

## **Emergence of Deerskin Exports from Taiwan under VOC (1624-1642)\***

Wei-chung Cheng\*\*

### **ABSTRACT**

In 1624, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) set up a trading post at a fort built on a sandbank extending out from the west coast of Taiwan (Formosa). As a new supplier in the Japanese market, the VOC attempted to import deerskins from Southeast Asian kingdoms. Unlike those imported from Siam, deerskins brought from the aborigines in Taiwan were exempted from official trade barriers between Siam and Japan. The VOC wasted no time trying to take over from the Chinese middlemen deerskin trade with the aborigines in Taiwan and compete with Japanese junk traders who held a Shogunal pass to visit Taiwan. Although deerskins accounted for an insignificant percentage of the total Sino-Japanese trade volume, their trade became a token of legitimacy for the Dutch's sole control over the Tayouan harbor. The competition between Dutch and Japanese traders soon spiraled out of control and led to a violent conflict in 1628. All VOC businesses in Japan were suspended until 1633, when the Dutch were preferred to the Iberians by the Japanese Shogun because they were Protestant and not prone to proselytize their religion. The following year, the Japanese Shogunal court implemented a total exclusion policy forbidding Japanese to travel abroad.

Deerskin exports from Siam had been in the firm grip of the Japanese community there until their leader, Yamada Nagamasa, became embroiled in the political strife following the death of King Songt'am in 1628. This political turmoil stalled Siamese deerskin exports, leaving a vacuum for Taiwanese deerskins to fill. From 1628 to 1632, the VOC authorities in Taiwan, with no access to the Japanese market, allowed the Chinese in Japan to engage in deerskin trade. Gradually, the profits made from Taiwanese deerskin exports were comparable to those from Siam. When the exclusion policy took effect in

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\* The article is dedicated to Prof. Ts'ao Yung-ho (1920-2014), who started his academic career from the studies on the same subject and became the first Taiwanese scholar who contributed richly to the East Asian maritime history and Taiwan history in early modern times. The draft was presented at the 17th World Economic History Congress, on 4th Aug. 2015, Kyoto, Japan, in the panel "Historical Diversities of Intra-Asian Trade networks 16th -19th Centuries, organized by Prof. Takashi Hamashita 濱下武志.

\*\* Assistant Research Fellow, Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan  
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1634 and the VOC trade with Japan resumed, the Siamese deerskin exports never recovered their previous level. Seeing an opportunity, the VOC determined to expand its Taiwanese deerskin exports. It launched a series of expeditions to aboriginal villages on the northern frontier to open deer hunting-grounds to Chinese hunters. The Siamese deerskin exports eventually stabilized in the early 1640s and the impetus of the VOC expansion slackened off accordingly. Around 1645, a new system to collect deerskins was established by the VOC authorities. This so-called “village-lease” system guaranteed keeping the Chinese-Aborigine contact to a minimum, while still providing the VOC with a certain amount of deerskins at a fixed price. Tracing the history of deerskin trade initiated by the VOC in Taiwan, the author argues that it served three purposes: to supplement Siamese deerskins, to establish the legitimacy of VOC’s control over Tayouan harbor, and to have exclusive access to the aborigines and all their goods.

**Keywords:** VOC, Formosa, Deerskin, Japanese in Siam, Chinese in Japan, Aborigines in Taiwan

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## 1. Extraordinary Years in Taiwanese Deerskin Exports

From 1624 to 1662, the VOC (Dutch East India Company) ran a post on the southwest coast of Taiwan. Their post served as an entrepôt generating revenues primarily by Sino-Japanese transit trade, especially in the first two decades. The proportion of deerskin trade within the total value of this transit trade is rather humble, as the Table 1.

We have to ask, since this trade only had marginal earnings, why the VOC authorities initiated this business?<sup>1</sup> What made them think it was worth entering this business at this juncture? On the other hand, before the VOC brought Chinese agricultural colonizers to develop the cash crops of sugarcane and rice, deerskin exports were the only item that generated profits in cross-ocean trade from Taiwan. This deerskin industry may have stimulated social changes in aborigines' villages. Why did they readily give up their opportunity of "primitive accumulation" to the several alien agencies including the VOC? In this article, the author is trying to answer the above questions through investigation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Blussé, "Retribution and Remose: The Interaction between the Administration and the Protestant Mission in Early Colonial Formosa," in Gyan Prakash, ed., *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 158, 160. Prof. Blussé mentioned the same observation, too.

**Table 1 Percentage of Taiwan Deerskin Exports  
in All Goods Exported to Japan (1634-1637)**

Year	Taiwan deerskin exports (florin)	Total exports to Japan (f.)	Proportion in all goods
1634	42,391	500,448	8% <sup>2</sup>
1635	24,929	836,691	2.9% <sup>3</sup>
1636	24,490	1,164,681	2.1% <sup>4</sup>
1637	33,071	972,404	1.7% <sup>5</sup>

early stage of the VOC's export of Taiwan deerskins.<sup>6</sup> Below, the author shall start by re-examining the deerskin numbers collected before shipping away

<sup>2</sup> The Dutch East India Company (VOC) Archief (The Hague: National Archief) 1114, Sommarium voor sooveel de coopmanschappen monterden dit zijder mouson, het sedert 12en tot 28en Augustus passado, per de jachten Oudewater, Venloo, Bredamme, Venhuijsen, de fluijt Schaegen, ende het jacht Grol, volgens incoop in Tayouan naer Japan versonden, Taiwan (25 Sept. 1634), fo. 75<sup>f</sup>. Further referred to as "VOC".

<sup>3</sup> VOC 1116, Sommarium van de cargasoenen desen jare anno 1635 het sedert den 18 Augustus tot ultimo ditto met de scheepen Amsterdam, Wassenaer, Groll en het jacht Venhuijsen uijt Tayouan naer Japan versonden, Taiwan (31 Aug. 1635), fo. 388<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> VOC 1123, Memorie der coopmanschappen uijt de Pescadores als van Tayouan met de scheepen de Galjas, Wasenaer, Grol, Schagen, Huijsduijnen ende de Swaen desen jaare naer Japan gesonden, Taiwan (1636, date unknown), fo. 730.

