gifts to be given. The king and wealthy merchants of Portugal counted themselves among the patrons of the Jesuit mission, diverting a small modicum of their profits from the maritime trade to do so. But it would be a mistake to view the Jesuits as the passive beneficiaries of Portuguese trade into the South China Sea. They were active participants in elaborate currency arbitrage and commodity trading to support their ventures. A papal decree forbidding religious orders from engaging in commodity trading, intended to insulate missions from the losses that speculative ventures inevitably suffered, did not come down until 1669.[37]

Two Italians, Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), were the first Jesuits to infiltrate themselves into the Ming realm. They managed to get permission to set up a church on the mistaken understanding of a regional official that they were some sort of Indian Buddhists. The building of the China mission would be a slow process that

involved much inter-cultural negotiation and many false starts. For example, when cross-dressing as Buddhist monks seemed not to put the Jesuits in touch with the people they hoped to attract, they gave that up in favor of impersonating Confucians, very much to the benefit of their mission to the gentry. Finally, in 1601, Ricci would achieve his goal of setting up a mission church in Beijing.

The Macao connection was more than fortuitous for the Jesuits; it was essential. It gave them a base outside the Ming but close enough to be able to operate on the inside. Macao also provided access to the financial operations of Portuguese and Spanish trade flowing through the port. Moving wholly into China would have made that next to impossible. Suspicious of these foreigners, the Chinese read the Macao connection differently. They saw the port as the Jesuits' Achilles heel, their point of vulnerability. What could the connection possibly indicate except that they were in the service of the Portuguese, whose interests were not entirely commercial but political? As one aggressive official in the Ministry of Rites phrased this suspicion in 1616, "Their religion makes Macao its nest." It was widely believed that the Portuguese were bent on encroaching on the Ming realm, which meant that every Jesuit was a "cat's paw of the Franks."[38] Macao may have been an essential asset for the Jesuit mission, but in Chinese eyes it was a liability. Such was the contradiction at the mission's heart: it did not take place in an economic and political void but followed closely the contours of the economic and political power that made it possible.

Despite the hostility of powerful officials, many well-placed intellectuals in the late-Wanli generation interacted keenly with the Jesuits, some even converting to Christianity. Their motives were as varied as their personalities. As we have seen, some prized the knowledge that the Jesuits brought from Europe: geometry, astronomy, cartography, ballistics, hydrology—sciences of spatial calculation in which Europeans excelled. Some were intrigued by Christian cosmology, which interpreted Heavenly signs in a satisfyingly comprehensive fashion. Some admired the Jesuits' personal intellectual capacity and moral certainty, regarding them as fellow-travelers in the great program of improving the world.[39] The Jesuits had the good fortune to inaugurate their mission at a time when Ming intellectuals were struggling with fundamental questions about their own moral mission as well as basic technical problems of how to help the people through the two Wanli sloughs and how to defend the

northern border against the forces that would bring the dynasty down in 1644. These were questions to which the highly educated Europeans appeared to have good answers.

The Society of Jesus was also fortunate in the man who ended up leading the mission. Matteo Ricci was subtle in his grasp of cultural patterns as well as strategic in his assessment of what a European in China had to do to achieve anything.[40] For example, he told Shen Defu, who lived near him in Beijing, that he had come to the capital "to present tribute."[41] This was not strictly true, Portugal not being a tributary state and Ricci not being Portuguese, but the statement was rhetorically effective by virtue of finding the right idiom in which to make his presence and ideas sensible. Ricci's effort, like Xavier's, ended in an immense failure, in Ricci's case the failure to gain an audience with the Wanli emperor. But it also produced the great achievement of devising a path that would enable Europeans to accommodate to Chinese values, and vice versa. Some other Catholic missionaries, particularly the Dominicans, were less tolerant of the culture into which they entered: less willing to find analogues for Christian habits that they mistook as fundamental truths, and ultimately less successful in persuading Ming intellectuals to trade their values and beliefs for an entirely different set. The Dominicans made considerable inroads among the people, though they survived only so long as the Christian communities they founded stayed beneath the radar of a state ever anxious that religion might be a smokescreen for sedition.[42]

The Fugitive's Return

The Suzhou constables sent south to find Guan Fangzhou were just about to wind up their manhunt for the silversmith when they decided to go out and have a final look around Macao. This was still in the 1570s, when the Portuguese had yet to construct the impressive fortifications that several decades later would convince some Chinese the foreigners were not to be trusted. Nor had Ricci yet arrived to start learning Chinese, which he did in 1582. While in Macao, the constables heard that a European wreck had just floated into port. It was without mast or rudder and appeared to be deserted. Curious, the constables went on board to have a look. They found two Chinese barely alive down in the powder magazine. By a remarkable coincidence that makes the story just a bit hard to believe, one of the men was none other Guan Fangzhou.

We never learn how Guan ended up on this European ship: as a cap-

tive? as a trader? as a stowaway? However it happened, once he washed into Macao, Guan realized that he might be able to turn his new situation to his advantage. The Ming had never formally surrendered sovereignty over the port to the Portuguese, so Guan claimed a sort of extraterritoriality *avant la lettre* and assured the constables that they had no jurisdiction in Macao. The constables accepted if not the plausibility of the claim, then the reality that they were in no position to clap Guan in irons and carry him bodily out under the noses of the Portuguese. They would need to proceed by a more circuitous route to make an arrest. They had to convince Guan, not force him, to return. So they made up a story.

"We too were planning to go off and trade with the Europeans," they tell Guan. "But looking at you now, we see just how dangerous this is, so we've decided to go home. You can come with us if you like." The fugitive from justice hesitated: "What about the case against me?" "Your case has already been dismissed," they assured him. "It was covered by a general amnesty." Amnesties were a common practice when an emperor needed to ask Heaven for a favor—to relieve a drought, for example—or when the Ministry of Justice had too large a backlog to clear its cases through regular procedures. "You have nothing to worry about."

Guan's mistake was to believe them. Only later did the penny drop, but by then he had lost his freedom. They got him back to Suzhou, and just in time. The edict for Warden Wang's execution had just arrived. Guan's return meant that the silversmith, not the warden, would pay the penalty for embezzlement. It was the talk of the town, incontestable proof, so everyone declared, that Heaven worked in mysterious ways to put matters right. If that was true, then the mystery now included global trade.

Annex 292(bis)

Robert Parthesius, *Dutch Ships in Tropical Waters: The Development of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) Shipping Network in Asia 1595-1660* (2010)

Dutch Ships in Tropical Waters

The development of the Dutch East India Company
(VOC) shipping network in Asia 1595-1660

Robert Parthesius

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Founded in 2000 as part of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age (*Amsterdams Centrum voor de Studie van de Gouden Eeuw*) aims to promote the history and culture of the Dutch Republic during the 'long' seventeenth century (c. 1560-1720). The Centre's publications provide an insight into the lively diversity and continuing relevance of the Dutch Golden Age. They offer original studies on a wide variety of topics, ranging from Rembrandt to Vondel, from *Beeldenstorm* (iconoclastic fury) to *Ware Vrijheid* (True Freedom), and from Batavia to New Amsterdam. Politics, religion, culture, economics, expansion and warfare all come together in the Centre's interdisciplinary setting.

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in Asia but did not have a firm basis of operation to work from, the problems they encountered to combine trade and military actions are apparent. It is interesting to note that in this period the Governor-General often operated from the Spice Islands, using this area as the centre for political and military decision making; while the Director responsible for shipping and trade had his base in Bantam on the island of Java, a more central location that was accessible the year round.

A so-called *retourvloot* (returning fleet or homeward bound fleet) sailed back to the Netherlands annually. At first, ships sailed back alone or in small fleets, but later the VOC organised the return voyages in larger fleets only. Around 1610, various ships had to abort their return trip to Europe or were even lost, because of their poor condition after their long service in tropical waters. Initially, the VOC directors were in favour of sending ships to Europe as soon as they were loaded, thus avoiding further weakening of the ships that had already been in the tropical waters for a long time. Soon they realised that better regulations could create greater advantages. Sailing in a fleet provided better support in the event that ships lost part of their rigging, were leaking or ran into other problems during their trip over the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. Around 1620 those problems were mostly solved because the ships were better adapted to their more specialist function and they also had a faster turn-around time in Batavia. They were not often employed to sail on an intra-Asiatic route before they sailed home, as was common before 1620. However, ships were still sent in convoy for mutual assistance but above all to make sure that all skippers stuck to the agreed route and sailing scheme that would bring the ships back in Europe before the Autumn.

The VOC's administration in Batavia endeavoured to dispatch a fleet around New Year for arrival in the Netherlands in the European summer. This was not an easy task since they had to deal with many variables, such as gathering the return cargo, planning the supply from the various trading posts and allowing enough capacity to ship the goods to Batavia. Shipping was organised in such a way that the various routes were synchronised; however, delays could easily occur as shipping routes were often subject to the monsoon. It frequently happened that the return fleet was delayed, waiting for other vessels to arrive from their various departure points. In the end, final decisions were based on economic considerations above regulations: to keep a fleet waiting created extra costs and risks, so sending the ships off on time was the usual choice. However, if cargo for Europe arrived too late from an Asian destination, storage in Batavia until the next return fleet meant more expenditure. The net result was that, although it was forbidden, ships were dispatched to Europe in the few months after the fleet had departed almost every year.

The decentralised organisation of the VOC and specific demands from the Netherlands made the job of the directors in Batavia even more complex. They had to make sure that the requested volume of cargo was transported, but also that the volume was divided between the ships of the specific Chambers (*Kamers*) of the VOC in the Netherlands. They had to endeavour to ensure that the cargo on a ship sailing back to Amsterdam, Zeeland or one of the other cities represented the correct ratio for the internal distribution of cargo. It was also important that the ships arrived in the Netherlands in the late summer, before the start of the stormy season, at a favourable time for the auctions but still with opportunities for ongoing transport connections within Europe.

An attempt to reorganise the Asian trade and shipping: 1620-1625

Developments up to 1620 laid the groundwork for the growth of an extensive network in Asia. In regions like the Spice Islands, the VOC was able to establish a firm position that allowed them to dictate trade and shipping. Governor-General Coen's determined objective was to extend his influence militarily into Spanish and Portuguese controlled areas, but it became clear that success would come at a price with ramifications for trade and shipping. It seems that the VOC had over-estimated its capabilities and was forced to make fundamental decisions about the organisation of trade and shipping in Asia.

As part of the (mutually reluctant) cooperation with the English, a 'fleet of defence' was sent to the Philippines in 1620. Although the booty captured from the Chinese junks was substantial, the combined action against the Spaniards was not very successful and the alliance soon broke up. Other VOC ships were then employed directly on the coast of China to break open the Chinese market. So, once again, fewer ships were available or suitable for regular trade. This situation became worse when attacks on Portuguese strongholds intensified again after the end of the truce that had lasted for 12 years. At the same time, expansion of the many trading posts was also responsible for a rise in operational costs. It was obvious by then that not all the VOC's ambitions could be fulfilled and that decisions had to be made to reduce costs. On Coen's advice, the VOC tried to concentrate on the shipping of cargo to Europe, leaving the intra-Asian trade to local traders and the private European operators. Even the monopoly on trade in the Spice Islands was no longer sacred. In a letter from 1621, Coen suggested to the VOC directors that Ambon could be used as an emporium where locals and traders from the Orient could bring items from the Chinese trade to be shipped to the Netherlands, thus relieving the VOC of many expenses. For other destinations, too, he hoped to arrange affairs in such a way that 'many Indians would sail for us and thus [that we], without investments and adventures, enjoy a fair amount of their profit' (Colenbrander 1919, p. 726).

Coen was reluctant to recommend that European private traders (*vrijburgers or vrijlieden*) operate in Asia because, in his opinion, this group consisted merely of 'scum'. Still the VOC could not ignore this growing group of *vrijburgers*, mostly former VOC employees who stayed in Asia after they had served their contracts. In order to organise the private trade for the future, Coen recommended establishing colonies of good officers and reputable families who would, together with slaves, be able to organise affairs in Asia (Colenbrander 1919, p. 795). His successor, Pieter De Carpentier, extended this policy to include the role of private traders and wrote to the VOC directors in the Netherlands: 'Liberate all trade also for the *vrijlieden*, except for the Spice Island, Paleacatte (Coromandel Coast) and the Chinese and Persian silk and indigo. Through a price policy and by force at sea, the trade should be directed to Batavia, which means that then many trade posts could be lifted' (Coolhaas 1960, p. 145). The initiative to set up this policy to stimulate a colony of *vrijburgers* with associated opportunities for free trade was taken by Coen before he left Asia for Europe in 1623. It was clearly not yet an official policy, but pending a formal decision, the developments were tolerated. On his return to the Netherlands, he was able to present his plans to the directors of the VOC for the restructure of the organisation in Asia onto a 'new footing'. Initially, Coen could count on sympathy for these plans and some of his suggestions were followed up. On the instructions of the directors in the Netherlands, large ships were only to be used for the return shipping between Europe and Asia, whilst yachts were to be used in Asia. Using these specific vessels, proportionally equipped by the VOC Chambers in the Netherlands, would also help the management in Asia to follow the proportional division of return-cargo between the various Chambers (Colenbrander 1919, p. 559). Coen also suggested opening a direct link with Surat and the Coromandel Coast from the European Chambers (Colenbrander 1919, p. 791). The directors followed this advice by sending several ships directly to Surat in this period.[11] As a consequence of this policy, most trading posts could be closed. Coen advised that only Surat, Coromandel, Japan and Solor should be continued – as long as the private traders did not take over the trade in sandalwood.

In 1623, the trading posts in Patani, Sangora (north of Patani), Siam, Cambodia and Atchin were closed. During this period, various initiatives by European private traders to develop shipping on these routes can be seen. For example, in 1625, *vrijlieden* sent various ships '*with special commission and permission*' to places like Jambi, Siam and Patani to set up trade, and bring the most sought after food supplies to Batavia (Heeres 1896, pp. 135, 182). Even the trade to Coromandel was released by the VOC on condition that the private traders paid appropriate customs duty (Colenbrander 1919, p. 796).

Gradually however, opposition to these plans arose. Coen ended up in a highly political power game over his 'new footing' policy. The political arena included, apart from the *Heren XVII*, Reael as former Governor-General opposing the plans of his successor, a group of active *dolerende* (dissenting) shareholders, complaining officials in Asia and the Dutch government.

Under discussion was the question of whether private traders should be given access to infrastructure developed for the Asian trade that had been funded by investments made by the VOC shareholders and the Dutch state. Efforts by the government to get involved generally resulted in unwillingness by the VOC directors to bring the decision-making process to a conclusion. When Coen left the Netherlands in 1627 to serve his second term as Governor-General he was no longer seen as a promising talent who could reorganise the VOC organisation in Asia. Instead he was rendered powerless in his decision-making capacity when his proposal for the 'new footing' was finally turned down at the end of 1627. From then on the *vrijlieden* were banned from the most lucrative trade in Asia and the VOC would build further on intra-Asian trade that proved to be very profitable indeed.

The expansion of the VOC network up to 1660

After 1625 the VOC network in Asia was in place but it would still take many years and a lot of effort to establish the organisation that led to the strong position of the VOC in Asia. There was no systematic approach to this development. Progress was dependant on the local situation as well as the available means. An understanding of this progression is important for further analysis of VOC shipping to 1660.

The situation in the eastern region

The focus of the intra-Asiatic trade around 1630 remained the Spice Islands – Ambon, Banda and the Moluccas – in the eastern part of the Indonesian Archipelago. The eastern Banda Island group was the only place where nutmeg was grown and harvested in the 17th century. The original population of the island had been completely annihilated by the VOC and replaced by a newly imported populace who were only allowed to sell nutmeg and its by-product, mace, to the VOC. Ambon was the island from which the VOC tried to control the clove trade, which was much more difficult to regulate than nutmeg..

Most of the European return-cargo, besides pepper, came from this area. Sailing from Batavia to the Spice Islands was only possible between late October and early March. Return trips were only possible between April and early October. On this route Timor and Solor, close to Java, were separate destinations instead of stopovers.

Since this route to the Spice Islands was so important for trade and so monsoon-dependent, the VOC experimented with sailing off-season using smaller ships, or on an alternative route, south of Java or west and north of Sulawesi. These attempts never lead to regular, commercially feasible shipping off-season.

Before 1630, it was difficult for the VOC to enforce their desired monopoly over mace and nutmeg on the rulers and inhabitants of the Banda Islands. The VOC directors in the Netherlands were in favour of an aggressive policy but they hesitated to order a large-scale operation against the local rulers in this region. The effectiveness of a policy that did not have the cooperation of the local rulers was questioned (Coolhaas 1960, p. 63). In earlier days, the main strategy was to put a blockade on trade and shipping, which was, in itself, already harmful to the Banda islanders. However, after Coen was appointed Governor-General, things took a dramatic turn for the local population. In 1621 a military expedition consisting of 2000 soldiers overran the main centres on Banda. By replacing the existing inhabitants with a VOC selected population, the absolute monopoly on mace and nutmeg was achieved. The traditional island community ceased to exist.

For the monopoly on cloves, Coen followed another policy. Cloves were grown over a large area of many islands near Ambon (Ceram) as well as in the North-Moluccas. Coen negotiated a treaty with the ruler of Ternate, who had nominal authority over large parts of this area; this treaty was forced upon all his subjects and at the same time all clove shipments not exported by the VOC were declared illegal. In the 1620s, Coen organised the *hongi* expeditions[12] to destroy clove trees and other crops on the Moluccas. He had hoped to make the 'illegal' production of

cloves impossible. In practice, it turned out to be very difficult to control the region and the so-called illegal trade. On Ambon, the VOC forced the locals to assist in the *hongi-expeditions* and to sell the cloves on VOC conditions. The strategy failed and the result was a long-lasting state of war with the Ambonese. Eventually, in 1656 the VOC was able to achieve its goal of a monopoly over cloves but again only after first destroying the original population.
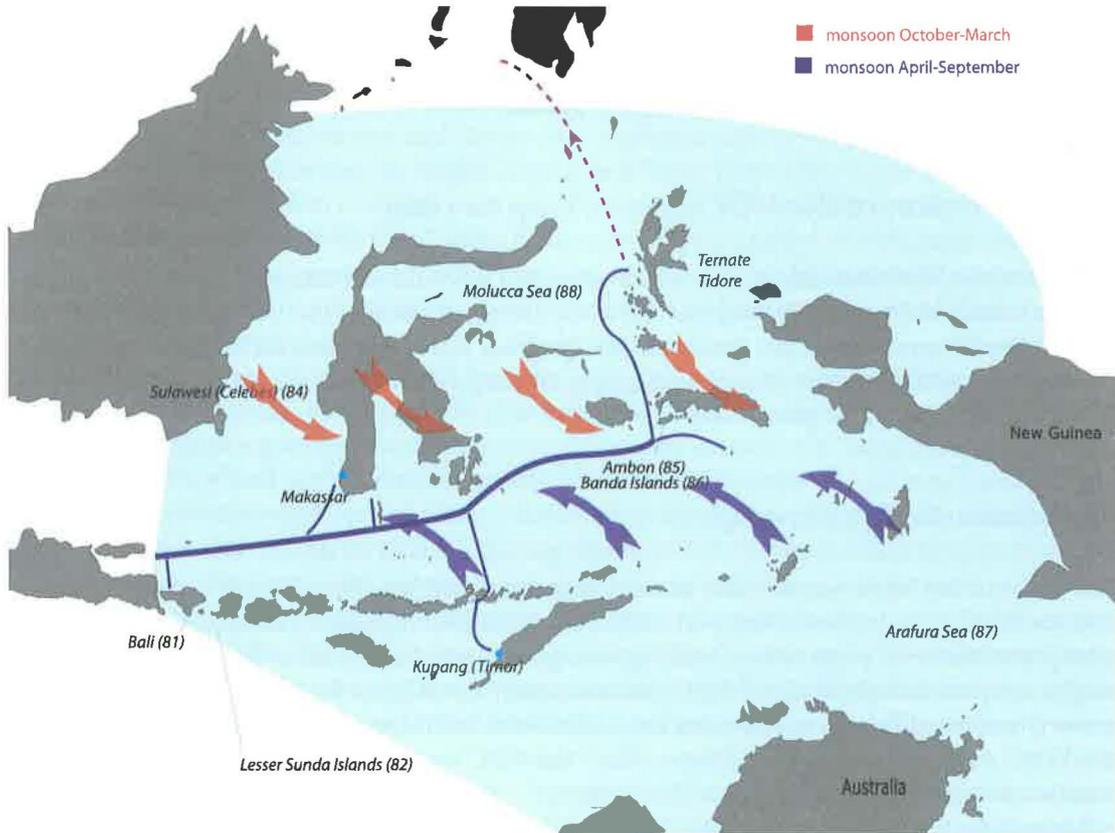

Map 3.1: The region of the Spice Islands indicating the routes and monsoon winds.