<sup>5</sup> VOC 1123, Memorie der coopmanschappen met het schip Amsterdam, het jacht Zantvoort, de fluytscheepen Rarop, de Duijff en Oostcappell, item het jacht Oudewater en het fluijtschip de Rijp, dit zijde zaijzen [van Taijouan] naer Japan versonden, Taiwan (1637, date unknown), fo. 784<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Lots of studies have been conducted on the deerskin trade of Taiwan; however, most of the studies take for granted that the initiation of deerskin trade was a transition stage that eventually would be controlled by Dutch colonial enterprise. Those studies thus focus more on a later period when the trading system is established. See Takashi Nakamura, "Shih-ch'i shih-chi t'ai-wan lu-p'i chih ch'u-ch'an chi-chi tui-jih-mao-i [The Production of Taiwanese Deerskins and their Export to Japan during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century]," in Micha Wu and Kaim Ang, eds., *Ho-lan shih-tai T'ai-wan-shih en-chiu, shang chuan: Kai-shuo, ch'an-yeh* [Studies on Dutch Formosa I: General Studies and Industries] (Taipei: Daw-shiang, 1997), pp. 81-120; Thomas O. Höllman, "Formosa and the Trade in Venison and Deerskins," in Roderich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund, eds., *Emporia, Commodities, and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, C. 1400-1750* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1991), pp. 263-290; Pol Heyns, "Deer Hunting in Dutch Formosa," in Wei-ying Ku, ed., *Missionary Approaches and Linguistics in Mainland China and Taiwan* (Leuven: Leuven University Press: Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 2001), pp. 59-100; Tonio Andrade, "Pirates, Pelts, and Promises: The Sino-Dutch Colony of Seventeenth-Century Taiwan and the Aboriginal Village of Favorolang," *The Journal of Asian Studies* (Ann Arbor) 64: 2 (May 2005), pp. 295-321; Hsin-hui Chiu, *The Colonial 'Civilizing Process' in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 65-72; Hui-wen Koo, "Deer Hunting and Preserving the Commons in Dutch Colonial Taiwan," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Cambridge) 42: 2 (Autumn 2011), pp. 185-203; Yung-ho Ts'ao, *Chin-shih t'ai-wan lu-p'i mao-i k'ao: Ch'ing-nien ts'ao-yung-ho te hsueh-shu-ch'i-hang* [Deerskin Trade in Contemporary Taiwan: The Academic Beginnings of Young Yung-ho Ts'ao] (Taipei: Yuan-liou Publishing; Ts'ao Yung-ho Foundation of Culture and Education, 2011).

during this initial stage. The most recent study of Prof. Koo Hui-wen, displayed a new table on the Taiwanese deerskin exports to Japan by the VOC, with adjustments showing the numbers of ready-to-ship deerskins rather than the skins which actually arrived in Japan.<sup>7</sup> The Table 2 is based on Prof. Koo's and shows the real numbers of deerskins collected by the Dutch post in Taiwan annually.

According to this new set of numbers, the peak of Dutch exports of Taiwanese deerskins was in 1638, when 148,910 deerskins were collected and

**Table 2 Taiwan Deerskin Exports to Japan by the VOC**

Year	Deerskins which arrived in Japan	Adjustment	Deerskins collected in Taiwan factory
1633	16,500	+?	16,500+
1634	102,660	-?	102,260-
1635	70,060		70,060
1636	60,295		60,295
1637	81,700		81,700
1638	148,910		148,910
1639	131,301		131,301
1640	7,080	+74,460	81,540
1641	62,810	-57,940	4,870
1642	19,140		19,140
1643	58,580		58,580
1644	38,440		38,440
1645	47,345		47,345
1646	28,708		28,708
1647	36,581		36,581
1648	42,111		42,111
1649	56,369		56,369
1650	66,534		66,534
1651	80,660		80,660
1652	85,731		85,731
1653	54,700	+17,952	72,652
1654	27,240	+60,000	87,240
1655	104,076		104,076
1656	66,582		66,582
1657	51,464		51,464
1658	94,529		94,529
1659	108,500		108,500
1660	45,673	+60,000	105,673
1661	2,780		2,780

<sup>7</sup> Hui-wen Koo, "Deer Hunting and Preserving the Commons in Dutch Colonial Taiwan," p. 193, Table 1.

exported to Japan. After that, the number of collected deerskins bottomed out in 1641, when only 4,870 deerskins were collected at the VOC's warehouse. After that, the deerskin numbers slowly bounced back, and were generally above 60,000 pieces from 1650 onward. Prof. Koo attributes the drop of numbers from 1640-1641 to a sudden recession in the Japanese market. She also thinks that the sudden rise of numbers during 1637-1638 was the direct result of the Dutch expansion to the Favorlang area, which was located at the north fringe of the Dutch influence ring at that time.<sup>8</sup> After 1644, the Dutch authorities introduced a new system in aborigines' villages by selling the sole right to trade deerskins in each village to a certain Chinese person (one per village). In this way, the VOC authorities managed to preserve the deer population, which allowed them to extract a certain amount of surplus in the following years.<sup>9</sup> Although Prof. Koo and many others who studied the Taiwanese deerskin exports thoroughly explained how the VOC implemented a system to guarantee the deerskin extraction each year, they did not explain how the whole business was initiated and why the VOC suddenly had motivation to push the exports of the deerskins to the first peak in 1637-1638. Before the VOC was able to assert its power to extract deerskins and regulate deer hunting with the village-leasing system, they had stayed in Taiwan for longer than one decade. In other words, what steps did the VOC take that eventually led them to extract the deerskins by setting up a political institution rather than using the existing free market?

To answer this question, we have to apply Prof. Koo's method a little further to clarify the exact amount of deerskins collected. In counting the deerskin collection in 1633 and 1634, Prof. Koo did not report how many deerskins were ready to ship in 1633. By tracing the correspondence between the VOC's factories in Japan and Siam and Batavia, we know that 56,000 deerskins were in the warehouse in Taiwan waiting to be carried to Japan, but this plan failed in the summer of 1633. Closer scrutiny shows many deerskins had been damaged when a yacht, the *Assendelft*, had attempted to carry the abovementioned deerskins to the Pescadores, supposing it could transfer this cargo to a fluit ship, the *Brouwerhaven*, there. Knowing the number damaged is 17,580 skins, a more accurate number of the deerskins collected in 1634 can also be tabulated.<sup>10</sup> These

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<sup>8</sup> Hui-wen Koo, "Deer Hunting and Preserving the Commons in Dutch Colonial Taiwan," pp.195-200.