The north-eastern region: China, Taiwan and Japan

The 'Far East' included destinations north-east of Singapore around the South China Sea like Patani, Siam, Vietnam, the South Chinese coast and Taiwan with the Korean peninsula and Japan as the most distant. The Chinese market was another focus of the VOC right from the start of Asian shipping. Expectations for this market were high. The hope was that the silk trade with Japan would be sufficient to finance the whole VOC trade in Asia (Colenbrander 1922, p. 594; Colenbrander 1934, p. 322). A number of nations conducted trade in Chinese products. The Portuguese transported merchandise from Macao to the European market via Malacca and Goa. The Spaniards had their cargo transported by Chinese Junks to the Philippines from where it was shipped by galleons to Mexico. From the Mexican east coast it was taken over land to the west coast and over the Atlantic Ocean to Spain. the Chinese themselves traded directly with Indonesia and Malaysia. Portuguese, Spanish and Japanese traders were active along the coasts of Malacca via Siam and Vietnam to Japan.

The VOC wanted to trade directly with the Chinese but access to the Chinese market was very restricted (prohibited by the Ming court) and the Portuguese were also very successful in obstructing the Dutch attempts. On the first visit by the Dutch in 1601 the Portuguese, fearing for their position, had the Dutchmen hung on the pretext that they were pirates (NA 1.04.01, Voorcompagniëen, 158). This pretence seemed to have been something of a self-fulfilling prophecy, since the Dutch realised that the best method to acquire Chinese merchandise was in fact

to capture the vessels, sailing for the Spanish and Portuguese, carrying these goods. Large profits were made from cargo captured from Chinese junks on their way to the Philippines. These captured products allowed the VOC an active role on the Japanese market, but excluded them from a direct link with the Chinese production areas.
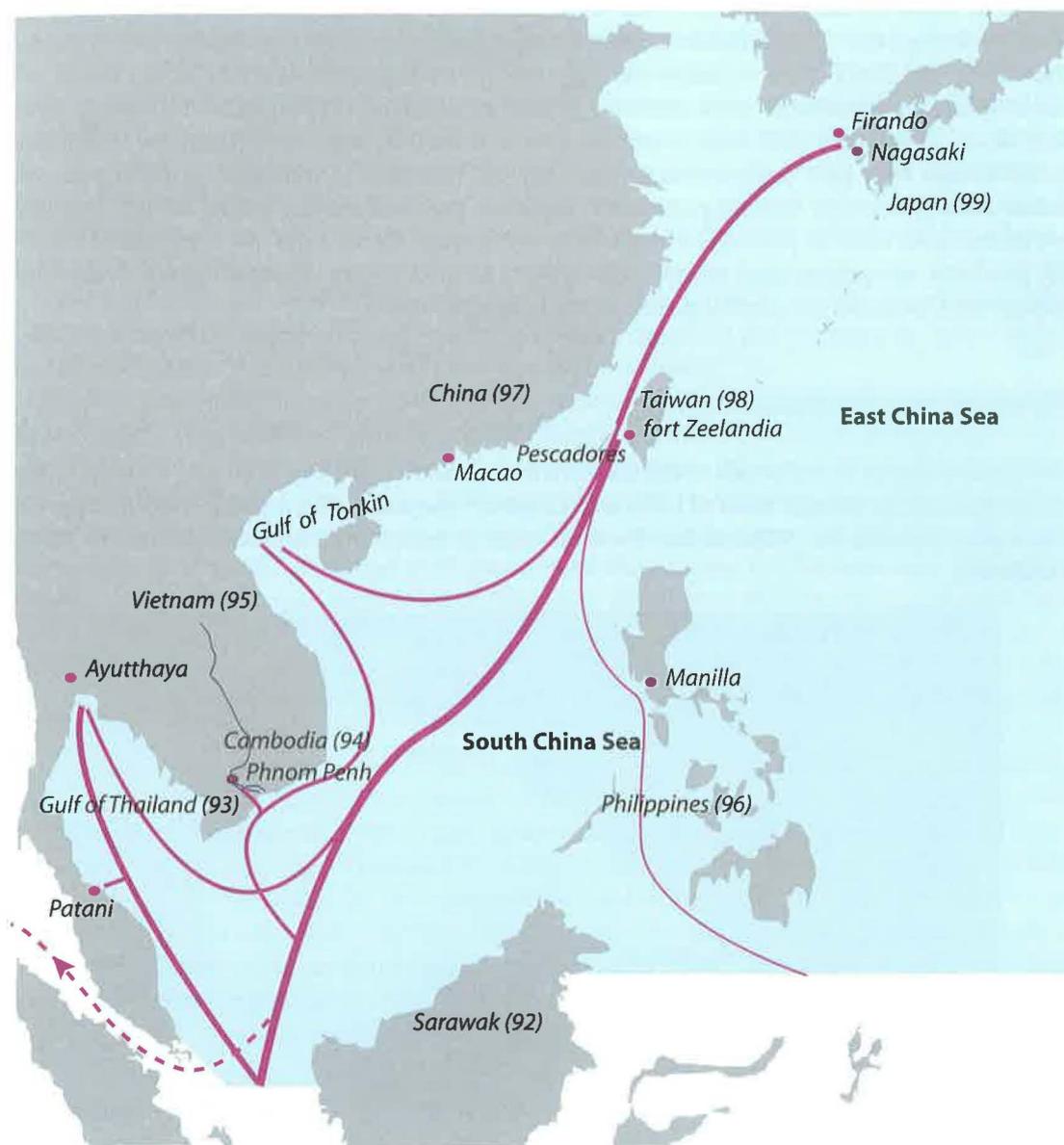

Map 3.2: The north-eastern region, indicating the shipping routes

The VOC followed an aggressive policy trying to break into the Chinese market. Confident due to the VOC successes at Banda, Coen dispatched a heavily armed fleet to the Far East. However, a raid in 1622 at Macao failed completely. Eventually, the VOC could do no more than try to set up a blockade at Macao and launch some scattered attacks on other locations on the Chinese coast. In 1624, a large Chinese fleet surrounded the established VOC stronghold on the Pescadores. The superior strength of the Chinese forced the VOC to move their centre of activities in this region to Taiwan (Formosa) from where the VOC continued their attempts to take part in the Chinese trade. In 1632 a last unsuccessful attempt was made to defeat the Chinese navy. Taiwan served for a substantial period as an indirect link to the Chinese market although officially the Chinese forbade this. However, supply was unreliable and subject to the vagaries of the political situation in China. Changes in the Chinese regime eventually forced the VOC from Taiwan in 1662.

The Dutch expansion in Asia up to 1660

From 1620 the Dutch gradually gained great economic strength through their position in Japan. Apart from a short period between 1629 and 1633, when the Dutch were in conflict with the Japanese authorities on account of Taiwan, the VOC was privileged above the other European nations. After the Tokugawa dynasty isolated itself from the outside world in 1639, they were the only Europeans allowed to trade with Japan. The Japanese authorities prohibited their people to travel to other countries. They were afraid that Japanese society would be contaminated by foreign (i.e. Christian) ideas. Since Chinese traders were also obstructed in both Japan and China, the Dutch were virtually the only foreign traders with access to Japan, under extreme restricted conditions (were confined to a artificial island off Nagasaki, Deshima). Japanese silver, copper and gold were important products on the Asian market and the Dutch had an advantage over their competitors in that they did not need to transport all these precious metals from Europe for trading purposes[13]. Japanese precious metals, traded for silk and luxury items, were used to purchase textiles from India; these formed the most important bartering products for pepper and spices. This system formed a very lucrative profit cycle even though the Dutch did not control prices on the Japanese market.

The situation in the western region

The western region is comprised of the important trade area of the Bay of Bengal with the Coast of Coromandel on the east coast of India and Ceylon in the south. The second important part of this region includes the Arabian Sea, the west coast of India, Surat and destinations in Persia and Arabia.
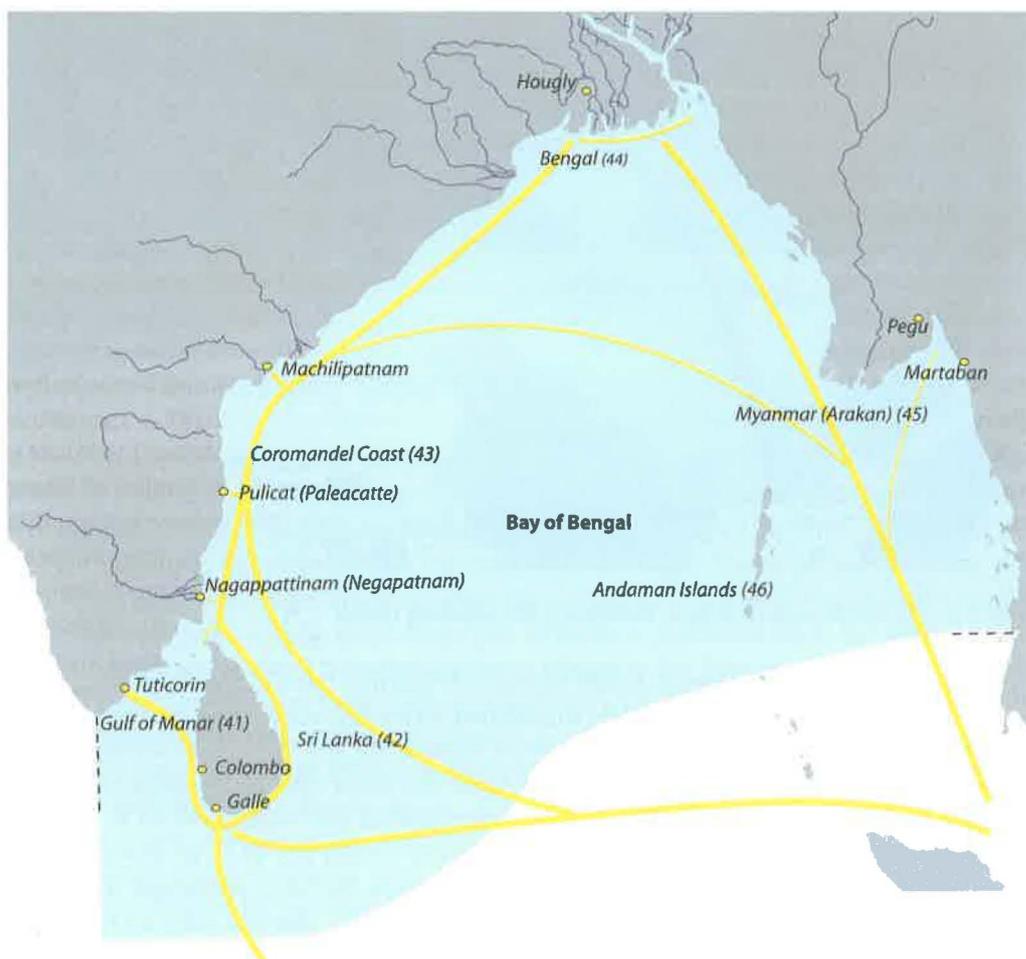
Map 3.3: The western region: Bay of Bengal, indicating the shipping routes.

already under VOC control from the 1620's. Controlling both seaways was an important aim for the VOC. Initially, the VOC was able to build alliances with the Sultan of Johore who was driven out of Malacca by the Portuguese. In those early days military confrontation involved the use of large ships whereas in later years, this changed to patrol activities to disrupt traffic and capture smaller vessels for the booty they carried. After 1640, when Malacca was taken over from the Portuguese, the VOC tried to re-establish an international trade and shipping centre there. This policy was difficult to combine with the VOC's ambition to gain a monopoly over the pewter trade from the local rulers. However the producers of pewter managed to evade contracts that would result in a shift of control to the VOC.

The general development of the Asian shipping
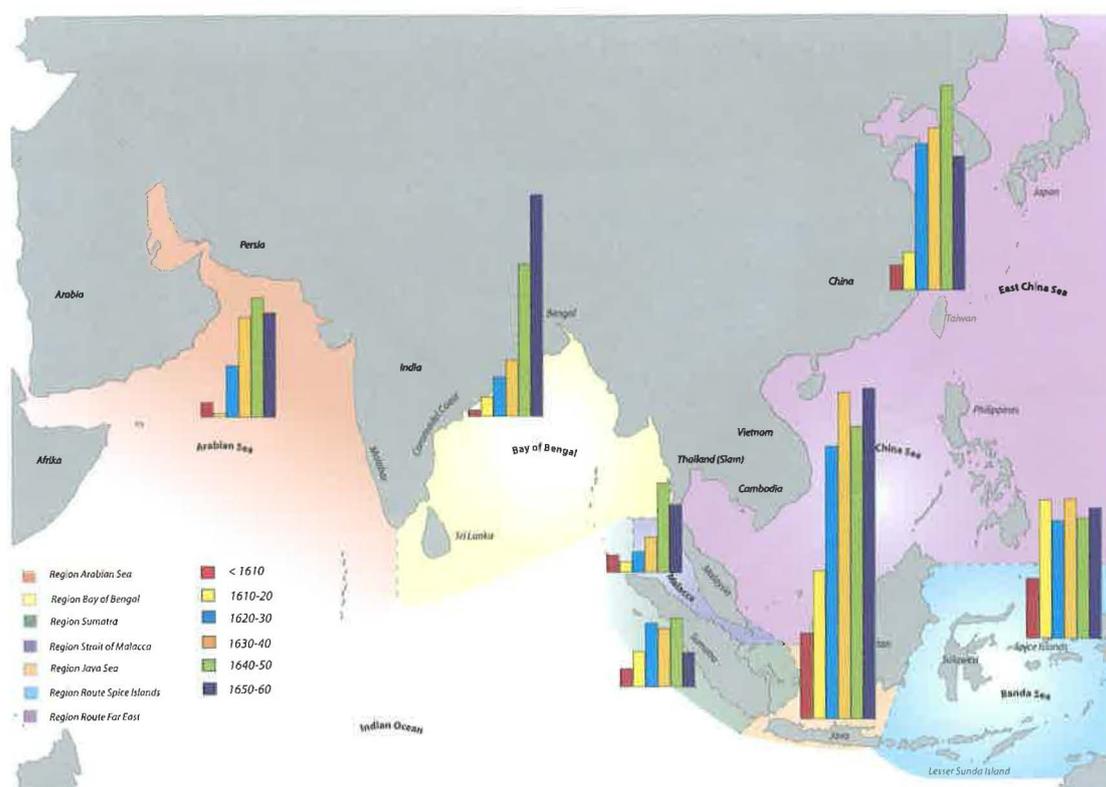
Map 3.6: General development of VOC shipping (frequency of arrivals per region) to 1660

From the data in Table 3.1 graphically shown in Map 3.6, the development of the total shipping network can be seen. In the period under consideration, 33% of all the arrivals (and 29% of the total cargo space involved) of VOC intra-Asian voyages took place in the region around the Java Sea with Bantam (only in the early years) and Batavia, as the most important ports. This region was pre-eminent in inter-Asian shipping. The tables also show the central role of this region in the intra-Asian network. A constant growth can be seen in the arriving shipping volumes in this area over the whole of this period, indicating a complementary increase in the stock of Asian goods available in Batavia for transhipment to Europe.

Throughout this period the Spice Islands were an important destination as one of the core businesses of the VOC as well. Ambon (area 85), Banda (area 86) and the Moluccas (area 88) together represented almost 16% of all arrivals and the total shipping volume. The region shows some fluctuation in the numbers of visiting ships and their cargo space because of the effects of large military actions in some periods, but is otherwise consistently high during the period 1610 to 1660.

For other regions, like the important pepper ports on Sumatra (areas 51, 52 and 53), the increase in shipping is clearly visible during the VOC's development phase. Shipping to other destinations like the Arabian Sea and the Far East emerged later in the process, but was already in some decline in the last 10-year period under consideration. The growing importance of the Bay of Bengal (VOC's "vette weide" – the plentiful pastures) is clearly shown, by the numbers of visits and volume amounting to nearly 20% of total VOC shipping in Asia during the last 10-year period.

Besides developments instigated by trade, other aspects such as a military emphasis on a region are also reflected in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. Changes in the arrivals and volumes of shipping to the Strait of Malacca (area 61) are indicators of changes in the nature of the shipping. When the VOC intensified its attempts to ban Portuguese shipping through this important link between the Far East and the Indian Ocean around 1630, they sent smaller, well-armed yachts to this region. Table 3.1 shows the frequency of arrivals in this region increasing rapidly, but there is a decline in the average tonnage of the ships to around 77 last in the 1620s and the 1630s, and even in the absolute shipping volume arriving in the area (as can be seen in Table 3.2) After 1640, when the situation had stabilised, the average tonnage again increased to values around 155 last in the period between 1640-1659.

Although the general issues can be clearly seen, a more detailed analysis will reveal much more of the way the VOC shipping in Asia developed during the first half of the 17th century. The quantitative part of this detailed analyses will be given in part two.

Intra-Asian shipping to 1660 Frequency by region	Period						
Region	<1610	1610-20	1620-30	1630-40	1640-50	1650-60	Total
Arabian Sea	38	8	139	268	320	280	1053
Bay of Bengal	16	51	106	152	410	597	1332
Sumatra	48	95	172	158	185	92	750
Strait of Malacca	46	28	56	95	224	181	630
Java Sea	231	400	736	880	789	891	3927
Route Spice Islands	161	371	317	375	324	350	1898
Route Far East	66	102	394	437	552	366	1917
Total	606	1055	1920	2365	2804	2757	11507

Table 3.1: Development of VOC intra-Asian shipping to 1660 in arrivals at main regions over 10-year intervals.

Intra-Asian shipping to 1660 Volume by region	Period						
Region	<1610	1610-20	1620-30	1630-40	1640-50	1650-60	Total
Arabian Sea	10650	1205	34629	64330	70724	53900	235438
Bay of Bengal	2625	6180	14861	19542	70268	91589	205065
Sumatra	8985	12695	24966	21637	30567	14277	113127
Strait of Malacca	12405	5440	4276	7510	34405	28456	92492
Java Sea	44645	70583	104652	122171	149934	165847	657832
Route Spice Islands	31964	85412	51923	40468	52160	53247	315174
Route Far East	13610	19430	61586	70277	101279	63220	329402
Total	124884	200945	296893	345935	509337	470536	1948530

Table 3.2: Development of VOC intra-Asian shipping to 1660 in volume (in last) at main regions over 10-year intervals.

4

Connecting the Asian regions: The trading and shipping network in operation after 1620

Introduction

After the period of 'round trading tours', a network of regular shipping gradually developed in the various regions in Asia. In 1619, Batavia in Java became the centre for shipping. It was the traffic control centre for most shipping in Asia and the main connection between the European management and the Asian branch of the VOC. Shipping was dependent on the seasons of the monsoon. The following sections describe the development of the Asian shipping network as the various shipping configurations were adjusted to the requirements of the weather and other conditions. It was sometimes very difficult for the VOC to regulate the connections between the many shipping routes spread out over a large area. In some cases, a ship delayed for only a short time could have major consequences for the organisation if a connection on a route subject to a specific monsoon season, could not be made; for instance when important products like textiles from India could not reach Batavia in time to be shipped to the Spice Islands where they were significant items for barter. Another difficulty was created if ships were delayed for months while waiting for a change of season and could not be employed on other routes. These problems do not appear to have been fully appreciated by the power holders in the Netherlands. Already in 1634, Governor-General Hendrick Brouwer had to explain to the VOC Directors in the Netherlands the importance of the timely departure of ships in order to be able to make the connection with the most prominent shipping routes in Asia:

> The money and cargo [from the Netherlands] that is meant for China and Japan should arrive here [Batavia] in the month of May. The commodities for Coromandel, Persia and the Surat are to be sent at the beginning of July and therefore, also because these trading posts are drawing most of the money and other means, [we] request Your Honour to send us these with the ships departing in the autumn that is before the winter from Your Honour, because otherwise these delayed arrivals means a fruitless stay with us for a year (Colenbrander 1960, p. 456).

Ships departed and arrived to and from Europe at regular intervals. Fleets of VOC ships left the Netherlands for Asia around New Year (the so-called Christmas fleet), and at the beginning of the spring (the so-called Easter fleet). Departures from Batavia to Europe were around New Year (December-January). Running the shipping through Batavia was first and foremost a management control issue since, for ships to call at Batavia was not always the most practical strategy. Ships could follow various main routes for voyages within Asia to or from Batavia, depending on the season and sometimes on the type of ship. Over the years, the VOC succeeded by trial and error in designing a shipping network that ensured an efficient year-round deployment of ships to various destinations.

The main routes in Asia

The eastern route: the Spice Islands

The Eastern Route stretched directly east from Batavia to the Spice Islands. The three important destinations on this route were the island groups of Banda, Ambon and what at that time was called Molucca. In this period, only Ternate, Tidore and a few neighbouring islands were referred to by this name by this as opposed to later definitions of Molucca, or the Moluccan Islands. From the centrally located Ambon, it was usually possible, though in some periods rather difficult, to reach both other destinations. The route from Batavia to Ambon, however, was the most monsoon-affected of all the VOC shipping lanes.
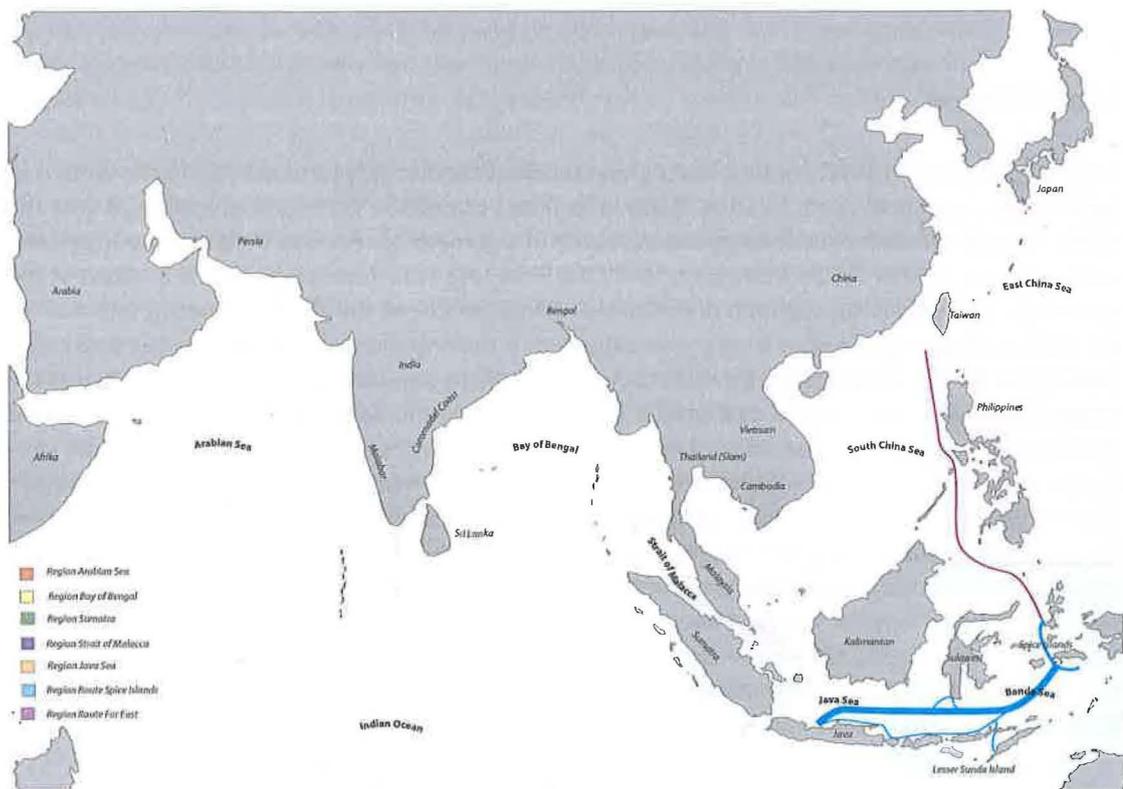
Map 4.1: The Eastern route to the Spice Islands. The route was connected with the route to the Far East along the Philippines (the purple pine).

It was only possible to sail from Batavia to Ambon from October to March. This applies not only to the larger Dutch cargo vessels, but also to smaller ships, whether of European or Asian construction. Ships leaving Batavia in March or even at the end of February often failed to make the voyage and had to return to their port of departure. From April to October, ships returned to Batavia with their cargo of nutmeg, mace and cloves. All types of vessels were used by the VOC on this route. Normally, the voyage was not dangerous for the larger ships with regards to weather conditions or attacks from enemies of the Company. The only navigational risks were the very steep shores of the islands and the reefs with nowhere suitable to anchor in adverse winds, or currents to prevent stranding. Because the skippers expected little danger on this easy route between Java and the east of the Archipelago, accidents often happened due to inattention. The ship *Hollandia* (ID:237) whose fate is described in detail in a report in the VOC archives is a case in point. This large *retourschip* sailed to the Spice Islands in 1642 with an accompanying smaller vessel and was wrecked on a reef near Lombok. The loss

occurred during excellent weather on a clear night and it seemed to have happened, 'as if no person was keeping watch' (NA 1.04.02, VOC 1142, fol. 9).

Arrivals and Departures: Ambon & Ceram
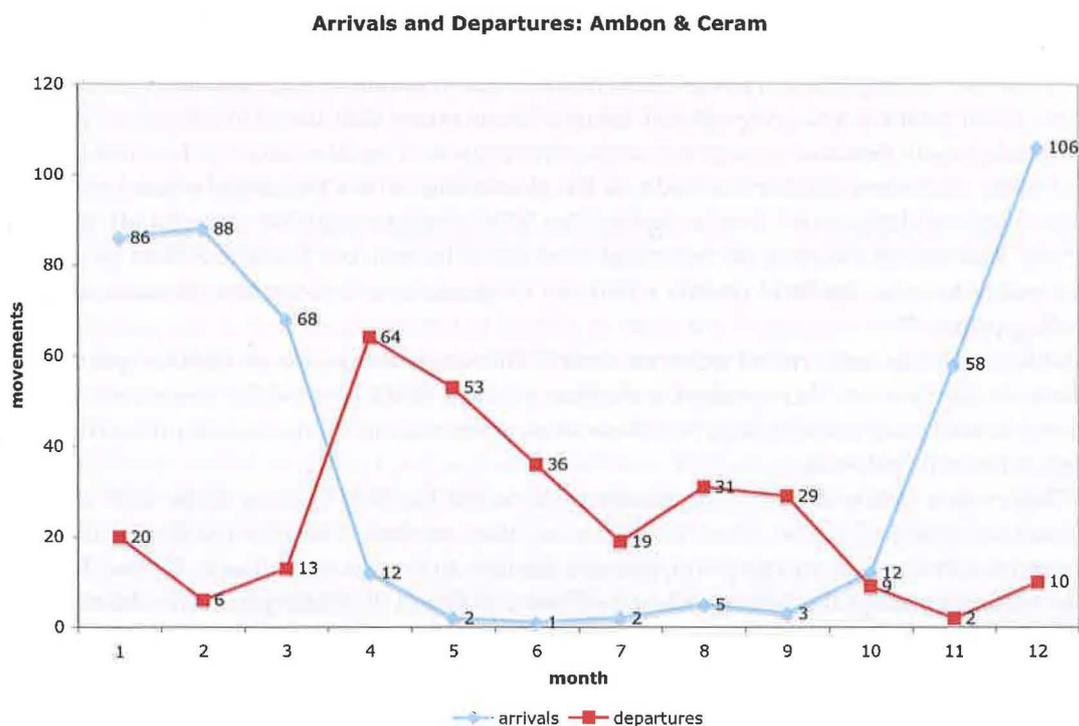
Fig. 4.1: Shipping in the Spice Islands Region: Average arrivals and departures from Ambon and Ceram per month for 1595-1660

The VOC often used worn out *retourschepen* for the journey to the Spice Islands; ships that were determined unfit for the return voyage to the Netherlands. Apart from these ships, a number of middle-sized, small and even very small vessels (sometimes just open boats) sailed from Batavia every monsoon (see chapter 5). To protect the VOC's clove trade from what the Company considered to be smuggling, a number of small vessels in good condition and heavily armed for their dimensions, which could be rowed if necessary, were used to fight local ships. They were also used to transport some of the soldiers and their possessions to the Spice Islands. Most of the troops, however, were transported to the Spice Islands on the large ships. Because the VOC tried to prevent foreign merchants from trading with the Spice Islands, the Company had to provision itself, so the larger VOC ships also had to carry substantial amounts of rice and other food products.

Only part of the cargoes carried on this Eastern route can be considered genuine intra-Asian trade. Most of the spices brought to Batavia were exported directly to Europe. A portion, however, was used by the VOC to trade with the rest of Asia. On their outgoing voyages from Batavia, the ships transported foodstuffs and utensils for VOC employees, soldiers, slaves, also for the other people on the islands. Most of these commodities were imported by the VOC from other parts of Asia, but also a large quantity of European meat and wine barrels were shipped to the Spice Islands in every west monsoon period. The textiles transported eastwards from Batavia were mostly intended to be traded for cloves, directly or indirectly. An interesting aspect is that the VOC itself generated intra-Asian trade, for example by using Asian pottery for storage instead of European built wares. Instead of wooden barrels, the VOC stored water and powder on the Spice Islands in *martabans (stoneware storage jars)* imported from ports in the Bay of Bengal, and which were in use there by the local people.

On this eastern route, only a few intermediate ports were of importance to the VOC. Some ships visited ports in Java, Bali or Macassar on their voyage from Batavia to the Spice Islands to buy food (mostly cattle from Bali and rice from Macassar). Trade products from these places

were of very little importance and ships very seldom made a direct return trip between these places and Batavia. Due to the smuggling trade, the relationship with Macassar was often tense and as a result this region became an occasional destination for military operations.

The only independent destinations on the eastern route for VOC ships, were the islands of Timor and Solor. At nearly every monsoon, one or two yachts sailed to these islands to buy sandalwood, an important trade product for the Asian mainland, and returned directly to Batavia. Local political and geographical circumstances meant that the VOC ships had to collect the sandalwood themselves near the areas were it grew. Vessels needed to be medium-sized and easily manoeuvrable for this trade, as the places from where the sandalwood was shipped were often on dangerous lee-side shores. The VOC tried to establish strongholds for themselves, first on fort *Henricus* on Solor and later fort *Concordia* on Timor, but they gave up on this policy because the local traders could not be persuaded to bring the sandalwood to the trading posts.

VOC ships regularly visited ports on central and western Java for provisions and building materials for Batavia. This required a number of ships of different sizes; sometimes with the ability to load long wooden logs, but these ships were usually utility vessels rather than trade vessels from the network.

There was a link with the north-eastern route to the Far East by way of the VOC ships deployed for a military action. From the Moluccas, they attempted to intercept the Spanish ships around the Philippines carrying supplies and soldiers to the Spanish allies in Tidore. The VOC also tried to intercept the Spanish silver galleons arriving in the Philippines from Mexico. They were, however, unsuccessful in this mission. Throughout the whole period of Dutch-Spanish warfare not one Spanish silver ship was captured in this region. In some periods a number of heavily armed ships left the Moluccas for this destination around January/February. After their activities in the region between the Moluccas and the Philippines, these ships would sail further north. Here they tried to intercept Chinese junks travelling to Manila. The VOC was much more successful in these actions and large quantities of Chinese products entered the VOC trade system in this way. Small amounts of cloves were also brought to the Chinese market in these ships. Weather conditions made this voyage a lot more dangerous then the eastern spice route. Larger ships in good condition were required, not only to withstand weather conditions, but also to resist assaults from Spanish ships which were much more powerful then those of the Asian enemies the VOC encountered around the Spice Islands. Before 1630, these ships sailed on to Japan on a regular basis where they could sell the captured trade items and wait for the change of the monsoon. In the second half of the period covered here, that base moved to Taiwan because entry to Japan had become restricted.

The north-western route, Branch A

The VOC's north-western voyages during this time were influenced by the military conflict with the Portuguese in the Arabian Sea. Naval expeditions to the area commenced in the 1620s with some being undertaken in conjunction with the English. Later, more attention was given to the blockade of Goa. From 1636, the VOC sent a large, strongly manned and armed fleet to the Indian west coast nearly every year. The Portuguese port of Goa on the west coast of India – the centre of their Asian administration – was highly monsoon-dependent. Between April and September, this coast had a very dangerous lee shore where hardly any shipping was possible, making the blockade of the port of Goa only worthwhile in the period from September to April. In order to be effective, Dutch ships had to be near Goa at the earliest possible occasion. Because it was difficult to sail northwards through the Strait of Malacca just before September, these ships would sail through Sunda Strait and search for the most favourable winds in a long curve over the Indian Ocean. After a first fleet had arrived in Goa travelling through Sunda Strait, other ships would arrive later in the season at Goa by way of the Strait of Malacca. From late September the passage to the Indian Ocean was much faster following this route than it had been through the Sunda Strait.

This blockade was the only place in Asia where, after 1620, the VOC could expect to have to fight a full-blown battle with another European fleet and therefore they had to deploy a strong blockade fleet. Combining this with trade activities in this region could reduce the cost of the blockade. The extensive expenses were justified by the VOC by the damage caused to the Portuguese supply of Asian products to Europe, which, it was believed, would ultimately benefit the VOC through higher prices on the European market (Coolhaas 1964, p. 144).

These circumstances meant that after the arrival of the fleet in Goa, a number of VOC ships could be used for trade, depending on the strength of the Portuguese fleet and the judgement of the Admiral of the blockade fleet. In addition to the stores and armoury needed for the blockade, some trade products were usually carried by the fleet as well. Normally, shortly after the fleet arrived in Goa, these goods would be sent on one or two ships to Surat, the most important port in north-western India, where the VOC had a factory. Trading ships sailing on to Surat or Persia had to be strongly armed to be able to resist the Portuguese still operating from many strongholds in the area. Indeed, the VOC lost one richly laden ship – *Franeker* (ID:648) described as a warship, but too lightly armed to sail alone in this area – in a Portuguese attack (Colenbrander 1900, p. 249). From December to May, shipping along the Asian coast between Surat and Persia could be carried out in both directions. VOC ships travelled this route with products from other parts of Asia, and also as traders between these ports, even regularly transporting freight for local traders or authorities. From Persia, some VOC ships would sail on to Mocha in Arabia, where coffee (*quawa*) was already a trading item, though not yet a very important one. More important for the VOC were Persian silk and Surat cloth. At the end of the blockade, some ships were sent to the Indian coast in the neighbourhood of Goa to buy rice and pepper. Good profits could be made by first sailing to Surat to buy *amphioen* (opium) and then trading this for pepper on the Malabar Coast of South India.
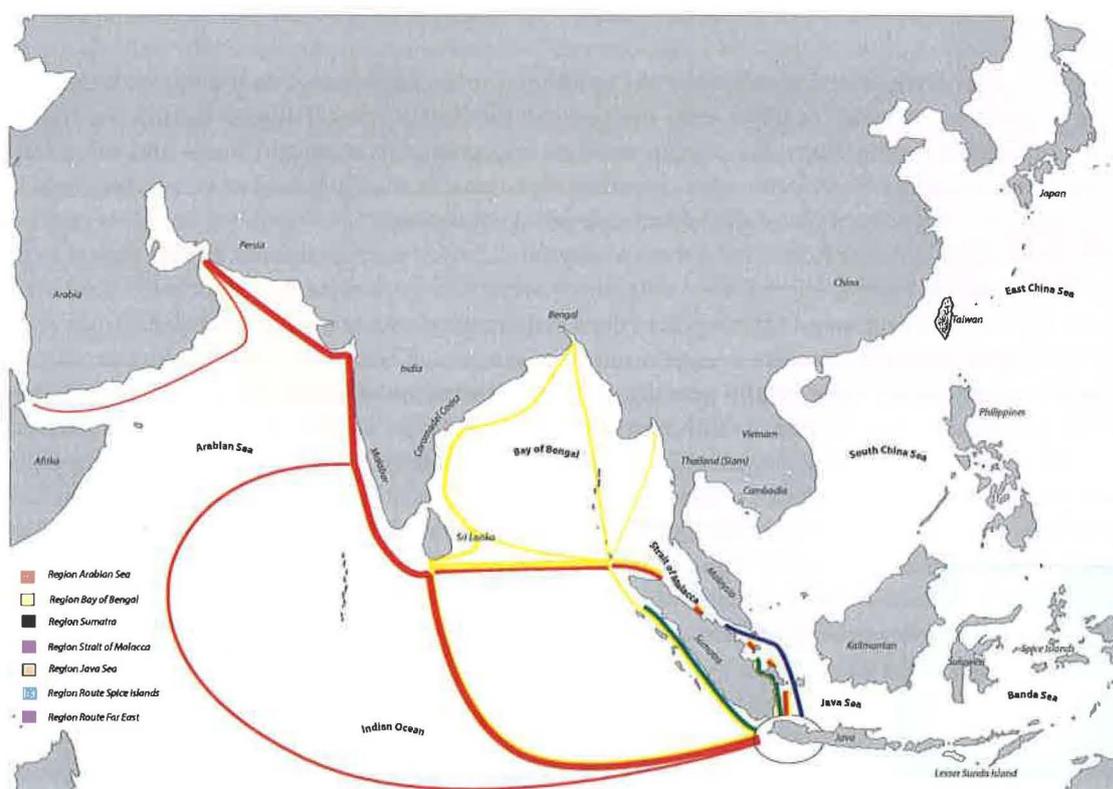
Map 4.2: The north-western routes, Branch A & B

Ships returning from Persia directly to the Sunda Strait often had great difficulty in finding favourable winds which meant that voyages to Batavia could take as long as five months. A more efficient route was to first cross the Arabian Sea to its eastern shore. Ships sailing along the Indian and Ceylon west coasts could approach Galle nearly all year round, since this port

was on the only east-west oriented coast in the region and thus independent of the monsoon. In the early 1640s, Galle was unable to play a logistical role in the shipping network, as the fort city was completely isolated from the surrounding area. Even basic supplies such as rice had to be brought in by passing VOC ships. In this period, however, Galle was used as a transit port for some goods; for instance, Persian horses, which were not able to make the long voyage to Batavia in a single trip, would have a rest and recreation stop there while their ship sailed on. By the end of the 1650s, Galle had gradually built up its logistical role in the shipping system.

Batavia could be reached from Galle or South India along the west coast of Sumatra, through the Sunda Strait in generally little more than a month. During some months of the year, vessels in poor condition chose the longer but more sheltered route through the Strait of Malacca. There was one other Asian area frequented by VOC ships that had to be reached through Sunda Strait, the pepper ports on the west coast of Sumatra. Commerce had a totally different character here from that described above. Trade was simple, only involving two products, cloth for pepper, but was dependent on the good will of the Sultan of Atjeh who dominated the whole region. Portuguese or other Asian adversaries were hardly present, so the ships did not need heavy armaments. Ships of intermediate size and good cargo-carrying capacity were needed to gather the pepper from the different ports along the coast and take it back to Batavia. Some VOC ships, often flutes, were almost continuously engaged in this trade.

The north-western route, Branch B

Sailing in a northerly direction through the Strait of Malacca was not entirely limited by the monsoon. It was always possible to pass through the Strait but during the adverse monsoon period (going north this was from around February to September), the voyage could take a long time and Branch A was preferred. Ships with a destination in the Bay of Bengal had to observe certain aspects of the wind and current patterns after leaving the Strait of Malacca in order not to end up on the wrong side of Ceylon and miss the entrance to the Bay of Bengal. It was possible to arrive at, or leave from the ports in the Bay of Bengal almost during the whole year, but direct sailing from one port to another was only safe at certain times and in certain directions. Normally Pipelij, the northern-most VOC base in the Gulf, had to be reached before December to take advantage of the favourable wind conditions.