<sup>9</sup> Hui-wen Koo, "Deer Hunting and Preserving the Commons in Dutch Colonial Taiwan," pp. 197, 200.

<sup>10</sup> In three invoices (factura) of yachts (*Bredamme*, *Groll* and *Schagen*), the price to repack the deerskins is listed as 1/2 rial per 300 skins, while in the invoice of the ship the Venlo, it shows 18 rials were paid for

results give us more reliable numbers in the years 1633 and 1634, as the Table 3.

**Table 3 Deerskins Collected from Taiwan  
by the VOC's and other Nation's Vessels**

Year	Carried by the VOC's vessels	Adjustment	Carried by the vessels of Chinese in Japan	Total
1624	910 <sup>11</sup>			910
1626	15,000 <sup>12</sup>			15,000
1629	8,825 <sup>13</sup>			8,825
1631			61,000 <sup>14</sup>	61,000
1633	16,500 <sup>15</sup>	+56,000 <sup>16</sup>	22,000 <sup>17</sup>	94,500

re-packing the skins. Assuming the usual price as above, this payment is enough for 10,800 skins. Because the *Venlo* carried only 5,670 skins, I infer that the deerskins in its and the *Ouderwater's* (which was the first yacht departing for Japan in that year) cargoes were repacked skins. The sum of skins in the above two vessels excluding skins from the Philippines was 17,580. See The Archives of the Dutch Factory of Japan (NFJ) (The Hague: National Archief) 762, Facture van de naergenomineerd coopmanschapen, gescheept ende geladen in 't jacht dat godt bewaere genaempt Venloo gaende van hier onder cognissement vanden coopman ende schipper van 'tselve jacht naer Japan geconsingneert aende Ed. president Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd over der compagnie negotie op 't comptoir Firando, Taiwan (22 July, 1634), not foliated, further referred to as "NFJ"; NFJ 762, Factura van de naergenomineerde coopmanschapen gescheept ende geladen (door ordre van Ed. heer Hans Putmans gouverneur) in 't jacht dat godt bewaere gnaempt Bredamme gaende van hier onder cognissement van den schipper ende coopman van 'tselve jacht naer Jappan geconsingneert aen d' E. president Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd over des Compagnies negotie op 't comptoir Firando, The Pescadores (12 Aug. 1634), not foliated; NFJ 762, Factura van de naergenomineerde coopmanschapen gescheept ende geladen in 't jacht (dat godt bewaere) genaempt Groll gaende van hier onder cognissement van den oppercoopman ende schipper desselffs naer Japan geconsigneert aen de E. president Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd over des Compagnies negotie op 't Firando, The Pescadores (15 Aug. 1634), not foliated; NFJ 762, Factura van de naegenomineerde coopmanschapen gescheept ende geladen (door ordre van d' E. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans) in 't fluijt schip (dat godtt beware) genampt Schagen gaende van hier onder cognissement van den schipper ende coopman van 'tselve naer Jappan geconsingreert aen d'E. heer president Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd over des Compagnies negotie op 't comptoir Firando, The Pescadores (25 Aug. 1634), not foliated.

<sup>11</sup> Élie Ripon, *Voyages et Aventures du Capitaine Ripon aux Grandes Indes: Journal Inédit d'un Mercenaire (1617-1627)*, ed., Yves Giraud (Thonon-les-Bains: L'Albaron, 1990), p. 106. Hereafter "*Voyages et Aventures du Capitaine Ripon aux Grandes Indes*".

<sup>12</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naar Batavia aan gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier], Firando (17 Oct. 1626), fo. 166.

<sup>13</sup> VOC 855, Missive van Batavia naar Teijjouhan aen den gouverneur Hans Putmans, per Assendelft geschreven, Batavia (17 May 1630), not foliated.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard Blussé, Margot E. van Opstall, Yung-ho Ts'ao, Shu-sheng Chiang, and Wouter. E. Milde, eds., *De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia: Taiwan 1629-1662* ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1986), Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 51 (23 June 1631), p. 53 (9 July 1631). Hereafter "*Zeelandia Dagregisters*".

<sup>15</sup> NFJ 762, Factura van de naervolgende goederen ende coopmanschapen door ordre van de E. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans gescheept ende geladen in 't schip (dat godt bewaere) genaempt Venlo gaende van haere onder cognissement van den coopman ende schipper desselfff naer Jappan in Firando

1634	105,290 <sup>18</sup>	-31,760 <sup>19</sup> +12,770 <sup>20</sup>	+3,000 <sup>21</sup>	89,300
1635	70,060 <sup>22</sup>			70,060
1636	60,040 <sup>23</sup>			60,040
1637	81,700 <sup>24</sup>			81,700

geconsigneert aen den president Nicolaes Couckebacker, Taiwan (not dated Aug. 1633), not foliated. Another copy see VOC 1113, Facture van de coopmanschappen door Hans Putmans gescheept ende gelaeden in het schip Venlo, gaende naer Japan in Firando, gericht aen den president Nicolaes Couckebacker, Chiulung River (17 Aug. 1633), fos. 629-630.