The situation with regard to trade was somewhat different here compared to the other side of the Indian subcontinent. On the west side, there were two important trade ports for the VOC, Surat for northern India and Gamron for Persia, where goods were brought overland from afar. On the eastern coast there were a large number of ports each with their own trading products. Each location would have locally specific patterns printed on. Besides the larger ships transporting substantial quantities of cloth and saltpetre to Batavia, smaller ships were also needed to collect these goods. The sequence of obtaining and transporting gold, silver, other metals and ores and some spices with which to buy these commodities was very important. For the most eastern ports in the Bay of Bengal, called Arracan and Pegu by the VOC (modern Myanmar), it was difficult to apply the system because the period when ships could go there in combination with other destinations was very limited. Consequently slaves and rice, which the VOC bought there, were often taken directly to Batavia.

VOC ships visited all the other ports during voyages up and down the coast, from the mouth of the Ganges in the north to Ceylon in the south, even though they had to be careful near places under Portuguese influence. Trade depended on a large number of local coastal rulers with these frequently being governors representing greater kings living further inland. Most of the ports had local traders and shipping operating concurrently with the VOC. The danger of interference from large, armed Portuguese ships was much less on this coast than on the western side of the subcontinent.

A number of VOC ships sailed from Bengal to transport sugar and tropical products to Persia. Because of the VOC's positive trade balance there (after a problematic start), the ships returning after 1640 to the Coromandel Coast and Bengal often carried gold and silver coins. Although these ships did not always sail into the bay of Galle, they nearly always tried to

establish communications there, underlining the strategic position of Galle in the trade and shipping network.

Shortly before 1640, the VOC established a connection between the north-eastern and the north-western routes. Around December, some ships returning from Japan and Taiwan would not sail to Batavia but would travel directly through the Strait of Malacca to the north instead. Some of these ships were expected to report to the Goanese fleet around January to be escorted through Portuguese spheres of influence and to redistribute cargo for Surat or Persia. Others had orders to sail directly to the Coromandel Coast. Japanese silver and copper, Chinese gold and porcelain and sugar were their most important cargoes. From the Coromandel Coast, these ships would join the other VOC ships trading in the region and then return with them to Batavia. There was no direct VOC trade in the opposite direction through the Strait of Malacca to China, as the Portuguese had carried out with their annual shipping from Goa via Malacca to Macao.
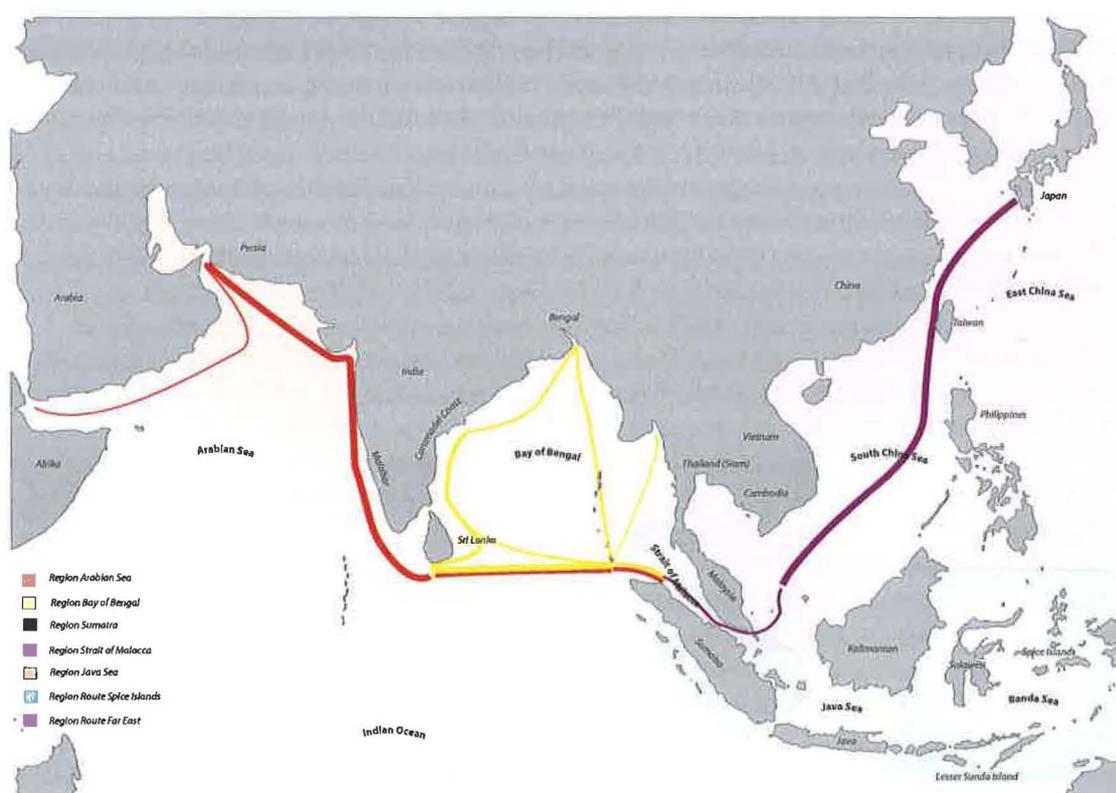
Map 4.3: The connection between the routes to the Far East and the North-West after 1640

The developing complexity of the trade and shipping network between these regions illustrates the flexibility of the VOC in utilising their ships to the fullest extent and keeping them sailing, in contrast to the Portuguese who often left ships idle in Macao, waiting for a change of season.

It is interesting to note that the VOC seemed to be the only partner who could transport and safely store large amounts of gold and silver along all the ports mentioned above. Local rulers in all these places knew that it was not wise to allow any major theft to take place, even if it was in the guise of robbery by bandits, because the VOC was able to take retaliatory action in the whole area. The VOC was therefore effectively able to capitalise on the exchange differences between gold and silver values and between different kinds of coins, by transporting large amounts of these currencies. The transport of the right kind of bullion to the right place was a permanent concern for the VOC traders (see Case Study 4-1).

Like Branch A, Branch B also included a pepper route to Sumatra. VOC ships visited the south-eastern coast of this island to exchange cloth for pepper. Trade here was in some ways different from that on the west coast of the island. Most of the centres for the pepper trade were situated inland and connected to the sea by rivers. The VOC often kept some smaller ships on

the rivers to transport the pepper down river to larger ships anchored outside the shoals that abounded on this part of the Sumatran coast. In this way, even the large *retourschips* could sail to Jambi to collect pepper in the interval between their arrival and the departure of the fleet back to Europe.

Between 1620 and 1640, many smaller vessels were sent to the Strait of Malacca to assist in securing all the waterways of the region for the VOC. The places and dates for ships to be present in this region were dictated by the possibility of intercepting Portuguese vessels, so the VOC fleets moved up and down the Strait of Malacca to the rhythm of the monsoon.

In 1641, the VOC took over the city of Malacca after a long siege with the Portuguese. The city then became a stopover for almost all VOC ships sailing through the Strait. Although Malacca did not reach the same status as an important emporium that it had under the Portuguese, it was still an important location for the storage and redistribution of stock. As far as intra-Asian trade was concerned, Malacca became a VOC centre for the pewter trade in this region and an independent destination from Batavia for pewter and pepper.

Case Study 4-1; Two examples of VOC currency exchange
The VOC was able to implement an active exchange policy of currency as is demonstrated in the following instances where the differing value of gold and silver in the region is maximised.

'Van Thaiwan door de straete Malacca aff te senden in Japans silver ende Chinees goudt thienhondert-duysent guldens, mits dat in 't versenden des gouts by scharsiteyt Coromandel prefereren ende des te meer silver nae Suratte schicken, alsoo 't gout meer in Masulipatnam als Suratte rendeert'

Send from Taiwan, through the Strait of Malacca the Japanese silver and the Chinese gold worth ten-hundred-thousand guilders. The gold to Coromandel, if due to the scarcity, it is preferred there and thus extra silver to Surat, because gold yields more in Masulipatnam then Surat (Coolhaas 1964, p. 37).

'De wissels aen de Moren in Bengale en op de cust, om op Seylon betaelt te worden, is een goede sake, maer het verschil van de reductie der pagoden en het verlies, dat mitsdien op Seylon geleden wort, is te groot. Weshalven de gouverneur besloten heeft van de comptanten, uyt Persia of Suratte voor en ten behoeve van Bengale op Seylon comende, soo veel ropias te lichten, als de wisselbrieven medebrengen, de Moren ropias in plaets van ryxdaelders gevende.

The bill of exchange to the Moors in Bengal and on the Coast [of Coromandel] to be paid on Ceylon is a good practise, but the difference of the reduction of the *pagode* and the loss, that therefore is made on Ceylon, is too large. Therefore the Governor has decided to take from the ready money, that will arrive from Persia or Surat to Ceylon to be used for Bengal, so many *ropias* as required for the bills of exchange, so we can give the Moors *ropias* instead of *ryxdaelders* (Van der Chijs 1893, p. 206).

The north-eastern route

Starting around April VOC ships would leave Batavia in a north-eastern direction, some simply sailing to Siam and back. The old capital, Aythaya, of what is now called the Kingdom of Thailand, was located much higher up the river than its modern equivalent, Bangkok, which in that period was only a toll station near the mouth of the river. Smaller VOC ships would cross the sandbar in front of the river mouth and sail up the river; larger ones would anchor in front of it. There was direct trade, large in volume though small in value (mostly in rice and wood), between Batavia and Siam. Some VOC ships would continue along this route to Taiwan with deerskins and products from the tropical forest (mainly Sappan wood) being their most important cargo. In Taiwan they would find other ships that had sailed directly from Batavia; ships would leave Batavia for Taiwan as late as September.

The special conditions prevailing in Taiwan meant that a great variety of VOC ships were dispatched to this region. The largest VOC ship type was sent to load large bulk cargoes from China and Japan. These ships arrived in the region in July/August, but had to leave before the end of October, for commercial rather than nautical reasons. Otherwise it was very difficult to get the cargo from China and Japan to Batavia in time for the return fleet that left around New Year. The Taiwanese port could however only be accessed by ships with a depth of less than 13 feet. In addition, the road in the Dutch settlement at Taiwan was dangerous because of foul weather during the part of the year when the ships were there. To overcome these difficulties, larger vessels were loaded with the cargo collected from the Chinese traders during the year in Taiwan and then transported during September-November to the roadstead near the Pisca-dores Islands. This transport system required a large number of cargo ships of different sizes. Some yachts assigned for military functions in this region could also carry cargo, but their armaments and construction hampered their usefulness. Captured Chinese ships were also pressed into service by the VOC, as were other Asian-built ships that were bought or hired in the region. In VOC correspondence they are all called *jonken,* which does not necessarily mean that they were all of the type now known as junks. It is remarkable that of a fleet of five VOC ships sailing together to the same destination near Taiwan, the three so-called *jonken* had pre-dominantly Chinese crews, whilst there were no Chinese crew on the other two (Blussé, Milde & Ts`Ao Yung-Ho 1995). *Jonken*/Junks sometimes carried cargo between Taiwan and Batavia or Siam, but were mostly utilised around Taiwan itself by the VOC.
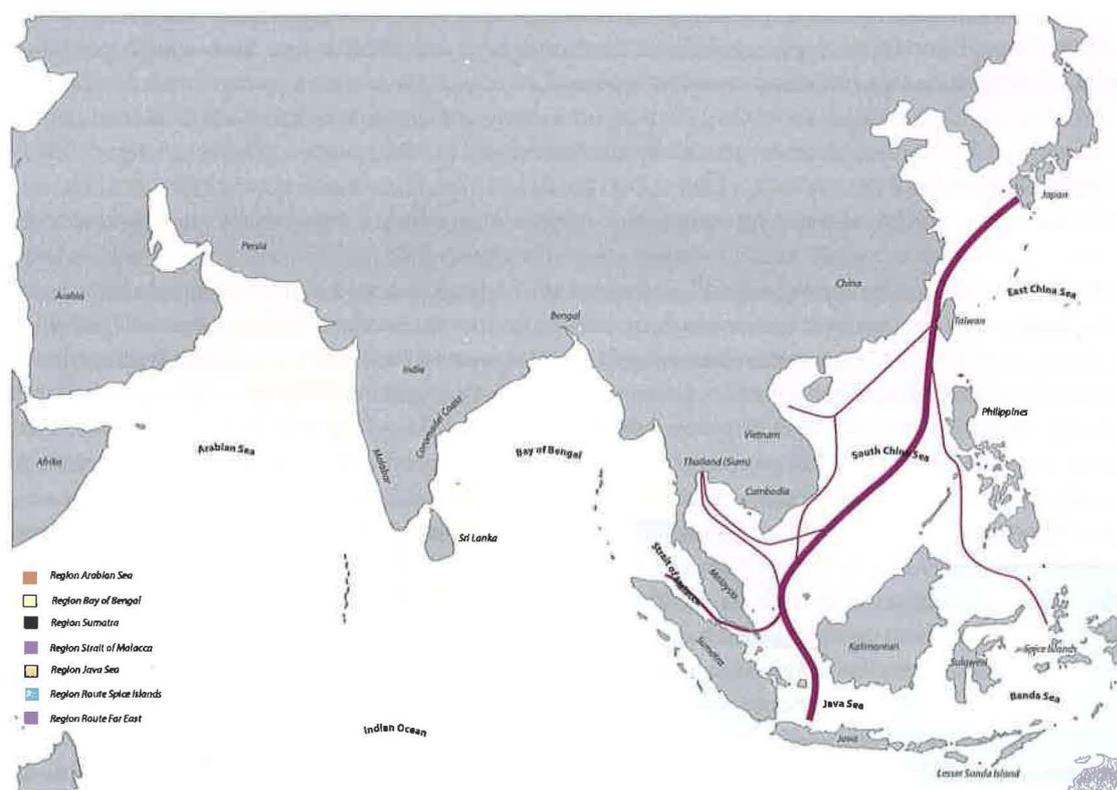
Map 4.4: Route to the Far East

The north-eastern route did not end at Taiwan but went on to Japan. Ships would sail on from Taiwan to Japan and return a few months later. Direct VOC trade between Batavia and Japan was rare until 1662 when they lost Taiwan. However, the products in demand in Japan came for the greater part from the Asian mainland. In addition, trade with Japan was regulated very strictly by the Japanese authorities who not only controlled which goods could be imported and exported, but also in which period the sales could take place. On account of the variation between the Japanese and Europeans calendar years, this would be some time in October. The VOC skippers could not make their own decisions to take advantage of favourable conditions

but were completely dependent for their departure on the permission of the Japanese authorities. The ships then only had a very short period to reach Batavia in time to load their goods onto the ships of the return fleet. Ships for Japanese trade did not need to be heavily armed, but they had a good chance of encountering hurricanes while sailing in the East China Sea or in the strait between the Pescadores and Taiwan. In addition to concerns about their highly valuable cargoes, this also meant that ships travelling on this route had to be sturdy and robust. Nevertheless, quite a number of VOC ships were lost due to the weather conditions in this region.

Because the VOC did not succeed in establishing factories in China, the Company tried to buy Chinese products in Cambodia and Vietnam. In the 17th century this area consisted of kingdoms that were more or less vassals to the Chinese emperor and in a permanent state of war with each other. The VOC still tried to get a foothold in a number of places despite these dangerous conditions. Ships could not be too large, because in most cases they had to sail far up river, but on the other hand they had to be heavily armed. Some rivers were so narrow that flutes were preferred over yachts because the woodcarving on the transoms of the latter could be severely damaged by collisions with trees on the shore (NA 1.04.02, VOC 1252, fol. 127). The VOC lost at least three ships in the period covered by this study due to hostilities in the region. Mostly ships would sail directly from Batavia to the Asian mainland around May to be in Taiwan in time to transport a part of their cargo to Japan. Tonckin (the northern part of modern Vietnam) proved to be the most profitable and stable connection. For some time the VOC operated with a number of ships in the silk trade on the Tonckin-Japan-Taiwan-Tonckin route.

The VOC called the waters around Taiwan a *harde en swaer vaerwater* (hard and heavy waters), which meant that ships had to be strongly built and be in good shape in order to sail this route with its difficult sea conditions. The route between Batavia and Siam was considered to be easy and for this old ships could be used.

Inter-regional transport: The compilation of the 'return cargo' in the 1620s

The main cargo for Europe consisted of pepper and spices, but numerous other products were also requested. In a general memorandum written in the 1620s, the VOC directors in the Netherlands instructed the Governor-General, his council and all the merchants in the trading posts all over Asia to send specific products for which they also specified the quantity as well as the quality. Heading the list was large quantities of pepper. Based on the experience up to that time, they expected that this pepper could come from the production areas on Sumatra: Jambi, Campar, Andrigiry, Tyco, Priaman, Celiber, Achim, Ligor, and Bordelon. The directors considered the Malabar Coast to be a potentially rich supplier, if the problem of the Portuguese in that region could be solved. The responsible authorities needed to ensure that only the largest and cleanest peppercorns were sent to the Netherlands. The VOC also requested that cloves, mace and nutmeg be sent annually in enough quantity for a two-year supply in case 'through an accident or other inconvenient circumstances, that God prevent' there was a shortage and trade in Europe would come to a halt (NA 1.10.30, Geleynssen de Jongh 138, fol. 37).

The *retourschepen* followed a strict time schedule. As stated before, the VOC's preference was to leave Batavia before the end of December; the ship could then arrive in the Netherlands in the late summer or early autumn. During two to four months time, the cargo was unloaded, the ship cleaned, repaired and equipped. Depending upon the weather conditions in Europe, the ship could then leave the North Sea in January to sail to Batavia in seven to eight months. The Cape of Good Hope was not yet a permanent staging post and compulsory stopover for the ships on their way to the East Indies before 1650. Still, the Cape was often used as a meeting place and somewhere to leave messages. Supplies and water were taken on board at various places. On the way back to Europe, St Helena was the most frequented place for meeting and supplies.

The *Hollandia* (ID:237) is a good example of one of the first *retourschepen* that sailed almost exclusively between Europe and Asia. The ship left the Netherlands for the first time on Boxing Day, 26th December 1619. Built in 1618 for the Chamber Amsterdam, the *Hollandia* made the

trip between Europe and Asia seven times before it was wrecked on a reef near Lombok on 27 December 1642 (p. 52-53). At 300-400 *last,* it belonged to the largest ship type in the service of the VOC in that period. In 1621 the *Hollandia* was sent to Banda to transport soldiers and in 1624 and 1632 it collected pepper at Jambi. But in all the other cases the ship arrived in Batavia and returned directly to Europe, mostly with a very short turn-around time.

The *Hollandia* is an interesting example of the problems the VOC encountered synchronising the Asian trade system to these voyages to and from the Netherlands. Because the loading of pepper at Jambi took longer then expected, the *Hollandia* left Batavia at the end of January 1625 on her second return voyage. This was rather late, bearing in mind the instructions of the VOC directors. Indeed, the ship did get into great trouble in the midst of the Indian Ocean and had to sail to Madagascar for repairs. Both her companions, *Gouda* (ID:255) and *Middelburg* (ID:378) perished. The voyage is vividly described in the travels of Willem Ysbrands Bontekoe, a book famous in the Netherlands in the 17th century and still read today. The *Hollandia* lost its masts during the storm in the Indian Ocean. The ship was repaired on the Mauritius and was fitted with new masts, locally cut (Hogerwerff 1952; Roeper 1996). These problems gave the directors in the Netherlands new reasons to set the urgent departure of the homeward bound ships from Batavia in December so as to avoid the hurricane season in the Indian Ocean.

Because of the repairs needed, the *Hollandia* could not leave the Netherlands again before May. The third voyage of the ship in 1626 is also very well documented in a journal printed in the 17th century (Commelin 1646f). Shortly after the *Hollandia* left, the skipper discovered that he had to bear the consequences of poor maintenance work during the short turn-around time in the Netherlands. Whether the Mauritian masts were replaced in the Netherlands is unclear, but the repairs were not satisfactory and the ship was leaking heavily when it reached the Atlantic Ocean. During a stop over at Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa in order to attend to this problem, the carpenter found the bow of the ship in very poor condition. Stops like these could cause long delays, especially on the west coast of Africa, were the wind and current conditions in the Gulf of Guinea could hold the ships up for many weeks. Later when more experience was gained, ships were forbidden to stop in this region and had to follow a very specific course over the Atlantic Ocean, sail close to the east coast of South America and then follow a long curve to the Cape of Good Hope. At Sierra Leone, the *Hollandia* also had an encounter with the illustrious Dutch pirate Claes Compaen. During a short exchange of gunfire, four people, including the vicar and his wife, were killed. However, the homeward-bounder must have been too big and powerful for the pirates. The confrontation ended peacefully with some courtesy calls and even the exchange of presents. After this setback, the continuation of the trip to Batavia was still problematic, and in October the ship lost parts of the bow section. Nevertheless, the *Hollandia* arrived on 14 December 1626 in Batavia, after a relatively fast trip, with 319 souls on board including 27 woman and children. During the trip 25 people died and Commander Schram died shortly after his arrival (Heeres 1896, 02-01-1627).

In view of the repeated strict proscriptions about departure times, the *Hollandia* was too late for the returning fleet of that year, and had to wait until the end of 1627 to return. Given the problems encountered on the journey from Europe, the ship must first have been sent to *Onrust,* an island off the coast of Batavia with repair facilities. In the course of 1627, the return cargo was collected from all parts of Asia. In October, the return fleet was ready for departure to Europe. The management in Batavia under Governor-General Coen, then starting his second term of office, was faced with the following dilemma. The preference was to send the fleet off at the earliest opportunity, taking the ships back to the Netherlands in the late spring or at the start of the European summer, in accordance with the VOC directors' insistence on arriving before the autumn. The sailing scheme dictated by the monsoon however forced the management in Batavia to wait as long as possible in order to include cargo from a number of other destinations. If this cargo missed the return fleet, it would have to be stored in Batavia for a year with all the additional costs and risks. Often, the practice was for one or two ships to wait for the delayed deliveries from the Asian VOC fleet and sail after the main fleet in the first months of the New Year. The VOC directors restricted this practice after the loss of the ships *Gouda* (ID:255) and *Middelburg* (ID:262) in the previous year.

Loading a ship with a cargo of various products was not an easy task. The differences between light and heavy goods in relation to the requirements of the balance of the ship had to be taken into account. The necessity to store products in such a way as to ensure that their quality was preserved, and that they did not contaminate each other during the trip to Europe, such as highly aromatic goods polluting other cargo was equally important.

On 30 October 1627, the return fleet was ready to sail. At the last minute, the management considered loading the ship *Vianen* (ID:422) and sending it off with the fleet. Although they believed that with the pepper that had just arrived in the yacht *Witte Beer* (ID:152) from the west coast of Sumatra, the pepper still in stock, and the cargo they expected 'at any hour' from Bantam, the ship could be loaded, they took the decision not to further delay the departure of the fleet (Colenbrander 1923, p. 624). It still took some days before the fleet was sent off with a letter for the directors in the Netherlands indicating that the management in Batavia could no longer wait for the delayed arrivals in order to prevent the risk of fire or other disasters and to avoid unnecessary loss of salaries, and supplies on board:

'deselve alsnu op't spoedichste in compagnie sullen toegesonden werden, sonder die langer in noodeloos perijckel van brandt, schips-leedt, verloop van maentgelden, consumptie van viveres etc. op te senden, […]'
[These should be sent at the earliest occasion in 'company' without leaving them in unnecessary risk of fire, ship disaster, wastage of salary, consumption of supplies etc.] (Colenbrander 1923, p.17).

The fleet consisting of the *Frederick Hendrick* (ID:405), *Hollandia* (ID:237), *'t Wapen van Delft* (ID:273), *'sLandts Hollandia* (ID:334)[15] and *Galias* (ID:406), left Batavia on 12 November 1627 and arrived in the Netherlands in June 1628. Contrary to regulations, Governor-General Coen did in fact dispatch the *Vianen* in January 1628 with a cargo of Chinese silk received from Taiwan in December.

Batavia was not always the only departure point and ships sometimes sailed to Europe from other destinations in Asia. For example, in December 1626 the ship *Dordrecht* (ID:219) sailed to the Netherlands from Surat. The function of Batavia as the VOC's central rendezvous is reflected in the cargo of the *Hollandia*. Among the correspondence from Asia at that time a so-called *factura* has survived. This document shows the cargo's specification, cost price and supplier and gives a unique insight into the functioning of the Asian trade and shipping network. The *Hollandia*'s cargo of 1627 is chosen as a good example because the origin of the diverse components of the return cargo was fully described and it is representative of the cargo usually sent to Europe in that period. The typical composition of cargo by volume was: 70% pepper, spices and silk each represent 10%, and the last 10% comprised of a variety of miscellaneous products.

The cargo of the November 1627 voyage of the *Hollandia* was sourced from a number of locations and arrived in Batavia from January to October of 1627 (Table 4-1).The complexity of the developing shipping and trade network is evident in the *Hollandia's* collection of cargo.

Pepper arrived during the first half of 1627 from: Succadena on Borneo (Kalimantan); Patani (Malay Peninsula); the west coast of Sumatra; south east Sumatra (Jambi) and Siam. The Pepper from Siam arrived in Batavia in the *Cameel* (ID:367) on 7 February 1627. This large merchant ship of 270 *last* then left Batavia on the 19th of February for Ambon and Banda. For larger ships, the end of February was about the latest time of year to sail eastward from Batavia to the Spice Islands. The *Cameel* left Banda on 26 April with a cargo of nutmeg and mace then took on board cloves in Amboina from where it departed in May to arrive back in Batavia on 23 June 1627. Most of the spices brought by this ship were loaded onto the *Hollandia*. Some more mace arrived just in time to be shipped by the *Hollandia*, on the *Munnickendam* (ID:294). This flute left Banda in August (just after the main harvest season), and arrived rather late in Batavia.

Pepper that had arrived in Batavia in November and December from Sumatra was also shipped on the *Vianen* in January 1628. As the cargo of baled silk and pepper had a low specific weight, the *Vianen* needed a substantial load of Japanese copper to ballast the ship. The vessel even returned to Batavia from the Sunda Strait to Batavia for an additional 40 *last* of copper but

the loading of the additional cargo proved problematic for the slender vessel; there were complications getting this ballast down into the hold of the ship without the time consuming task of unloading and re-loading the cargo complotely.

Cargo	Amount	Arrived in Bat. with	Arrived from	Arrival date
Pepper	54000	Haen	Borneo	7-1-1627
Pepper	320000	Witte Beer	Patani	29-3-1627
Pepper	300000	Amsterveen	west-coast Sumatra	19-1-1627
Pepper		Amsterveen	west-coast Sumatra	22-7-1627
Pepper	157500	Vrede	Jambi	30-1-1627
Pepper	4350	Cameel	Siam	7-2-1627
Pepper	51000	Local shipping?	Batavia	
Cloves	38500	Cameel	Ambon	23-6-1627
nutmeg	88000	Cameel	Banda	23-6-1627
nutmeg	4 barrel	Cameel	Banda	23-6-1627
Mace	25700	Cameel	Banda	23-6-1627
Mace	1630	Munnickendam	Banda	15-10-1627
salpetre	20500	Medenblick	Coromandel	13-10-1627
silk (Persian)	28000	fleet of defence	Gamron	6-6-1627
silk (Chinese)	40 pack	Arnemuyden	Taiwan	13-1-1627
Ginger	29000		conquered	
Indigo	1000		conquered	
Aloe	1 barrel		conquered	
porcelain	16 tubs		conquered	

Table 4.1: The origin of Hollandia's return cargo is analysed
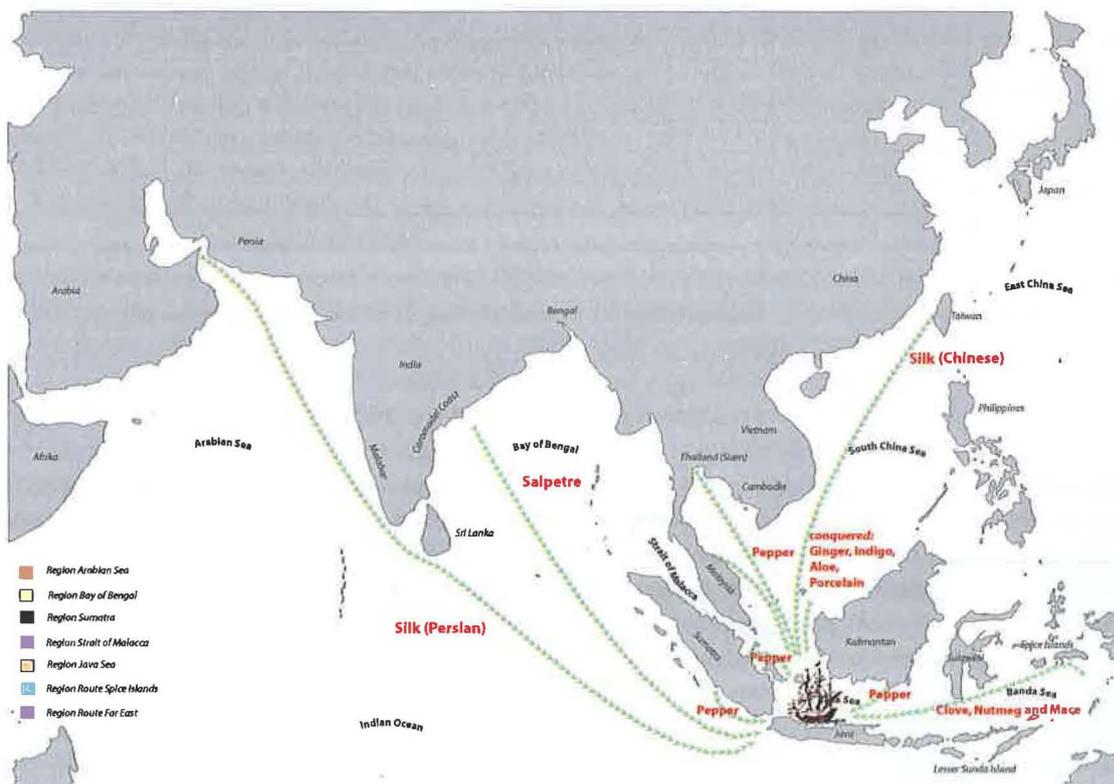
Map 4.5: The origin of the Hollandia cargo in Asia

Persian silk was shipped to Batavia in a fleet of war ships that had been in conflict with the Portuguese in the northern part of the Arabian Sea. The ships of this fleet arrived in Batavia in June 1627. Part of their silk cargo was carried by the *Hollandia*.

The saltpetre shipped as 'useful ballast' in the *Hollandia* most probably arrived in Batavia in September with the *Medenblick* (ID:242) from the Coromandel Coast. The timely arrival of this ballast commodity was important; the VOC transport system relied on the availability of enough ballast goods when ships were loaded with lighter cargo.

Some Chinese products like porcelain and ginger were also part of the cargo of the *Hollandia*. These items are reported as 'captured'; it is known that VOC ships defeated at least four Portuguese ships in 1627 in the Strait of Malacca (Colenbrander 1923, p. 33; Heeres 1896, p. 322). Like some of the pepper, the precious stones and musk in the *Hollandia's* cargo most probably arrived from Borneo on the *Haan* (ID:257) in January 1627. Chinese silk had been taken to Batavia from Taiwan on 13 January 1627, too late to be shipped in the return fleet of 1626. More silk was expected from Taiwan, but only arrived in December 1627, again too late to be included in the cargo of the Hollandia. This consignment of Chinese silk was eventually shipped in the *Vianen* which left Batavia two months after the *Hollandia*.

gaged in action on the coast of China itself. These actions were not very successful, but they did lead to the establishment of the earlier-mentioned VOC stronghold on Taiwan. The VOC, however, remained excluded from the Chinese market itself and had to find alternative sources of Chinese products.

Apart from the military actions, a regular shipping route between Batavia and Taiwan and Japan was developing with an increase in the frequency of the stopovers in this region: Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam (Areas 93, 94 and 95) were visited 92 times, which represented an explosive growth. Thailand, where Ayutthaya high up the Menam river in the heart of the country had now replaced the semi-independent Patani on the peninsula as the place for VOC trade, and had become an important destination to purchase merchandise for Japan together with rice and timber for the VOC settlement on Taiwan. A picture emerges, during this period, of shipping specifically intended to cater for the supply of consumable products and building materials for the VOC settlements. Food was shipped over long distances; for example, Japan was supplying rice and wheat for Batavia (the need for food in Batavia had also grown because of problems with the local authorities of Bantam and Mataram).

The frequency of shipping to Japan nearly doubled and the number of the VOC ships sailing to Hirado (Firando) increased by more than 100%, despite the fact that the VOC's shipping to Japan totally ceased for three years in 1629-1632 because the Japanese did not accept the VOC's authority on Taiwan. Eventually the conflict was settled to the VOC's advantage since shortly after the 3-year hiatus they gained a favourable position over their other European competitors as the only Christian nation allowed to trade with Japan. This policy of isolation by the Shogun brought strict regulations but an overall benefit for the VOC. In the previous period some attempts were made by Specx to make Japan a VOC logistical centre but this was no longer practical or feasible. The restrictions linked with the position of the VOC in Japan were too strict, the function as a staging post could be taken over by Taiwan.

At the other end of the Asian network in the northwestern regions of the Indian Ocean (Arabia with Mocha as the most important harbour, Area 31 and Persia with its port Gamron, Area 32), later called the *Westerkwartieren*, shipping had also increased substantially. After some experimentation with shipping to Persia and Mocha in the previous period, this route now became well established with 51 arrivals. Together with this development, there was also a substantial increase in shipping voyages with Surat as both a final destination and as a stopover for voyages to or from Persia and Arabia (78 arrivals).

The Period 1630-1639

In the previous periods, the trade and shipping networks of the VOC had started to take shape. In the period after 1630, shipping intensified and the emphasis on certain destinations changed for various reasons. The total shipping in Asia increased less spectacularly than in earlier periods but, nevertheless, still increased by 23% for ship movements and 17% by total volume.

In general, all the regular shipping routes were more or less in use by the VOC in the 1630-39 period. No new destinations were added and only in a few cases did the actual harbour within a destination sometimes change. For core destinations like the Spice Islands, the frequency and volume of shipping could vary according to the type of ships that were sent. Because the military operations against the Iberians had been shifted away from the Philippines to other areas, shipping to the Moluccas and the Sulu Sea dropped considerably. Regular shipping took place to Sumatra (pepper for textiles) and from Batavia to Taiwan and Japan. The only new route that came into service was the direct one from Taiwan, through the Strait of Malacca (avoiding a stopover in Batavia) to the *Westerkwartieren* and the Bay of Bengal. The trade position of the VOC in Persia improved considerably. Precious metals and copper from Japan and China, and sugar from Taiwan and China, were exchanged for silk, other textiles, indigo and saltpetre along this route. This development is reflected in an increase in arrivals of 35% to the region of Taiwan, 100% for Persia and 40% for northwest India. Only Arabia proved to be less profitable than previously expected and the frequency of voyages dropped to about one ship every year.
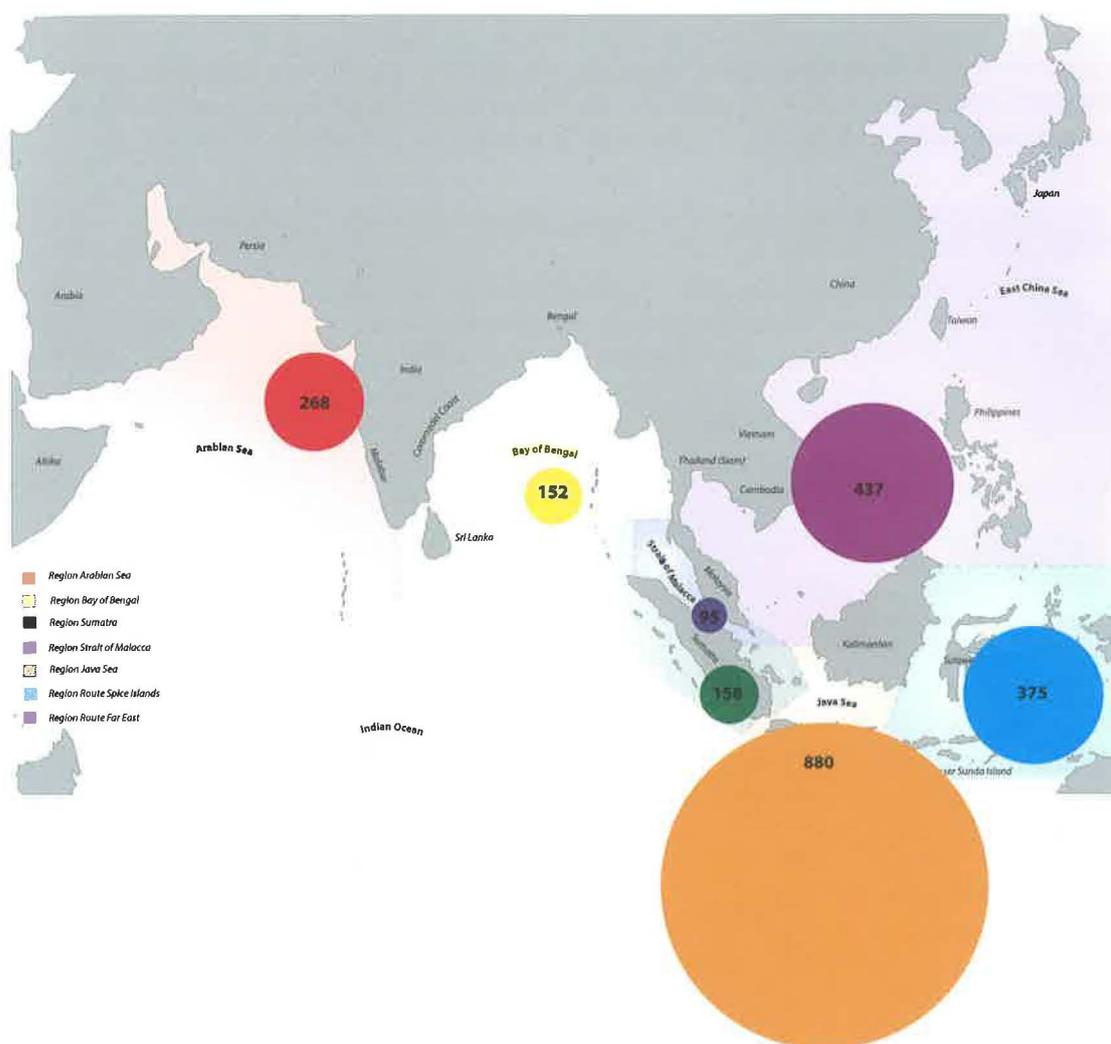
Map 8.4: Development of the frequency of the VOC shipping 1630<1640

The VOC's military actions were redirected from China (visits dropping to half the number in the previous period) to the Portuguese stronghold of Malacca, which showed a 75% increase with 95 arrivals, Goa, with 63 arrivals as against only 5 in the pervious period, and Ceylon with 41 visits. Large men-of-war were sent to these latter regions, in most cases to organise a blockade. The volume of the shipping to the Strait of Malacca did still remain relative low. Some of these ships were also used for trade with VOC-friendly ports in these areas.

The Period 1640-1649

The total amount of shipping in Asia in 1640-49 again showed an increase of 19% over the previous period and the volume increased by almost 50%. The reason for this and the previously noted differences between frequency and volume will be explained later in the composition of the VOC fleet in Asia. Significant changes during this decade were the capture of the Portuguese strongholds of Malacca and Galle. Malacca became a strategic rendezvous on the route from Taiwan to the *Westerkwartieren*. Galle gradually developed into an important emporium for the transhipment of products from Bengal, Coromandel, Surat and Persia. The development of both areas can be seen very clearly in the figures; shipping volume to both areas increased five-fold over the previous ten years surpassing Taiwan and the Spice Islands in importance. The VOC had a well distributed network of destinations where products could be exchanged and transhipped from ships occupied in local and regional trade to ships engaged in inter-regional and intercontinental shipping to Europe. Independently of their function as

riers. *Retourschepen* rate 10 were not ideal for this purpose as long as they were employed on the route back to Europe since they could not arrive back in Batavia in time for the departure of the fleet to Europe around the turn of the year as the monsoon was only favourable from around April. Therefore, the older rate 8 cargo carriers from the early period or comparable old cargo carriers that were explicitly sent to remain in Asia played an important role in transport in the 1620s. After 1630 flutes and the older *retourschepen* that were no longer fit for a return voyage took over this role. The vessels that were only suitable for the transport of goods and cargo were dispatched around the change of the monsoon in order to avoid a long delay in the region while they waited for favourable winds. This also fits in with the ambition of the VOC to use their fleet all year round. For instance, flutes returning from the Spice Islands just after the turn of the monsoon in April could then still make a trip to the Far East.