- <sup>16</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Tayouan aen de Ed. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans, Osaka (20 Oct. 1633), fo. 17. From this letter we know that the yacht *Brouwershaven* was expected to carry 56,000 deerskins to Japan.
- <sup>17</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Batavia aen de Ed. heer gouverneur generael Hendrick Brouwer, Osaka (20 Oct. 1633), fo. 4.
- <sup>18</sup> Prof. Nakamura Takashi summed up the deerskin numbers of the invoices (factura) of 5 vessels which departed from Taiwan to Japan, and the result was 111,840. See Takashi Nakamura, “Shih-ch’i shih-chi t’ai-wan lu-p’i chih ch’u-ch’an chi-chi tui-jih-mao-i,” p. 109. In the total sum of 111,840 skins, we take off the amount of 6,550 skins from the Philippines that were captured by the yacht *Oudewater*, then we get this amount. See NFJ 762, Factura van de naergenomineerde coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen in ’t jacht *Oudewater* gaande van hier onder cognisement van de coopman ende schipper van ’tselve jacht naer Japan geconsingneert aen de E. president Couckebacker opperhoofd onder des Compagnies negotie op ’t comptoir Firando, Taiwan (17 July 1634), not foliated.
- <sup>19</sup> There were 56,000 deerskins unable to be carried to Japan from Tayouan in the summer of 1633. The yacht *Assendelf* carried 41,820 pieces from Tayouan to the Pescadores for the fluit ship *Brouwerhaven* but failed. See VOC 1113, Missive van den oppercoopman Paulus Traudenus naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Hendrick Brouwer, Taiwan (23 Oct. 1633), fo. 791<sup>f</sup>. Since 17,580 deerskins were saved and repacked in 1634, 24,240 deerskins (41,820-17,580) must have been removed due to the failed attempt of the yacht *Assendelft*. Based on this number, the remaining deerskins in the storehouse in 1633 must have been 31,760 pieces (including those which originally were not carried away by the *Assendelft*).
- <sup>20</sup> VOC 1116, Missive van Hans Putmans uijt ’t Fort Zeelandia aen den gouverneur generael Henrick Brouwer, Taiwan (9 Mar. 1635), fo. 325<sup>f</sup>. Although in an earlier report right after the incident, the loss number is larger, here the author considers the later account more accurate.
- <sup>21</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 176 (29 May 1634).
- <sup>22</sup> VOC 1116, Sommarium van de cargasoenen desen jare anno 1635 het sedert den 18 Augustus tot ultimo ditto met de scheepen Amsterdam, Wassenae, Groll en het jacht Venhuijsen uijt Tayouan naer Jappan versonden, Taiwan (31 Aug. 1635), fo. 388<sup>f</sup>.
- <sup>23</sup> VOC 1123, Memorie der coopmanschappen uijt de Pescadores als van Tayouan met de scheepen de Galjas, Wasenaer, Grol, Schagen, Huijsduijnen ende de Swaen desen jaere naer Japan gesonden, Taiwan (1636, date unknown), fo. 730.
- <sup>24</sup> VOC 1123, Memorie der coopmanschappen met het schip Amsterdam, het jacht Zantvoort, de fluytscheepen Rarop, de Duijff en Oostcappell, item het jacht *Oudewater* en het fluijtschip de Ripp, dit zijde zaijzoen [van Taijouan] naer Japan versonden, Taiwan (1637, date unknown), fo. 784<sup>f</sup>.



If we remove the drastically varying numbers of the years 1638-1642 and 1661 in Table 2 and replace the numbers of the years 1633-1634 of Table 2 with the numbers of the same year at Table 3, we can get an average annual number of deerskins in 24 years of collection in Taiwan from 1633 to 1661 of 70,724 skins. We can therefore judge that a constant number of 70,000 to 80,000 skins is the amount Taiwan aborigines offered each year under normal circumstances. The VOC authorities obtained a similar conclusion when the governor Francois Caron claimed in 1644: "For the past twenty years, 50,000, 70,000 or even 100,000 deer were caught yearly". From that moment on, the VOC authorities decided to implement a new system in the aborigines' villages to control the export of deerskins in a moderate number, and to abolish the Chinese free hunters and traders. It seems to me there must be reasons behind this decision to partially regulate trade rather than continuing with free market practices.

When we check this constant (70,724) with the years before Dutch intervention (1624-1637), it doesn't seem very different from the 72,500 (16,500+56,000) deerskins in 1633. Therefore the VOC had already been capable of obtaining this amount by means of free trade. Furthermore, this constant is not far from the amount carried by the Chinese traders in the previous year 1632 (70,000), which the VOC authorities did not interfere in at all. Taking this constant into account, a result determined by the natural limitations of the fixed deer population and aborigines' hunting efficiency, the shift of export agents from Chinese to the Dutch was quite smooth, without any serious interruption from 1631-1635.

With the hindsight provided to us by this estimation of the constant, it seems that the Company authorities overestimated the amount they could purchase from Taiwan at 200,000 pieces. However, the Company had every reason to aspire to more under the first peak in 1633, because they did not collect the deerskins directly from the aborigines, but relied on the Chinese middlemen. If they heard that those middlemen had once provided greater amounts to previous buyers other than the Company, they should of course have assumed some more could still be obtained. They must have known that the total amount of exports of deerskin from Taiwan in 1633 (including that shipped away by Chinese to Japan) was about 94,500 skins, and thus attempted to reach this amount from 1634 onwards. This overestimation of the deerskin surplus from aborigines' deer hunting fields drove the VOC authorities to stretch its hands out to the aborigines' villages, depriving the aborigines of access to different buyers.

To make a long story short, the initiation of the VOC's exports of Taiwanese deerskins was actually a process in which the export agent for the aborigines changed. Regardless of the aborigines' willingness to accept this change, it triggered new power constellations among the aborigines, the Dutch and the Chinese middlemen. Still, with such an investment in implementing a new system to the aborigines, if the VOC could not earn more, why the Company authorities decided to take this risk and why this not so rewarding new system was maintained rather than abolished are still questions to be answered.

## 2. Taiwanese Deerskin Exports as a Supplement to Siamese Deerskin Exports

The VOC commenced its deerskin business in East Asian waters to supply the demand of the Japanese market. When Cornelis Reijerson led a fleet to attack Macau and occupied the Pescadores in 1622, the Batavian authorities decided to reopen the route between Siam and Japan, because they noticed that the Japanese shogun court had ceased issuing licenses to Japanese junks to Siam and Cambodia in order to bar their Catholic crews from landing.<sup>25</sup> In 1623, the Batavian authorities thus decided to send a ship, the *Muiden*, to Siam to determine whether it would be able to carry some deerskins to Japan.<sup>26</sup> The Japanese silver gained by this trade was in turn to be re-invested in the VOC post in the Pescadores, to buy Chinese silks. Unfortunately, when the *Muiden* arrived in Ayutthaya, Yamada Nagamasa (alias Qkphra Japander), the leader of the Japanese community in Siam, had already shipped 160,000 deerskins away on three Siamese junks, and thus the Dutch were only able to purchase 8,000 small deerskins.<sup>27</sup> In the following year of 1624, because war exploded in Java and the Coromandel Coast, where the VOC procured rice, the trade with Siam

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<sup>25</sup> George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 1977), p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> VOC 850, Instructie voor den commandeur Christiaen Franckx ende d' overhooffden van de schepen, Orangie, Erasmus, mitsgaders de jachten den Valck, West Cappel. ende Cleen Tholen, gaende in vlote na de custe van China, Batavia (3 Apr. 1623), fo. 120<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> VOC 1080, Missive door Leonard Camps uijt Firando aen den gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier, Firando (5 Oct. 1623), fo. 379<sup>r</sup>; NFJ 482, Missive van Japan naar Batavia aen Ed. heer gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier, Firando (20 Dec. 1623), fo. 14.