For multi-purpose vessels like the middle-sized yachts (rate 5) the situation was the opposite: they had to stay in the region for as long as possible during the favourable monsoon season. Their main task was to secure the monopoly against private traders. So some middle-sized yachts arrived at the earliest possible time after the turn of the monsoon to prevent other ships from entering the region. They returned to Batavia at the latest possible time, or they stayed in the region. The activity level of the rate 5 vessels were stable at around 50 ship movements per 10-year period but reached a high in the 1630s. Locally, most of these vessels operated between the destinations of Ambon, Ceram (62) and Moluccas (66) where many small islands produced the desired cloves. To protect the harbours and also ensure that the monopoly was not broken the VOC needed the smaller vessels of rates 1 to 3. During the period up to 1630, small yachts like the *fregats* in rate 3 played an important role in the establishment of the VOC's power base at a local level. Similarly to the situation in the Strait of Malacca, these vessels were well equipped to control the shipping.

In the analysis of the activity level in the various destinations (Table 9-9) in this region, it is clear that Ambon served as the central destination in the Spice Islands. After the situation had stabilised in this region there was little need to send militarily equipped vessels to destinations like the Banda Islands, far away from the mainstream of shipping. It is important to note that destinations on the route to the Spice Islands were visited as stopovers and to collect supplies, but they could also be independent destinations from Batavia.

The "Far East" (Areas 92-99)

This region centres on Taiwan (Area 98) and Japan (Area 99) as the main destinations. China (Area 97) and the Philippines (the islands at the Sulu Sea, Area 96) were derivative destinations: the VOC was active in the waters of the Philippines in their attempt to frustrate the traditional trade between Chinese merchants and the Spaniards who exchanged the sought-after Chinese products like silk for silver from Mexico. So China was, in a way, the main reason for the VOC's presence in the region but the actual amount of Dutch shipping to China was minimal due to the Chinese ban on the Dutch from landing on the Chinese coast. The VOC, therefore, found an alternative destination in Taiwan that they could control; firstly, as a regional emporium for the exchange of products, and later also for some local products like deerskins and sugar. Thailand (Area 93), Cambodia (94) and Vietnam (95) were alternative destinations for the purchase of "Chinese" products en route to Taiwan and Japan. Thailand was also a trading source for food and wood for Batavia. Sarawak (Area 92), the area on the north coast of Kalimantan was only visited by some wayward large ships from the *Voorcompagnieën* and very few small vessels in later years. All these areas are situated along the shores of the South and East China Seas, but are, for reasons of convenience, also often called by their traditional name "Far East" in this book.

As the waters around China, Taiwan and Japan were considered dangerous due to the typhoons, strong well-built ships were required. The Chinese coast, although only visited occasionally for military reasons, demanded easily manoeuvrable vessels to negotiate the narrow channels between the many islands. Physical conditions in Taiwan also put severe limitations on visiting vessels. The entrance to this VOC post was so shallow that only vessels with a

draught of less than 11 feet could enter and bigger ships had to anchor in the rougher waters outside or at the Pescadores. In the early stage of the Dutch presence in this region there was an unsuccessful military attempt to establish a position on the Chinese market. After the Dutch had set up a post in Taiwan – the backdoor to the Chinese market – confrontations only took place on the instigation of the VOC until 1660.

Given the physical characteristics of the Chinese coast with its small islands, well-armed swift-sailing vessels were required. In the 1630s the destinations Vietnam and Cambodia were engaged in internal power struggles in which the VOC involved itself. Well-armed yachts could best counter this type of conflict in which large confrontations with heavily armed ships were not expected.


	<1610	1610-20	1620-30	1630-40	1640-50	1650-60
10			4	42	52	21
9	4	21	26	3	5	
8	33	39	82	2	9	2
7		4	37	34	28	43
6			6	118	252	126
5	23	3	106	97	57	71
4		10	6	24	33	54
3	3	17	102	89	64	9
2			5	10	42	39
1	3	7	15	16	8	
0		1	5	2	2	1
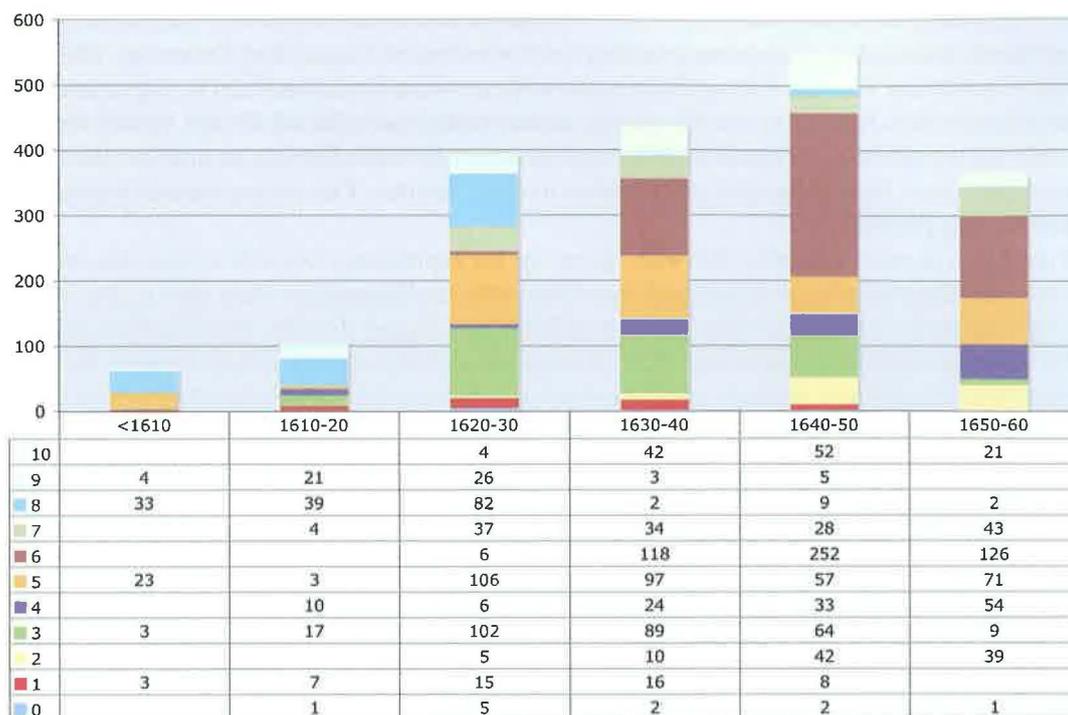
Table 9.10: The activity level of the various types of VOC vessels in the region of the South and East China Sea per 10-year period to 1660

A military capacity was required for the (also unsuccessful) attempts to intercept the Spanish silver fleet from Mexico to the Philippines. At the end of the period studied the tensions around Taiwan were increasing and military reinforcements in the shape of heavily armed war yachts were required. On a political level, the favourable position of the VOC in Japan above the other European competitors came at the cost of restrictions on their visits. The Japanese authorities set the conditions of trade but they also tried to minimise the threat of the VOC ships. It was a common rule to remove the rudder of the vessels arriving at the trade post Deshima in Naga-saki. The restrictions practised by the Japanese and their effects on the VOC vessels can be learned from an incident in 1657 on the arrival of the yacht *Hercules*. In the 1650s, as a result of the first Anglo-Dutch war, the VOC was left with a surplus of big war yachts in their Asian fleet. These ships were constructed at the cost of the flutes that were the ideal traders for this region and did not raise the suspicion of the Japanese authorities because of their light arma-ments. After the conflict was over these war yachts had to serve as regular trading vessels. When the *Hercules* (ID:939) arrived in Japan the local authorities felt uncomfortable with this clearly well armed yacht and referred to the VOC's obligation to send unarmed vessels (NA 1.04.21, Factory Japan 69, fol. 46).

Mainly trading items for the Japanese market and supplies for the post at Taiwan were col-lected from Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. There was a direct route between Thailand and

Batavia for the collection of supplies for the VOC headquarters. This route did not call for the use of a particular vessel type or require specific vessel features.

Enough bulk goods like sugar and silk were available from Taiwan to justify the use of big ships for this trade, but the shallowness of the harbour entrance meant that they had to be loaded at the Pescadores. Flutes were suitable as carriers since military confrontations were not expected.

Copper, precious metals and some luxury items were shipped from Japan. The copper could stay in the ships for shipping to other parts of Asia but part of the cargo of precious metals had to be unloaded in Taiwan to purchase silk and part was shipped on to Batavia or, following 1638, directly to the Coromandel Coast and Surat. Flutes and bigger yachts were suitable for this purpose.

Smaller vessels were needed to facilitate the distribution of cargo. The smaller flutes turned out to be ideal for that purpose. The VOC's voyages to and from Taiwan were highly monsoon-dependent. The loading took place in a short period between August and December. The small flutes stayed near Taiwan during the season, with an occasional short trip to Japan and back and sailed back to Batavia in the off-season. It was sometimes difficult for the vessels that had to wait for the auctions in Japan in October/November to reach Batavia in time for the departure of the return fleet at the end of December or early January. Fast sailing vessels were appropriate for this purpose.

Table 9.10 shows that after the VOC gave up its aspirations towards China, the military needs were lifted to a large extent and they were able to differentiate their fleet in this region. Up to 1630 there was a clear emphasis on military and bigger vessels. This changed dramatically after the establishment of the VOC stronghold in Taiwan with a fleet focused on trade. Apart from the sporadic military confrontations and the military vessels heading for the Philippines, the Far East was suited to dedicated cargo carriers. This general image should be nuanced a bit, especially for the transition period in the 1620s when some developments took place at the level of the separate destinations. For the military operations, Japan was the preeminent base for the bigger vessels to capture the big junks sailing between China and the Philippines, until the Japanese authorities became more restrictive about the kind of vessels that were allowed to visit their harbours. Closer to the Chinese coast most of the smaller or middle-sized yachts were employed. Note also the almost complete absence of the flute, which vessel type could not play a role in the military action in China and the Philippines. As is the case with the smaller vessels in the Strait of Malaccathe smaller vessels needed as utility vessels around Taiwan, i.e. the vessels that brought cargo from Taiwan to the waiting fleet at the Pescadores, are not revealed in the statistics since they rarely left the region.

The heavy sea conditions required strongly built new ships. The possibility of typhoons was the pre-eminent threat, and no ship was able to withstand those conditions. The most suitable combination of vessels was big flutes and *retourschepen* as trade ships together with smaller flutes and other small vessels to facilitate the loading and unloading of cargo near Taiwan. *Retourschepen* often sailed on the Batavia and Thailand route. In Table 9-11 the important role of this rate 10 vessels in the shipping to Thailand becomes clear. The newer *retourschepen* could also sail direct or via Thailand to Japan. In Thailand there was usually enough cargo of products for the Japanese market in combination with food supplies and building materials for Taiwan, for these bigger ships. On the return trip these ships often called at Thailand again to load supplies for Batavia. The need for these supplies depended on the political situation in Java. A stopover in Taiwan was often inevitable for the redistribution of cargo for the various destinations: China, vietnam, Batavia and later also the direct connection with the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The central role of Taiwan in this region becomes obvious in Table 9-15 where it is shown to be by far the busiest destination. It was a shipping junction with the specific need for smaller vessels and the medium sized flutes (rate 4) in order to be able to serve as a point of transhipment.

It was also possible for *retourschepen* to combine a trip to Taiwan with a return trip to Europe. With a departure from Batavia in August at the latest the ship could be in the region around Taiwan in September. As was the case with the collecting of a pepper cargo from southeast Sumatra, the ships could take on a good shipment of sugar; however, loading took a month

due to the complexity of the logistics between Taiwan and the Pescadores where the big ships had to anchor. If these *retourschepen* were not affected by the typhoon season they could make it back to Batavia before the end of the year to load the remaining cargo and leave for Europe.

The high rate of flutes to Cambodia in Table 9-11 can be explained by the unique situation on the Mekong River where vessels had to be dragged manually far up stream by their anchors. This situation has been described as very arduous and almost inhumane for the crew who had to handle the heavy anchors in the heat of the sun: 'and when at night the time had come to get some rest it was impossible because of the mosquitoes that were in such large quantities that one doesn't know where to turn' (NA 1.04.02, VOC 1252, fol. 116, 127). Damaged *rinckelwerck* or not, it must have been more efficient for the VOC to use flutes rather than the yachts because they had a better cargo capacity for the same effort. A complication was still the danger of hostilities on the Mekong River that required the protection of the vessel, crew and cargo. The VOC probably did develop a more heavily armed flute. This more defensible flute type is recorded on one occasion in the Arabian Sea when, against all odds, the flute *Noortster* (ID:633) was escorting a yacht. This flute then had a crew of 70 and was armed with 30 canons (Colenbrander 1902, p. 203). In the database more of these types of defensible flutes have been found: *Vliegend Hert* (ID 650), 24 canons, *Zon* (ID:621) 22 canons, *Koning David* (ID:780) and *Trouw* (ID:811) 20 canons.

|	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
10		56	1	1	9	1	33	18
9		10		2	18	6	7	16
8	1	46	2	11	28	21	24	34
7		17	4	6	19	16	59	25
6		103	21	32	7	10	218	111
5	3	56	5	37	25	56	131	44
4		27	5	13	2	9	48	23
3		49	6	36	16	57	97	23
2		8	2	14	11	6	50	5
1	4	9	2	8	3	7	14	2
0		4	2	3	1		1	
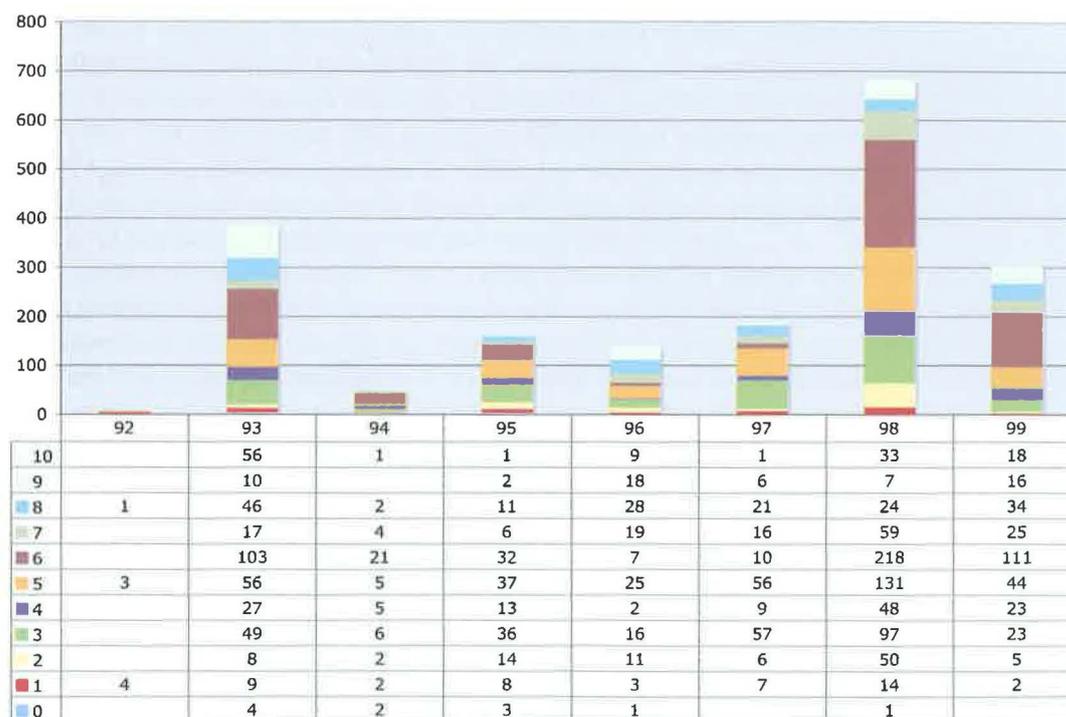
Table 9.11: Activity levels of the various types of VOC vessels in the separate destinations in the region of the Far East. 1595-1660 (areas in the first row of the table: 92.Sarawak, 93.Gulf of Thailand, 94. Cambodia and lower Mekong delta, 95.Vietnam, north from Mekong Delta, 96.Sulu Sea, 97. Coastal China, 98. Taiwan and adjacent islands, 99. Japan and Korea)

Annex 542

Robert J. Antony, "Giang Binh: Pirate Haven and Black Market on the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier, 1780-1802" in *Pirates, Ports, and Coasts in Asia: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (J. Kleinen & M. Osseweijer, eds., 2010)

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Maritime Issues and Piracy in Asia

PIRATES, PORTS, AND COASTS IN ASIA

Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Edited by

John Kleinen and Manon Osseweijer

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Photo Credit: Cover photo reproduced courtesy of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Marines from the Dutch frigate De Zeven Provinciën freed on 18 April 2009, twenty fishermen from a Yemeni flagged dhow which had been captured by Somali pirates earlier. There was no exchange of fire and Dutch forces seized a number of weapons. Seven pirates were detained, but were eventually released.

3

Giang Binh: Pirate Haven and Black Market on the Sino-Vietnamese Frontier, 1780–1802

Robert J. Antony

Depositions

In a routine memorial the governor of Guangdong province, Debao, reported to the Qianlong Emperor a case of piracy along the Sino-Vietnamese border that occurred in 1782. The victim was a merchant named Tong Shengru who had gone to the black market town of Giang Binh to trade, perhaps somewhat clandestinely. He testified that in the summer of that year a gang of pirates had robbed the vessel he had hired from Weng Panda, and on which they were both travelling. The band of pirates was a typical small ad hoc gang composed of impoverished fishermen and sailors who regularly alternated between legitimate work and crime to earn their living. Shortly after the incident, several of the pirates were apprehended and brought to trial. This incident typified the unstable, yet vibrant conditions on the Sino-Vietnamese frontier between 1780 and 1802. What follows are excerpts from the depositions of the victim Tong Shengru and a reluctant pirate named Wang Yade:

> Tong Shengru: I, an unassuming subject, originally came from Jiaying Subprefecture and opened a cosmetics shop in Hengye village in a place called Neighing Horse Hamlet (Masishe). On the ninth day of the sixth lunar month of this year (1782), I hired Weng Panda's boat to transport perfumes and powders to Giang Binh to sell. On the thirteenth day [after completing my business transactions] in Giang Binh I collected my money and goods to return to my shop. That night on the ocean at a place known as Flowing Water (Lizhu) a boatload of pirates robbed us. Their boat suddenly heaved alongside us and then, like a swarm of hornets, they boarded our vessel,

grabbing money and goods and then fleeing. The next morning we repaired to Lizhang where we began searching everywhere for the culprits. On the twentieth day, we spotted the pirate boat in Zhangshan harbour. [After reporting the incident to] the local market head, together we apprehended two culprits, Li Xing and Wang Yade. We also recovered some of our stolen property. The others had already got away. Afterwards, we turned the pirate boat over to the port authorities in Zhangshan.

Wang Yade: I, your humble subject, come from Hepu County. I am 21 years old. I make my living as a sailor. I know Li Xing very well. This year [1782], early in the sixth lunar month, the cost of rice was very high, and so I went to Giang Binh to look for some work. On the tenth day of that month I ran into Li Xing and he took me to see He Xing who was looking to hire sailors on his boat. He agreed to pay me 150 cash (wen) each month in wages. Aboard He's boat there were three other sailors and a helmsman, so that the total, including the skipper, Li Xing, and me, was seven men. On the afternoon of the thirteenth, He Xing went to the market to find us a job, but he returned to tell us that there was no work anywhere in that port. What is more we were out of rice to eat. He told us that while at the market he had heard that Weng Panda's boat had on board a passenger named Tong who had money and goods and was about to return to his store in Hengye village. He said why don't we go out to meet them en route at sea and rob them of their money and goods? How's that for a piece of work? Li Xing and the others all agreed, but this humble subject was afraid to join with them. He Xing cursed at me and said he would throw me overboard right then if I didn't agree. I didn't dare refuse and so went along with them. They set off and that evening we awaited our prey at a place offshore near Lizhu harbour. Around midnight Tong arrived and his boat anchored for the night. He Xing, Li Xing, and the others pulled our boat up to his. But when they jumped aboard to rob Tong's boat, I hid myself in the stern, afraid to come out. Afterwards He Xing and the others grabbed money and goods and brought them aboard our boat and we sailed off to a secluded spot in barbarian [that is, Vietnamese] waters to split up the booty. I didn't dare take a share, but He Xing told me that since I went along with them and knew about the heist, if ever a word leaked out to anyone he would kill me. He then gave me 2,000 cash. I was afraid of him so I didn't refuse. On the twentieth we anchored at Zhangshan mart. He Xing and three others went ashore to buy food and provisions. Li Xing, Ge'er, and me remained on board to watch things. We didn't know that the victim had already discovered our whereabouts and was on his way with the market head to arrest us. As soon as Ge'er saw them coming he jumped ashore and ran away. The victim and the others came aboard and nabbed Li Xing and me.[1]

Piracy

Piracy was a violent predatory activity, which in the late eighteenth century seemed to have got out of control in the South China Sea. Beginning in the 1780s, small bands of Chinese and Vietnamese pirates began to coalesce into large, well-organized fleets under the patronage of Tay Son rebels. Lacking a strong navy of their own, rebel leaders commissioned Chinese and other pirates to help them in their war against the reigning Le dynasty. Tay Son rebels, who needed both men and money for their struggle, actively recruited pirates, guaranteed them safe harbours, supplied them with ships, weapons, and provisions, and rewarded them with official ranks and titles so they would engage in piracy as a means of obtaining revenue. In effect, the Tay Son regime created a plunder-based political economy. Following the rhythms of the monsoons, each spring and summer pirate fleets left their bases along the Sino-Vietnamese border for Chinese waters, returning each autumn laden with booty which they shared with their Tay Son patrons. By the time the Tay Son Rebellion was crushed in 1802, there were already more than 50,000 pirates roving around the South China Sea. Nevertheless, throughout those years petty gangs of local pirates, such as He Xing's mentioned above, continued to operate in the shadows of the larger, well-organized fleets of "barbarian pirates" (*yifei*) and "ocean bandits" (*yangdao*).

The intensification of piracy on the Sino-Vietnamese water frontier resulted from several factors.[2] First, there was a combination of changing environmental circumstances, especially China's population explosion and the increased trade with Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Paradoxically, the rise in piracy corresponded to China's "prosperous age", and a time when Vietnam was also benefiting from China's booming economy. Piracy arose not because of a general immiseration of Chinese society, but rather because of the strains that prosperity had placed on the more marginal elements of Chinese (and Vietnamese) society. A second factor important to the growth and development of large-scale piracy was the external patronage of the Tay Son rebels in Vietnam. Third, internally the emergence of talented and charismatic leaders among the pirates assured the cohesion and organization necessary for the expansion of piracy. Contradictions inherent in maritime society created conditions of conflict, violence, and predation. Piracy was an endemic and integral part of maritime society and culture and a logical outcome of early modern China's burgeoning economy.[3]

Inevitably, pirates depended on friendly ports and black markets for survival. Cut off from the land by their life on the seas, pirates not

only relied on people on shore to supply them with food, water, weapons, and other necessities, but also to dispose of their booty and provide with them information and recruits. They needed safe harbours where they could careen and repair their vessels, and where they could rest and relax. Wherever there were friendly ports there could be found shops, inns, brothels, and gambling dens that catered to the needs and whims of spendthrift pirates.[4] The worst thing that could happen to outlaws, as Eric Hobsbawm pointed out, was to be cut off from their local sources.[5]

One such pirate haven was Giang Binh (in Chinese, Jiangping), a frontier town that thrived on the piracy and smuggling trade between 1780 and 1802. In this chapter we will examine three important aspects concerning the rise and fall of Giang Binh: one, its connection with the underground economy of the South China Sea; two, its role as a frontier; and three, its transient outlaw population and underworld culture.

Turning to the Sea

Giang Binh was located near the mouth of a small, unnavigable river called the Tielang on the ill-defined Sino-Vietnamese border. The town was a part of Vietnam's An Quang province until it reverted back to China in 1885, as part of the settlement ending the Sino-French War.[6] The illustration in Figure 3.1 depicts Giang Binh in the early nineteenth century. With almost impenetrable mountains at its back and land too poor for agriculture, the people of Giang Binh naturally turned to the sea for their livelihood. Throughout the eighteenth century it was a well known black market town, and at the end of the century it served as a major pirate and smuggling headquarters. By then it was a bustling border town with hundreds of shops and a population of roughly two thousand households, composed of both Chinese and Vietnamese, as well as the occasional aborigine sojourner. There was also a large squatter population of mostly poor Vietnamese, who had settled on the sandy shoals at the entrance to the harbour. Many residents specialized in handling stolen goods and provisioning the pirates who frequented the market and lived on many of the nearby islands. Traders and merchants, such as Tong Shengru mentioned above, travelled from Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, and other Chinese provinces specifically to this black market to sell merchandise, and to buy booty, which pirates always sold at bargain prices. So too did Vietnamese traders. Giang Binh was a refuge not only for pirates, criminals, and misfits, but it also attracted

FIGURE 3.1

Qing Representation of Giang Binh
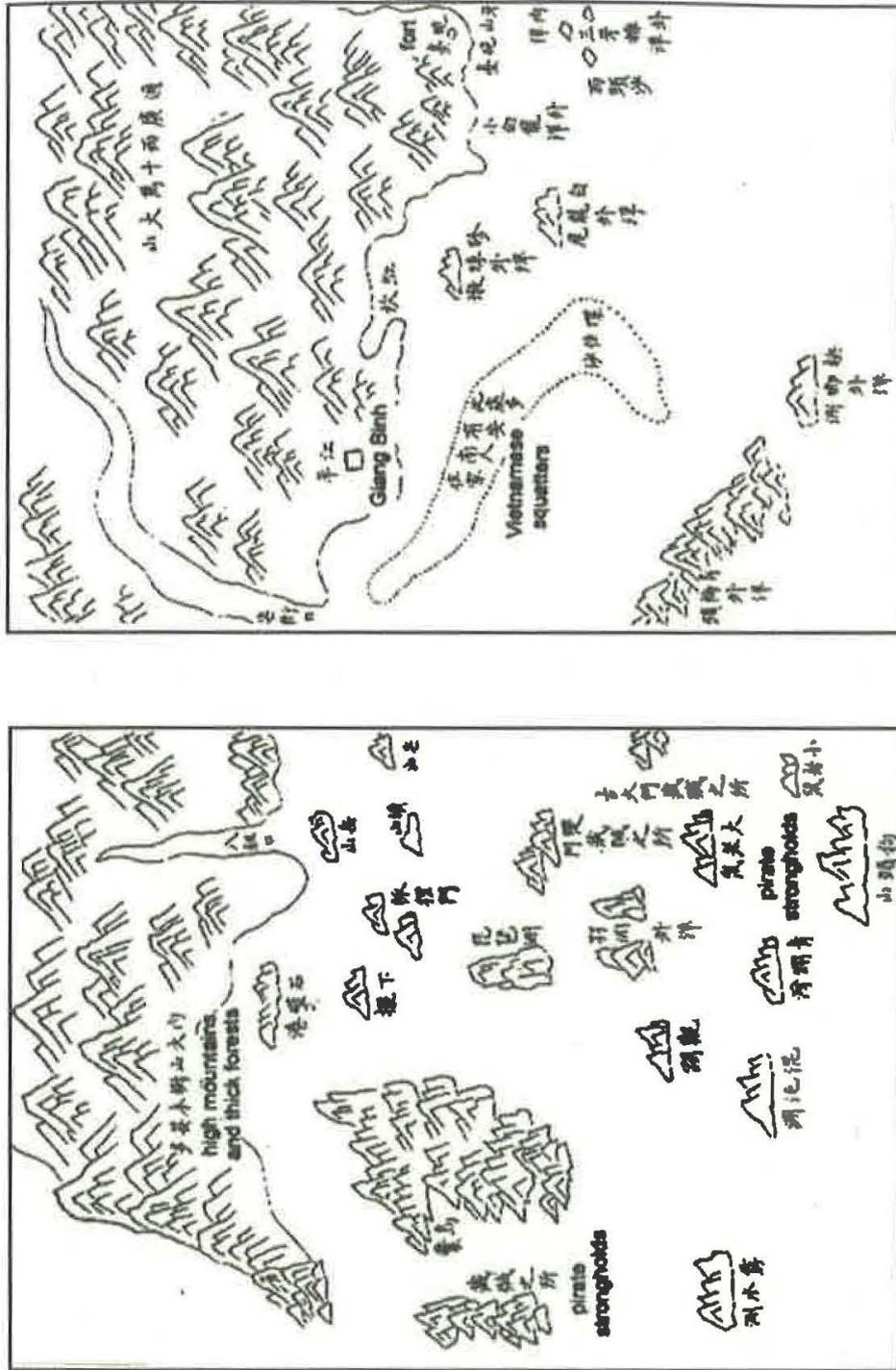
Source: Guangdong tongzhi (Gazetteer of Guangdong province), 1864

large numbers of sailors (such as Wang Yade above), as well as fishermen, labourers, and porters who came in search of work.[7] These were the sorts of men who provided a steady pool of recruits for pirate gangs. In 1802 Giang Binh was razed by royalist troops fighting Tay Son rebels. The destruction of Giang Binh was, in fact, one of the final acts in a devastating rebellion that had lasted over thirty years.

Through the underground networks of pirates, smugglers, and outlaws, Giang Binh's reputation as a black market and friendly port spread far and wide. A gangster such as Peng Aju, who was a fisherman and pirate from Chenghai in faraway eastern Guangdong, knew that he could receive shelter and protection at Giang Binh. After being involved in several piracies on the Guangdong-Fujian border, Peng sought the safety to Giang Binh to hide out from the authorities who were seeking to arrest him. Eight months later, he organized a new gang in Giang Binh, which committed six piracies before his arrest in 1797.[8] Peng was but one of thousands of Chinese, Vietnamese, and other outlaws and outcasts who were attracted to Giang Binh between 1780 and 1802 because of its reputation as a safe haven.

Places such as Giang Binh, which were cut off from the hinterland by mountains or by the lack of adequate rivers that penetrated into the interior, had little chance of developing as viable commercial ports. Rather they were better suited for handling clandestine activities — piracy and smuggling. Geography was important in explaining the development of Giang Binh as a pirate haven and black market. It was a secluded, remote speck on a jagged coastline that stretched for over 3,000 miles from the Mekong Delta in Vietnam to the Ou River Delta in Zhejiang, China. This coast was dotted with innumerable bays and islands, many of which provided safe anchorages for pirates and others wishing to avoid detection by officials. Located on a major shipping route, yet far removed from the centres of government, Giang Binh made an ideal pirate lair. Natural barriers assured Giang Binh's isolation. Communications to and from the interior over land were nearly impossible (even today it is still a difficult journey). The closest military post — at Dongxing — was small and about fifteen miles away over a craggy mountain trail. It was three days by foot to the nearest town, Fangcheng in Qinzhou department. Even by sea the town was not easily accessible. The sandy shoals proved to be dangerous obstacles to shipping.[9] Besides Giang Binh, numerous other clandestine ports and black markets sprung up along the coast of the South China Sea to handle the trade in stolen goods and to service pirate ships and crews. Giang Binh had intimate connections with many of them.

Giang Binh was an integral node in a vibrant underground economy that criss-crossed the South China Sea, linking and forming an extensive network of licit and illicit markets. It was an important part of the larger "water world" of the South China Sea.[10] In its prime (between 1780 and 1802), Giang Binh was the core or hub of a vast water world, a network of black markets, pirate bases, and friendly ports that stretched up the Chinese coast from Hainan Island and Guangdong to Fujian, Taiwan, and Zhejiang, and southward along the Vietnamese coast to Hue, Saigon, and beyond (see the map in Figure 3.2). Some of the well known clandestine ports having connections with Giang Binh included Sanhewo, Baimiao, Haian, Jiazi, Haimen, and Dahao in Guangdong; Meizhou, Baisha, Shage, Shuiao, and Xiahu in Fujian; Jilong, Dagou, Houlong, Suao, and Donggang in Taiwan; and Goutongmen, Shibandian, Dachenshan, and Sanpan in Zhejiang.[11] In Vietnam, Giang Binh's network of friendly ports included Doan Mien, Thi Nai, Hue, and Hoi An.[12]

It is important to point out that in many cases clandestine activities (especially smuggling) were also conducted in some of the larger "legitimate" ports such as Saigon, Macao, Jiangmen, Huangpu, Chenghai, and Amoy. These larger entrepôts that served pirates were cosmopolitan centres and relatively tolerant of outsiders, even criminals, as long as their presence proved to be profitable. In a sense, it would appear, many merchants and even officials made little distinction between legal and illegal enterprises. Piracy and commerce had become indistinguishable. The merchants and traders who travelled to Giang Binh acquired stolen goods, which they then transported and resold in various ports in the same way they sold their other goods.[13] To borrow the words of the Spanish historian Gonçal López Nadal, it would be "difficult to describe these methods of economic activity in terms that are conceptually distinct from commerce in general".[14] Just as Saigon or Amoy functioned as key trans-shipment hubs in the legal trading system, Giang Binh functioned as a key trans-shipment hub in the underground trading system. Although it remained a bustling port during the heyday of piracy in the late eighteenth century, once the pirates had been defeated and their base destroyed, Giang Binh never again recovered its former glory and thereafter devolved into a backwater port and petty black market. Without pirates or smugglers Giang Binh could not survive.

Piracy was important because it allowed marginalized areas, such as Giang Binh, which had otherwise been excluded, to participate in the wider

FIGURE 3.2

Giang Binh's Water World in the Late 18th Century
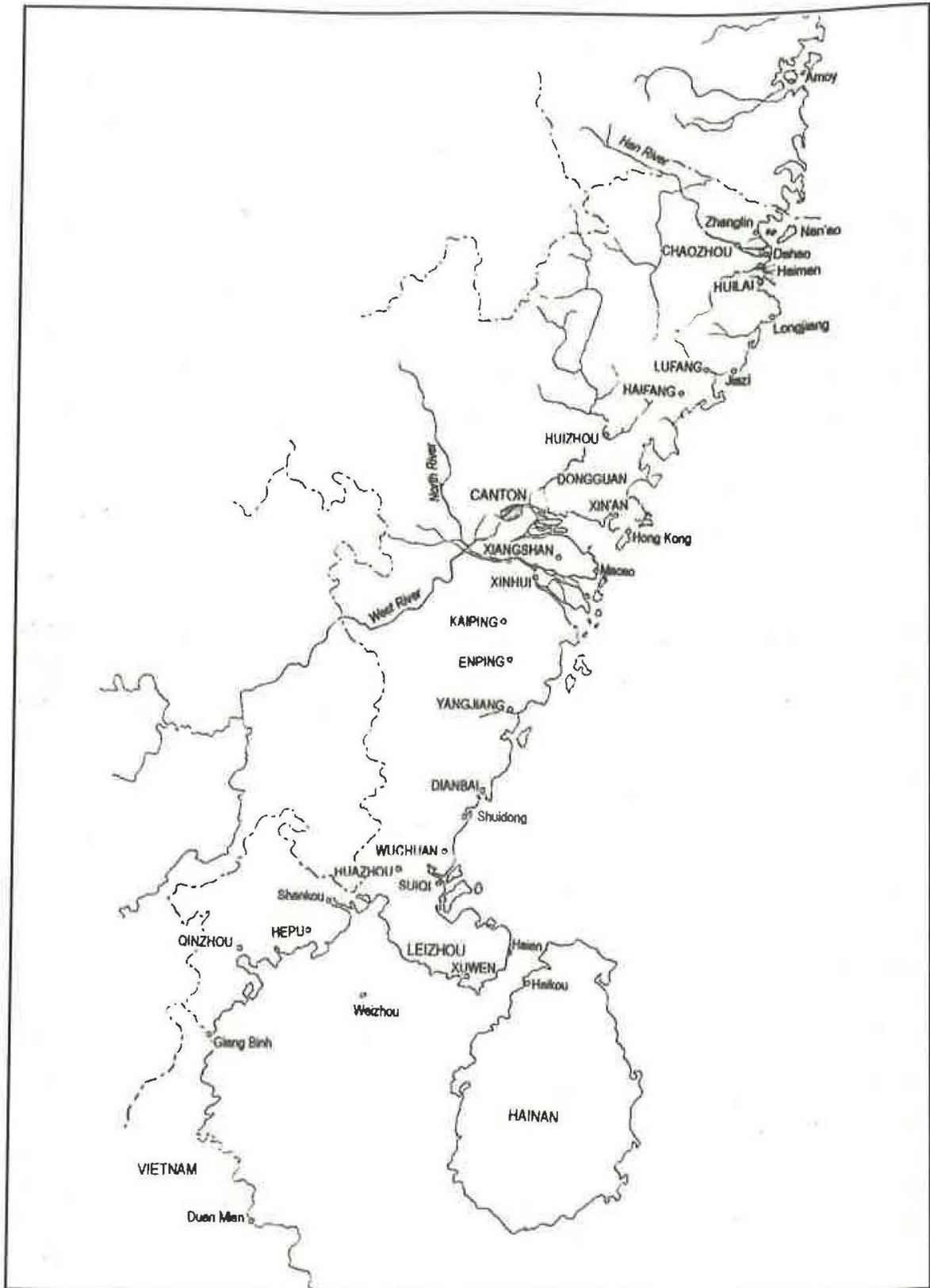
Source: *Guangdong tongzhi* (Gazetteer of Guangdong)

commercial economy. Whenever piracy flourished, so too did the underground economy, providing tens of thousands of jobs to coastal residents. Like the pirates themselves, most of the individuals who traded with them were fishermen and sailors, as well as petty traders, who engaged in both licit and illicit activities as vital for survival. In many instances, extra money gained from clandestine activities provided an important, even major, part of their overall incomes. Because tens of thousands of people on both sea and shore came to depend on piracy for their livelihood, either directly or indirectly, it became a self-sustaining enterprise and a significant feature of life on the South China Sea.

While piracy did detract from legitimate trade and profits, it nonetheless also had important positive economic consequences. Not only did the growth of legitimate commerce promote the development of new ports, but so too did the pirates' illicit trade. Black markets, such as Giang Binh, operated as a shadow economy alongside, and in competition with, legitimate trade centres. Furthermore, this illegal trade also tended to perpetuate piracy. Once pirates generated supplies of goods for sale at discount prices, buyers were attracted to the black markets that arose to handle the trade in stolen goods. Although the scale of illicit trade is impossible to measure, it certainly pumped large amounts of goods and money into many local economies, especially in those areas outside the normal or legitimate marketing system. Large amounts of money and goods flowed in and out of black markets, all of which were outside the control of the state and normal trading networks. The establishment of markets specifically to handle stolen merchandise was a clear indication of weaknesses in the structure of normal, legal markets. Pirates, therefore, made important contributions to the growth of trade and the reallocation of local capital. In a word, piracy had become a normal part of economic life for tens of thousands of people who inhabited the shores of the South China Sea.

Borders and Frontiers

Giang Binh also raises some interesting questions about borders and frontiers, and about cores and peripheries. This place, particularly its location, has long intrigued me because Giang Binh was actually situated just *inside* China's border. Although both Chinese and Vietnamese officials understood that there was a border or boundary separating the two countries, both sides would have been hard pressed to say exactly where that line was at the time. This is not because the notion of borders was an alien concept to Chinese officials, but

rather because for them the concept remained imprecise. After all, Chinese rulers were emperors of "all under Heaven" and the Qing imperium viewed Vietnam as a vassal or tributary state. For officials, the question of borders was related more to administrative jurisdictions than to a line of national demarcation, and in the case of Giang Binh, both governments agreed that the town was under Vietnamese jurisdiction.[15] At least that was the theory, and that was how things appeared to officials on both sides of the border in the late eighteenth century.