gained attention again as a provision source. Apart from providing food supply for the garrisons in the Pescadores, the Batavian authorities dispatched a ship, the *Noort Holland*, to purchase deerskins in Siam to enlarge the trade on the Siam-Japan route. They estimated 40,000 deerskins could be obtained, and if the three Siam-Japanese junks were not able to reach Siam again safely, they should invest more in deerskins.<sup>28</sup> At this very beginning stage of deerskin trade in 1624-1626, the VOC were hardly able to compete with the Japanese-Siam traders in Siam.<sup>29</sup> Facing this awkward competition, they began to notice that Chinese fishermen and smugglers exported deerskins from Taiwan to Japan as well, but the hindrances seemed fewer because no native monarch like the Siamese king or strong local interested parties like the Japanese community were holding on to that trade.

The Dutch occupied the Pescadores in the summer of 1622, and reached a ceasefire during the winter of 1622-1623. In the summer of 1623 the conflict resumed, and in the spring of 1624 the Fukien authorities decided to send Chinese troops to land on the Pescadores for further war preparations. The final round of negotiations was held in the summer of 1624, and the Dutch were forced to move to the shore of Taiwan in the autumn. During the VOC occupation of the Pescadores, the commander Reijersoon dispatched several vessels to check the shore of Taiwan, because the Ming officials constantly urged them to move there. On 25 October 1623, a group of 16 Dutch soldiers with 34 Bandanese slaves were dispatched to Taijouan Bay, a bay behind a sandbank that links to the main Island of Taiwan (or 'Formosa', as it was called at that time).<sup>30</sup> They were led by Captain Elias Ripon, and stayed there for about five months until the middle of March 1624.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, senior merchant Jacob Constant and assistant merchant Barent Bessardt were dispatched to the village Soulang, which was the largest of the villages around Taijouan Bay.<sup>32</sup> In their report, they immediately compared the deer hunting in

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<sup>28</sup> VOC 1082, Instructie voor den oppercoopman sr. Jan van Hael ende den Raet van 't schip Noort Hollandt gaende van hier naer Siam ende de Pescadores, Batavia (2 Apr. 1624), fos. 231<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>30</sup> Shu-sheng Chiang, trans., *De Missiven van de VOC-Gouverneur in Taiwan aan de Gouverneur-Generaal te Batavia* (Nantau: Taiwan Historica; Tainan: National Museum of Taiwan History, 2010), Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 100. Cornelis Reijerssen aan de gouverneur-generaal Pieter de Carpentier, The Pescadores (25 Jan. 1624). Further referred to as "*De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*".

<sup>31</sup> *Voyages et Aventures du Capitaine Ripon aux Grandes Indes*, p. 114.

<sup>32</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 101.

Siam and in the Village Soulang: “We suppose therefore that the deer cannot be caught in such abundance as in Siam, although we do not doubt that this country has the same abundance of game as Siam or any other place, for, as soon as you go ashore, across from the roads of Tayouan it leaps up before your eyes in great number...”<sup>33</sup> Captain Ripon visited another village a bit further north, Mattau. He reported: “The hunter trailed the wounded game and killed it. Afterwards he skinned it, took away the hide, cut the meat into pieces which would be dried in the sun to sell or for food. The hide would be also dried in the sun and sold in dozens. It is the biggest business here. I have counted the number we traded there in about one year, and it amounted to 910 pieces. The amount sold to Chinese is not included. They traded more. Japanese also had demand for it in large amount.”<sup>34</sup> After the Company eventually decided to stay in Taiwan in October 1624, their eyes naturally fell upon the extant deerskin exports. One of the skippers, Pieter Muijser, wrote to the VOC directors in Amsterdam: “Upon our arrival here they showed friendship and amiability to the Lord Governor [Martinus Sonck] and offered their service and help as well, which is the reason why the Lord Governor also sent a junior merchant to live among them, for the purpose of luring the trade in deerskins away from the Chinese and towards us in due time...”<sup>35</sup> Here we can see the deerskin trade already had a seasonal routine for the aboriginal villages. The agents of this export were mostly Chinese. This trade was open to other foreigners as well, because the Chinese themselves were not organized by any kind of administration. There were almost no barriers to entry in this market.

When the governor of Taiwan, Martinus Sonck, considered replacing the Chinese peddlers in the aborigines’ villages with Dutch personnel, the Company’s deerskin trade project in Siam was confronted with an awkward failure. The Siamese deerskins delivered by the VOC’s ships to Japan did not fetch a satisfactory price. The Dutch merchants in Japan complained that they were mostly rejected by Japanese buyers due to the poor quality of the skins. According to the letter written by merchant Jan van Haesel, he claimed: “The deerskins were very small and all bitten by worms and cockroaches; I think it is

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<sup>33</sup> Leonard Blussé, Natalie Everts, and Evelien French, eds., *The Formosan Encounter: Notes on Formosa’s Aboriginal Society -- A Selection of Documents from Dutch Archival Sources* (Taipei: Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines, 1999), Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 21. Further referred to as “*The Formosan Encounter*”.

<sup>34</sup> *Voyages et Aventures du Capitaine Ripon aux Grandes Indes*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>35</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 33.

because of the long journey. More than 100 pieces were sold for merely 1 tael per 100 pieces. Anyone can easily tell the differences when you see the deerskins brought by the Japanese junks that were ready to sell in the warehouse, which were cleaned and packed neatly, otherwise the Japanese buyers would not pay for them.”<sup>36</sup> The deerskins carried by Japanese were sold at a price of 35 to 36 taels per hundred, while the skins carried by Dutch could only gain a lower price of 25 1/2 taels, if not rejected outright by Japanese buyers due to poor quality. Packing deerskins in traditional Japanese ways was also recommended: “In the future it is very necessary to mark the deerskins to show how many pieces are in one pack. Besides the marks of the Barigos, each kind of skins should be marked. For example: Cabessa should be marked per pack on the cargo list; otherwise it would cost us great efforts to do it, especially when the sorting is so bad and they can hardly be accepted.”<sup>37</sup> As we shall see in the latter part of this article, the Dutch merchants could not fix this difficulty until 1628, because the skilled workers who processed and packaged the deerskins were all Japanese immigrants in Siam who would never cooperate with the Dutch.

Hitting this wall, Batavian authorities must have seen the deerskin trade in Taiwan as heaven-sent compensation for the unfavorable prospects of the Siamese deerskin trade. They reported to the directors in Amsterdam in the January of 1625, claiming: “Rumor has it that every year approximately 200,000 deerskins ... can be found there [in Taiwan].”<sup>38</sup> The governor-general Pieter Carpentier actually gave an instruction to the governor of Taiwan, Martinus Sonck, in the following summer of 1625: “Concerning the deerskin trade, as long as it would not exceed our capacities in the coming China trade and reduce our capital, we recommend that you take over this trade when you find the price is cheap, because it is a cash commodity which is very profitable in the Japanese market. However, you should apply the experience that we gained in Siam to prevent being deceived.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan naar Batavia aen Ed. heer gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier, Firando (30 Nov. 1624), fo. 32.

<sup>37</sup> NFJ 482, Missive aen sr. Jan van Haesel in Siam uijt Japan, Firando (30 Nov. 1624), fo. 54.

<sup>38</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 37; Shaogang Cheng, “De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662: Een vergeten geschiedenis,” (Ph.D. diss., Leiden University, 1995), Vol. II: Appendix, p. 45 (27 Jan. 1625).

<sup>39</sup> VOC 852, Missive van Batavia naar Teijouwan aen den gouverneur Martinus Sonck per ’t jacht Erasmus geschreven, Batavia (13 May 1625), fo. 73<sup>v</sup>.

In the winter of 1624, the governor Sonck had dispatched a junior merchant with two assistants to the Village Soulang.<sup>40</sup> The only possible exporting trade with the aborigines was the deerskin trade. In the report written by Barend Pessaert, he witnessed five market places in the Village Soulang. The bullion currency was not common there. The daily goods offered to the aborigines by the Chinese peddlers were salt, rice and other groceries, which were carried from the Chinese shore.<sup>41</sup> The Chinese peddlers lodged within the aborigines' house in groups of 1-6 persons each.<sup>42</sup> Taking account of their major commodities, rice and salt, and their residential style, apparently they were fishermen who visited Taiwan's coast each winter to fish for mullets. They carried considerable amounts of salt in order to pickle the mullets and rice as their own provisions. It happened each winter, as Governor Sonck witnessed, with a sudden booming trade between aborigines and Chinese fishermen brought by one hundred fishing junks in the aboriginal villages in December 1624.<sup>43</sup> The Dutch junior merchant Pessaert must have followed the Chinese peddlers' manner to trade the deerskins with the aborigines in Soulang. Although the aborigines did not recognize the value of silver and gold, they appreciated the cotton textiles and stored them as permanent property in their houses.<sup>44</sup> When in January 1625 the Governor Sonck visited those nearby aborigines' villages, he brought coarse cangans as gifts.<sup>45</sup> Cangan is a kind of cotton textile which is known to have been exported by the Chinese to Manila in a large quantity.<sup>46</sup> The Dutch fleet had captured several junks heading towards Manila during their occupation of the Pescadores and thus plundered 46,237 pieces of Chinese cangan in the summer of 1623. They stated 16,208 pieces had been shipped to the Japanese market right away.<sup>47</sup> Therefore in the beginning of 1625, there

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<sup>40</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 35.

<sup>41</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, pp. 14, 19-20, 29; J. E. Heeres, ed., *Dagh-Register Gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant Passerende Daer ter Plaetse als over Geheel Nederlandts-India* (s'-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1896), [Vol. I:] Anno 1624-1629, p. 23 (16 Feb. 1624). Further referred to as "*Batavia Dagregisters*".

<sup>42</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 36.

<sup>44</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 39.

<sup>46</sup> VOC 849, Notitie van de coopmanschappen die in China tot den Chineschen handel dienen geprocureert te worden, Batavia (19 June 1622), fo. 104<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> VOC 1080, Facture van de goederen door de schepen Groeningen ende den Engelsen Beer in het vaerwater van de Manilha ende omtrent Formosa uijt vier Chinese joncken veroverd, The Pescadores (14 July 1623), fos. 388, 390.

should have still been a considerable store of Chinese cangan at Dutch disposal. There is no record on the amount of deerskins purchased by the Dutch in Taiwan that summer, but they were sent for sure.<sup>48</sup> Since the president of Taiwan's factory, Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit, was able to estimate the total amount of deerskins exported, no matter by whom, at 80,000-100,000 pieces, they were probably exported by the Japanese that summer.<sup>49</sup> Despite the fact that a large amount of deerskins from Siam, Cambodia and Manila lowered the prices of deerskins, the skins from Taiwan still sold out in Japan and proved their potential as a competitive product.<sup>50</sup> In that season of 1625, the Company's agents in Soulang and other villages were still not able to compete with the Chinese peddlers, but when the Batavian authorities allowed the governor of Taiwan to invest silver capital in this trade, the purchasing of deerskins went better in 1626. 15,000 deerskins were carried to Japan from Taiwan by the VOC.<sup>51</sup> The Dutch merchants in Japan welcomed this kind of investment: "It is a good thing that your honors spent some capital to obtain deerskins, since it is a cash good and its profit reached 100%, performing as well as other commodities from China."<sup>52</sup>

Apart from the peddlers, some Chinese adventurers who collected deerskins from peddlers and resold them to the Japanese traders visited Taiwan for the Silk trade.

The Dutch occupation on the Pescadores disturbed the order on the Chinese Southeast coast, and they patrolled to intercept Chinese junks bound for Manila and the Portuguese vessels in Macau. Such intervention encouraged more Chinese adventurers to flock to Taiwan to avoid Dutch attacks. When the Dutch eventually settled down in Taiwan and were waiting for their Chinese contractors to provide silk goods in Taijouan Bay, those adventurers were hiding in other bays along the southwest coast of Taiwan. When governor Sonck visited the aborigines' villages, a Chinese merchant there, Li Tan, promised to provide

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<sup>48</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 257.

<sup>49</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 255. De Wit estimated that 80,000-100,000 pieces of deerskin should be purchased each year, if there were no other competitors in this trade.

<sup>50</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naar Batavia aan Ed. heer gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier], Firando (17 Nov. 1625), fo. 97.