The rugged terrain also hindered specifying exact boundaries. Both Vietnam and China utilized zones or belts of natural obstacles, such as mountains, deep forests, and rivers, as natural boundaries to separate one from the other. In this area (as in others) the border was simply marked by a series of military posts, which could be moved forward or backward, according to changing circumstances. It was all very imprecise.

Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that the residents of Giang Binh viewed things in the same way officials did. At least, for the fishermen, sailors, pirates, and smugglers, who lived most of their lives on the water, borders and boundaries simply made no sense. The key to their survival, as Dian Murray put it, "lay in the freedom to range back and forth across the border without hindrance".[16] Borders, like laws and regulations, were unnatural to their way of thinking.

Giang Binh can best be understood as a frontier town, in the sense of both place and process. Frontiers were marginal zones of cultural contact where two or more initially distinct peoples coexisted in some sort of developing relationship.[17] In many ways, Giang Binh resembled the pirate stronghold on St. Marie Island off Madagascar during the late seventeenth century.[18] Like St. Marie, Giang Binh had all the earmarks of a typical frontier town. Hemmed in by rugged mountains and thick forests (see Figure 3.1), Giang Binh remained quite remote and isolated from other more settled areas of both China and Vietnam. In the interior there was a buffer zone of "savage" aborigines separating Giang Binh from the "civilized" areas of China. In the eyes of Chinese officials and literati, Giang Binh was on the outskirts of civilization. Many of its Chinese residents had forsaken their queues and had taken Vietnamese or aborigine wives or mistresses.[19] The region, as a whole, was sparsely populated and the population was highly transient. There was little evidence of permanence. Everything seemed makeshift. Most of the people there lacked roots or a place they called home.

Because most of them — the fishermen, sailors, coolies, pirates, smugglers, and itinerant traders who dominated the town — owned no property, they felt little attachment to the land.[20] It was precisely the fluidity and frontier nature of this whole region, Li Tana explained, that "made life uncertain and potentially violent".[21]

Formal government was also weak. Giang Binh fits James Ron's description of a frontier as a "weakly institutionalized and often chaotic setting prone to vigilantism and paramilitary freelancing".[22] Frontiers, after all, were lawless zones. Although the Vietnamese claimed jurisdiction over the area, the government's presence was nearly non-existent. This should not be surprising because it was at the time of the devastating Tay Son Rebellion, and a time of general anarchy throughout much of the region. Because Giang Binh was a backwater on the fringe of the Sino-Vietnamese frontier, neither Vietnamese nor Chinese authorities paid much attention to it. From time to time, the Tay Son rulers, under pressure from the Qing court, sent soldiers to clear Giang Binh of pirates and other outlaws, but this was never done in earnest because the rebels relied on the pirates for money and support.[23] For all practical purposes, it was a town without governance or laws. No wonder the people there were known for their lawlessness, drunkenness, debauchery, and brawling. What Ray Allen Billington said about the "wild" American frontiersmen rings true here as well: "Partly responsible for their antisocial behavior was the inclination of lawless men to concentrate in lawless regions; sparsely peopled frontiers attracted outcasts who rebelled against authority".[24] Under those conditions, Giang Binh was the perfect hideaway for pirates, smugglers, and a host of other malcontents. Outlaws could operate out of there with little fear of detection and arrest.

From the perspective of the heartlands of China and Vietnam, Giang Binh was at the extreme periphery of civilization. From the perspective of Giang Binh's (transient) residents, however, things may have been viewed from a different angle. For them, perhaps Giang Binh was the core, and faraway Canton, Hanoi, and Hue were the peripheries. After all, the terms "core" and "periphery" are relative and mutable. It was truly a no-man's-land, a polyglot community in the process of "creolization", not assimilation.[25] It was neither purely Vietnamese nor purely Chinese in its social, economic, and cultural structures. It was a creation of its own. Though the people of Giang Binh were mostly transients, they (or others) frequently returned to this place for shelter, rest, and play. "Water people" (*shuishang ren*) needed land bases to survive.

Citizens

The "citizens" of Giang Binh, between 1780 and 1802, were a motley bunch of Chinese, Vietnamese, and occasionally even European seafarers, renegades, and misfits. Official documents from both China and Vietnam often used the unflattering term *liumin* to describe these sorts of people. They were homeless wanderers, runaways, displaced persons, vagabonds, fugitives, and refugees. According to Wang Gungwu, the term *liumin* "suggests people whose anti-social behaviour and irresponsible acts had led to their homeless state and to their status as outcasts, vagrants, and even outlaws". The term also referred to people who left China without permission.[26] One such desperado was a monk named Jue Ling, who hailed from Guangdong. In his youth, he was a hoodlum and assassin who first sought the safety of the monastery by becoming a monk and then later fled to Vietnam to avoid arrest. Another Chinese fugitive named He Xiwen was a one-time triad boss who, because of later involvement in the White Lotus Rebellion in Sichuan, fled to Vietnam in 1778, where the Tâysons commissioned him as a commander of a pirate junk.[27]

Pirates were the most important group of transients in Giang Binh in the late eighteenth century. The survival and prosperity of the town depended on them. In one report, dated 1797, Chinese officials estimated that in and around Giang Binh pirates had erected over a hundred shacks where they lived (irregularly) with their families and traded with local and itinerant merchants.[28] Among the 230 individuals arrested for piracy by Guangdong officials whom Dian Murray investigated, 199 had connections in Vietnam, and among those, 127 had direct connections with Giang Binh. Most of those pirates came from south-western Guangdong, particularly from the Leizhou Peninsula, the area in closest proximity to Giang Binh and also one that was notorious for its pirates.[29] Some were from Vietnam, while others came from as far away as Fujian and Zhejiang provinces.

Most of these men were poor fishermen and sailors in their twenties and early thirties; the youngest was fourteen yeas old (*sui*) and the oldest, sixty-eight years old; the average age was 32.8 years. There was also a significant number of peddlers, porters, merchants, and shopkeepers whom the Qing authorities had arrested.[30] Jiang Sheng, a peddler from Zhejiang who sold betel nut in Fujian and engaged occasionally in piracy, returned each year to Giang Binh to sell his booty, rest, and refit his ship.[31] Huang Daxing, who hailed from Xinhui county in the Canton Delta, worked as a porter in Giang Binh before joining the gang of the notorious pirate Zheng

Qi.[32] In general, apart from having a high degree of mobility, most of these men were impoverished; they were individuals who lived on the fringe of society, making barely enough money to survive. Take the case of Wang Yade, mentioned at the start of this chapter. As a hired sailor he earned 150 cash (*wen*) a month, which was about the average wage for hired sailors at that time. Because a male Chinese normally ate one catty (1.3 pounds) of rice each day and a catty of rice cost about five cash, therefore, wages provided a sailor only enough money to buy a day's worth of rice and little else. In short, wages were barely enough for subsistence. Thus, the 2,000 cash Wang received as his share of the booty was an enormous sum of money.

Pirate gangs were seldom fixed or permanent. They were, in this sense, much in tune with the fluid nature of Giang Binh itself. Pirates were not only mobile, but also mostly amateurs. Piracy was typically a part-time job for seafarers who routinely alternated between criminal and legitimate activities (as several of the above mentioned cases have already shown).[33] Wang Ya'er provides a typical case. Originally from Xinhui county in the Canton delta, Wang had gone to Giang Binh with four friends to seek work, but finding none they decided to become pirates. In 1796 they received "certificates" (*zhao*) from Tay Son leaders authorizing them to build ships and recruit gangs ostensibly for piratical activities. They quickly recruited over a hundred men, and in spring, they set sail to plunder the China coast from Guangdong to Zhejiang. After returning to Giang Binh in winter, they disposed of their loot, refitted their ships, and recruited a new gang. Once again they set out early the next year with over a hundred and fifty men, but in June they were apprehended by Chinese naval forces near the coast of Xin'an county.[34]

These Sino-Vietnamese pirates plundered all shipping regardless of nationality, both off the coasts of China and Vietnam. During this period large fleets of pirates from Giang Binh and Vietnam (labelled "barbarian pirates" [*yifei*] by Chinese officials) dominated the Sino-Vietnamese water frontier. Giang Binh pirates routinely cooperated with smaller gangs of "local pirates" (*tufei*) in Guangdong and Fujian provinces who acted as guides and participated in raids in their home areas.[35] So powerful was the Giang Binh network that by 1800, its pirates had nearly shut down the Qing-monopolized salt trade in Guangdong and the Western opium trade in Canton. Through its extensive underground network the pirates also collected annual "tribute" from ports as far away as Zhejiang, between 1796 and 1802.[36]

Other members of Giang Binh's transient community were men such as Luo Yasan, who was a merchant, smuggler, and pirate. Luo, who was thirty-three years old at the time, was a Chinese from Qinzhou, Guangdong, whose family had migrated to Vietnam some three generations earlier. In the summer of 1796, he received a commission from a Tay Son official to transport rice to sell in Giang Binh and then buy medicine, ceramics, and cloth to bring back to the rebel camp. On his way home a month later, however, pirates robbed Luo. Undaunted, he returned to Giang Binh where he was able to procure a boat, weapons, and eighteen men from a friend, a pirate named Liang Er, and so Luo set out once again — this time as a pirate — to recover his losses. Luo and his mixed Sino-Vietnamese gang plundered two junks off the coast of Qinzhou before their ship was wrecked in a storm off Hainan Island.[37] Luo's case shows just how easy it was for someone to move back and forth between criminal and legitimate pursuits in Giang Binh's sociocultural environment.

The people of Giang Binh's water world also shared a common culture. It was a rough and tumble underworld culture of poor, marginalized seafarers, and pirates. They shared a collective culture of their own making, quite different from that of people living in agricultural villages and walled cities on land. Forged out of hardship, prejudice, and poverty, they created a culture of survival based on violence, crime, and vice, and characterized by excessive profanity, intoxication, gambling, brawling, and sexual promiscuity. The culture of seafarers and pirates had its own amusements, sexual mores, and morals. The common language would very likely have been creole, a mixture of southern Chinese and Vietnamese dialects.[38] In defiance of the Qing imperium, and as a political statement perhaps, many Chinese who lived or sojourned in Giang Binh cut off their queues and let their hair hang lose in the fashion of outlaws and rebels.[39] The Qing government was sensitive to the issue of queues because of its policy of using hairstyle as a sign of loyalty. These pirates and sailors were social and cultural transgressors and outcasts, who stood in marked defiance of orthodox values and standards of behaviour.[40]

It was also a male-dominated culture where the place of women was definitely subordinate and submissive, even more so than in the orthodox cultures of China and Vietnam. Pirates acted without restraint. The only sexual conventions they followed were their own. Women and boys were just another type of booty, and could be bought and sold as chattel. Pirate chiefs frequently kept several wives and boys, as many as their fancies dictated. Gang members also took and discarded women and boys like they would

empty bottles of wine. Captives were the objects of wanton brutality, being abducted, battered, and raped as their captors saw fit.[41] For many pirates, the acquisition of "wives" was done simply by forceful taking. In the language of official reports pirates, abducted indigenous and occasionally Chinese women whom they "forcefully raped and slept with" (*qiangbi jiansu*). Just as often pirates sodomized young captive boys and forced them to serve them both on and off the ship. In one case, a bankrupted merchant-turned-pirate, Yang Yazhang, kidnapped and raped several Vietnamese women and young boys.[42] In another case, Chen Zhangfa, a fisherman from Xinhui county, Guangdong, had gone to Giang Binh where he joined a gang of pirates in 1795. After plundering a fishing junk off the Dianbai coast, Huang and several cohorts gang raped four captured sailors, while another pirate forced a Dan (Tanka) woman aboard their boat where he raped and kept her against her will.[43] In terms of sexual mores the pirates broke all the rules. Sexual violence against both women and boys was a regular feature of the pirate's trade.

From the official Chinese perspective, Giang Binh was beyond the pale of civilization and the pirates were no better than savages. Like the Christians who joined the Barbary corsairs and "turned Turk" in the seventeenth-century Mediterranean,[44] the Chinese who became pirates were seen as despicable characters for abandoning their own advanced culture in favour of backwardness and depravity among the Vietnamese and non-Sinicized ("raw" [*sheng*]) aborigines. In short, they lacked the redeeming features of Chinese civilization. There was no better "proof" of their debauchery than the extreme cruelty exerted by pirates towards their captives, especially their cannibalistic practices. Take the case of Chen Laosan, a pirate from Suiqi county in south-western Guangdong who operated out of a lair in Vietnam. On more than one occasion Chen brutally murdered his victims by ripping open their chests and extracting their livers, which were then mixed with liquor for the crew to drink. Afterwards he had the corpses thrown overboard. The Qing official who wrote this memorial completely abhorred such outrageous and bloodthirsty acts, and made it clear that Chen had already forsaken ·China and any semblance of humanity.[45]

Just as seafarers depended on land for their survival, Giang Binh depended on the sea for its survival. It was a multicultural, multilinguistic, and multi-ethnic port whose population thrived on illegal activities, especially piracy and smuggling between 1780 and 1802. It was an international black market. Not only the economy, but also Giang Binh's society and culture were tied to crime, vice, and violence. Giang Binh does not fit in

well with our preconceived notions of Southeast Asia or China. It existed uneasily on the outside of any discrete, state-based geographical system. Giang Binh and the pirates and outlaws that it supported created a world unto itself.

Notes

1. Xingke tiben (Routine memorials), QL 11.10.48. First Historical Archives, Beijing. (In the notes, Chinese dates, as above, refer to the eleventh day of the tenth month of the forty-eighth year of the Qianlong Emperor's reign.)

2. The term "water frontier" comes from Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., *Water Frontier: Commerce and the Chinese in the Lower Mekong Region, 1750–1880* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004).

3. See the discussions about South China's piracy in the late eighteenth century in Katsuta Hiroko, "Shindai kaiko no kan" (Pirate disturbances in the Qing period), *Shinron* 19 (1967), pp. 27–49; Dian Murray, *Pirates of the South China Coast* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); and Robert Antony, *Like Froth Floating on the Sea: The World of Pirates and Seafarers in Late Imperial South China* (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, China Research Monographs, no. 56, 2003).

4. Ming-Qing shiliao, wubian (Historical materials on the Ming and Qing, *wu* series) (Taibei, undated), pp. 305b, 492–93; *Shichao shengxun* (Imperial edicts of the ten [Qing] reigns [first year of the Jiaqing reign]) (Taibei, undated), 38:1.a-b.

5. Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (New York: Norton, 1965), p. 17.

6. Suzuki Chusei, "Re Cho koko no sin tono kankei" [Vietnam's relations with the Qing in the late period of the Le dynasty], in *Betonamu Chugoku kankei shi*, edited by Yamamoto Tatsuro (Tokyo, 1975), pp. 480–81.

7. Gongzhongdang (unpublished palace memorials, National Palace Museum, Taiwan) (1074) JQ 1.8.26, (1656) JQ 1.12.11, (2531) JQ 2.6.11 (JQ refers to the Jiaqing Emperor's reign); and *Guangdong haifang huilan* (A conspectus of Guangdong's coastal defence) (Canton, undated), 26:1a-2b.

8. Gongzhongdang (2531) JQ 1.5.29.

9. Suzuki Chusei, op. cit., p. 480.

10. I borrow the term "water world" from Dian Murray, but use it in a slightly different way. I use the term in a broad sense of shared social, economic, and cultural activities and patterns that are not easily defined and delimited by ethnic and linguistic differences or by national boundaries. See Murray, op. cit., pp. 6–17.

11. Thomas C.S. Chang, "Ts'ai Ch'ien, the Pirate King who Dominates the Seas: A Study of Coastal Piracy in China, 1795–1810" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1983), pp. 218–19; and Antony, op. cit., p. 127.

12. On the friendly ports in Vietnam mentioned in Chinese sources, see Gongzhongdang (137) JQ 1.2.9, (2845) JQ 2.7.6; and (3459) JQ 2.12.1.

13. Gongzhongdang (1047) JQ 1.8.19, (2010) JQ 2.2.14, and (2845) JQ 2.7.6.

14. See Gonçal López Nadal, "Corsairing as a Commercial System: The Edges of Legitimate Trade", in *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader*, edited by C.R. Pennell (New York: New York University Press, 2001), pp. 125–36 (quote on p. 127).

15. Lloyd Eastman, *Throne and Mandarins: China's Search for a Policy during the Sino-French Controversy, 1880–1885* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 43–44.

16. Murray, op. cit., p. 20.

17. For the comparative study of frontiers and the problems they present, see Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson, *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

18. On the pirates of St. Marie, see Robert Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War against Pirates* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 80–111.

19. See examples in *Da Nan shilu Qing-Yue guangxi shiliao hubian* (Material on Sino-Vietnamese relations in the Veritable Records of Vietnam), Xu Wentang and Xie Qiyi, eds. (Nangang, Taiwan: Academia Sinica, 2000), pp. 19–21, 30–31.

20. On Qing frontiers, see James Millward, "New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier", in *Remapping China: Fissures in Historical Terrain*, edited by Gail Hershatter, et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 113–29.

21. Li Tana, "The Water Frontier: An Introduction", in Nola Cooke and Li Tana, eds., op. cit., p. 8.

22. James Ron, *Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 16.

23. See, for example, Gongzhongdang (2368) JQ 2.4.24. In another case, Tay Son soldiers cooperated with the Qing navy on a joint expedition to clear the Giang Binh area of pirates. The report mentions the capture sixty-three pirates, but no leaders, and it also claimed that soldiers had killed an unspecified number of pirates besides destroying more than a hundred of their houses in the area. The Tay Son authorities turned over the sixty-three prisoners to the Qing authorities, and as a token gesture, promised to continue to search and arrest pirates in the area. A follow-up memorial details their trial and the sentencing to death of sixty-two of those prisoners; Gongzhongdang (2631) JQ 2.6.16.

24. Ray Allen Billington, *America's Frontier Heritage* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), p. 72.

25. See G. William Skinner, "Creolized Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia", in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese*, edited by Anthony Reid (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1996), pp. 51–93.

26. Wang Gungwu, "Sojourning: The Chinese Experience in Southeast Asia", in ibid., p. 4.
27. *Da Nan shilu Qing-Yue guangxi shiliao hubian*, pp. 29–31.
28. Gongzhongdang (2368) JQ 2.4.24.
29. *Chiongzhou fuzhi* (Gazetteer of Chiongzhou prefecture, Hainan Island) (1890) 19:28a.
30. Murray, op. cit., pp. 162–65; Murray had 135 cases with information on ages of arrested pirates.
31. Gongzhongdang (2631) JQ 2.6.16.
32. Ibid., (1448) JQ 1.11.10.
33. See the discussion in Antony, op. cit., pp. 82–104.
34. Lufu zouzhe (Copies of palace memorials), First Historical Archives, Beijing, (3854), JQ 2.1.27.
35. For example, see Gongzhongdang (1763) JQ 1.12.29.
36. Antony, op. cit., p. 41.
37. Gongzhongdang (1643 addendum) JQ 1.12.7 (2010) JQ 2.2.14; and Murray, op. cit., p. 187 n. 39.
38. See the discussion on creole languages in Southeast Asia in Skinner, op. cit., pp. 59–61.
39. Gongzhongdang (1047) JQ 1.8.19.
40. For an extensive discussion of the culture of pirates, see Antony, op. cit., pp. 139–63.
41. Although several years later, Chinese pirates under the female chieftain, Zheng Yi Sao, issued a code of conduct that attempted to protect female captives from rape, the evidence is mixed as to just how effective this rule was in actual practice.
42. Gongzhongdang (2845) JQ 2.7.6.
43. Ibid., (1448) JQ 1.11.10.
44. An informative essay about "turning Turk" is Lois Potter, "Pirates and 'Turning Turk' in Renaissance Drama," in *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time*, edited by Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michele Willems (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 124–40.
45. Gongzhongdang (2779) JQ 2.6.21. Antony, op. cit., pp. 161–63, discusses the practice of human sacrifice among the pirates of south China.

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