<sup>51</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naar Batavia aan gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier], Firando (17 Oct. 1626), fo. 166.

<sup>52</sup> NFJ 482, Missive [uijt Japan] aen de E. commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit, Firando (10 Oct. 1626), fo. 157.

him with 6,000 deerskins at a price of 10 taels per 100 skins.<sup>53</sup> This transaction was never realized, for Li Tan passed away soon thereafter, but his confidence in providing deerskins indicated that he and other adventurers were undertaking this business as well.<sup>54</sup> Those adventurers were ready to cooperate with any buyer with silver capital — including Japanese merchants.

### 3. The Deerskin Trade as a Token of Legitimacy

In the spring of 1625, Governor Sonck had purchased a piece of land in Sinkan village from the aboriginal principals there for 15 pieces of cangan. Sinkan was a smaller village with 400 able-bodied men, compared to Soulang with 1,000.<sup>55</sup> It was on Taiwan Island, on the opposite shore from the Tayouan sand bank where about 280 Dutch people stayed.<sup>56</sup> During this time, half of the Dutch staff was sick due to malnutrition, so the governor, Sonck, built some accommodations, like a warehouse, hospital and stables for cattle, to improve provisions. Aside from this Dutch area, Chinese adventurers built their own residences as well. By the end of October, 30 to 40 huts were built by Chinese there.<sup>57</sup> The company's house must have served as a shop for trading deerskins with aborigines, and for storage. Governor Sonck had also planned to settle all Dutch employees on the same site, with the deerskin trade as their livelihood.<sup>58</sup> This plan was not realized, since very few deerskins were exported in the summer of 1625. As explained below, Japanese competitors purchased most of the deerskins from Chinese peddlers and adventurers.

Before the Dutch built their fort on the sand bank at Tayouan, the Chinese adventurers and the Japanese traders met on the adjacent sand bank named Baximboy. The Dutch had also built an office there, apart from their fort.<sup>59</sup> Not earlier than the end of March of 1625, two Japanese junks arrived in Tayouan

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<sup>53</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 208. In this article, all Chinese words follow the standard of Wade-Giles transcription.

<sup>54</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 248; *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 41; *Batavia Dagregisters*, [Vol. I:] Anno 1624-1629, p. 145 (9 Apr. 1625).

<sup>55</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 38.

<sup>56</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 254.

<sup>57</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 252.

<sup>58</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 253.

<sup>59</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 153.



bay, one equipped by the governor of Nagasaki, Fesidomme (Suetsugu Heizō 末次平藏), and the two carried about 6-70,000 taels of silver together.<sup>60</sup> Their rich capital overwhelmed the Dutch, and thus the deerskins collected by the Chinese peddlers were mostly sold to the Japanese traders. As the junks carried Shogunal passes, the Dutch did not dare take measures to prevent this exchange. In the end of August, the Governor, Sonck, received a letter from Governor General Pieter van Carpentier which ordered him to prevent any trade by neighboring nations (meaning the Japanese) with Chinese and aborigines.<sup>61</sup> In this letter Carpentier advised: "... that we take the whole island of Formosa and small islands in its vicinity in possession for the honorable excellent power of the General Staten of united Netherlands, our superior sovereignty holder and the United East India Company. You should make it happen under the consent of local principals. If it is not able to be achieved, or the inhabitants are unreasonable, you should persuade the people or scare them, in order to prevent Chinese and especially Japanese pretentions against us."<sup>62</sup> Following this instruction, on 22 September, the President Gerrit Frederick de Wit (Sonck had since died) decided to build a redoubt on Sinkan and compel all Chinese adventurers from Boxambo to move to Saccam (in the vicinity of Sinkan) accordingly.<sup>63</sup> The Taiwan authorities hoped to put the Chinese under surveillance and tried to acquire consent of the aborigines to submit themselves under the sovereignty of the Dutch Republic. The aim of this measure was to bar contacts between either Japanese traders or Chinese traders residing in Japan and local Chinese peddlers, adventurers and aborigines.

This measure was dodged. During the Japanese stay, the Dutch noticed that Li Tan's affiliated adventurers anchored in several bays on the southwest coast of Taiwan but further north than Tayouan and Soulang, especially in a bay

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<sup>60</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naer Taijouan aen Ed. heer gouverneur Martinus Sonck], Firando (20 Mar. 1625), fo. 80; *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 243.

<sup>61</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 241; VOC 852, Missive van Batavia naar Teijouwan aen de heer gouverneur Martinus Sonck per 't schip 't Wapen van Enckhuijsen geschreven, Batavia (14 Apr. 1625), fo. 54.

<sup>62</sup> VOC 852, Missive van Batavia naar Teijouwan aen de heer gouverneur Martinus Sonck per 't schip 't Wapen van Enckhuijsen geschreven, Batavia (14 Apr. 1625), fo. 54.

<sup>63</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 Novmber 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (22 Sept. 1625), fo. 357<sup>v</sup>.

then called Wankan.<sup>64</sup> The Taiwan authorities attempted to extend surveillance over those bays and dispatched coastal patrols there in December 1625.<sup>65</sup> In spite of the patrols, the cooperation between the adventurers and the Japanese traders (including Japanese-based Chinese) managed to bypass the Dutch control of the area around Tayouan Bay: “Some adventurers went to the bays farther north along the coast in Gilim and Wankan, unloaded their cargo there, and carried the goods via land routes to the bay of Tayouan. They brought those goods to the Japanese junks by night and kept the Dutch unawares.”<sup>66</sup> On the patrol mission, they found Wankan to be an estuary of the Mattau River, and the Mattau village was located upstream. When they patrolled Wankan, the Chinese adventurers most probably ran from the immediate coastal zone and hid in Mattau village.<sup>67</sup> They searched Chinese adventurers in Mattau later, without decisive results. In April 1626, two Japanese junks visited Tayouan Bay again. Because the Dutch prevented them from carrying their capital to the Chinese coast (which was forbidden by the Chinese officials), they stayed and waited for Chinese adventurers to approach them. Since the Dutch could entrust their capital to a certain Chinese merchant named Sinsou to the China coast, the situation turned against Japanese traders because the Dutch had begun to arrest the adventurers visiting bays other than Tayouan Bay.<sup>68</sup> In July of 1626, president de Wit dispatched armed junks to Gilim (Ehrlin at present) to attack newly arriving adventurers, and successfully cleared out Wankan.<sup>69</sup> Although they successfully forced the Chinese adventurers to trade with the Dutch rather than with Japanese traders, the Taiwan authorities did not prevent the Japanese traders from purchasing deerskins. The Japanese traders thus released capital to the Chinese peddlers, so the deerskin price was driven up from 9-10 taels per hundred skins to 12 to 13 1/2 taels. Consequentially the Dutch could not get as

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<sup>64</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, p. 248.

<sup>65</sup> VOC 1090, Resolutiën bij Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende de raet in Teijouwan (en cust van China) genomen, 16 Nov. 1625 -11 Maert 1626, Taiwan (14 Dec. 1625), fo. 192<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naar Batavia aan gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier], Firando (17 Oct. 1626), fo. 167.

<sup>67</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, pp. 46-47.

<sup>68</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, pp. 314-317.

<sup>69</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 November 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (7, 21 July 1626), fo. 371<sup>v</sup>.

many deerskins as they expected.<sup>70</sup> Since there were no more alternative channels for Japanese traders to get deerskins from Chinese adventurers without being seen by the Company, free competition for deerskin purchasing by the Chinese middlemen ensued between Dutch and Japanese capital (some of them were adventurers and peddlers as well) in the Bay of Tayouan. When sending patrol vessels to blockade bays other than Tayouan, president de Wit also posted a placard requiring Chinese peddlers who inhabited aborigine villages to report to him for a license. This was obviously a measure to keep track of the Chinese peddlers' presence for the purpose of deerskin trade.

In the spring of 1627, when this deerskin trade competition became severe, with Chinese middlemen supported by either Dutch or Japanese, the friendship between the VOC authorities and the villagers in Soulang soon deteriorated. The Company had built a house in Soulang to accommodate a junior merchant, but the villagers turned their back on the house and let it deteriorate and fall apart. The villagers in the next village Sinkan sensed this change and then expressed their kind willingness to offer a house.<sup>71</sup>

This attitude shift must have had something to do with the commercial rivalry between Japanese traders and the Dutch authorities in Tayouan Bay. One year earlier (1626), when the three Japanese junks arrived in April, they brought 180,000 taels in capital and anchored near Boximboy, which was near Soulang. When the Japanese personnel were on land, they stayed in huts near Soulang village.<sup>72</sup> The newly planned Dutch area next to Sinkan, "Provintie (situated at Saccam)" had been razed by a big fire, with all Chinese huts in ashes, in February 1626, so governor Sonck's plan to task the Dutch free citizens there

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<sup>70</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, pp. 324-325.

<sup>71</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 Novmber 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (13 Feb. 1627), fo. 382<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> W. P. Coolhaas, J. van Goor, and J. E. Schooneveld-Oosterling, eds., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneur-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* ('s-Gravenhage: Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, 1960), Deel I: 1610-1638, p. 230; Prof. Nakamura Takashi mentioned there were two junks that carried about 300,000 tails silver, in an article without proper citations. See Takashi Nakamura, "Wei-jao T'ai-wan te jih-lan kuan-hsi: Bin-t'ien-mi-ping-wei te he-lan-jen kung-chi [Japan-Dutch Relationships Relating to Taiwan: Hamada Yahyōe's Attack on the Dutch Officers]," in Naojirō Murakami, et al., *He-lan shih-tai T'ai-wan shih lun-wen-chi* [Studies on Taiwan History under the Dutch], trans., Hsien-yao Hsu (Ilan: Fokuang Jenwenshehui Hsuehyuen, 2001), p. 216; José Eugenio Borao Mateo, *Spaniards in Taiwan: Documents* (Taipei: SMC Publishing, 2002), Vol. I: 1582-1641, p. 65.

with the deerskins trade was doomed.<sup>73</sup> The Chinese middlemen left the Dutch area after the plague struck in June.<sup>74</sup> The deerskin peddlers and middlemen all flocked to Soulang thereafter. As the Japanese poured more silver into Soulang for silks and deerskins, the Chinese middlemen preferred them to the Dutch, and the aborigines also welcomed a more generous buyer.

Being the Company's ally, the villagers in Sinkan accordingly in the spring of 1627 offered a new house for the Dutch, the aborigines in Sinkan gained more security against the hostility from the village Soulang, where the Japanese traders and Chinese middlemen formed a tight alliance for deerskin trade.<sup>75</sup>

The Dutch authorities also noticed that the Japanese traders had begun to invest their capital in deerskins. They knew that there would be no way to win this price battle, and that they would have to resort to other measures to undermine the Japanese. In Fort Zeelandia on the sandbank of Tayouan, they adopted a resolution: "Assuming that the Japanese merchants will not be able to load such a large amount of deerskins onto their junks, their best strategy would be to purchase some other junks here to help them. Since the effect of the passes issued by the Shogun would not cover junks other than the ones which they have brought here, we decided, in order to avoid difficulties in the future and improve the Company's deerskin trade, that the Japanese are only allowed to export deerskins in the amount that their own junks can carry."<sup>76</sup> The Japanese were compelled to accept this restriction, and left Taiwan. They arrived in Japan in about August 1627 with resentment. As a countermeasure, they carried 16 aborigines of Sinkan in order to prove that, "they visited several years in Tayouan Bay bearing the passes issued by the Shogun; Tayouan did not belong

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<sup>73</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. I: 1622-1626, pp. 282-283.

<sup>74</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 Novmber 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (24 June 1626), fos. 340<sup>v</sup>-341<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 Novmber 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (13 Feb. 1627), fo. 382<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> VOC 1093, Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 Novmber 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (27 Feb. 1627), fo. 383<sup>r</sup>.

to the Dutch. They wanted those aborigines of Sinkan to claim that they welcome the Shogunal subjects as well as the Dutch.”<sup>77</sup> They believed that, although whether Japanese would be allowed to proceed with trade with Chinese merchants was uncertain when Chinese officials forbade their subjects to trade along the China coast, the trade between Japanese and aborigines in Taiwan should not under the regulation of the Dutch. The Nagasaki governor Heizo supposed this reason could find firm ground in the Shogunal court, and brought the Taiwanese aborigines to support his argument. In the end, although the Shogunal court decided not to interfere in affairs in Taiwan, they refused to recognize the self-claimed sovereignty of the Dutch over Taiwan Bay.<sup>78</sup> Both Japanese and Dutch intended to use the aborigines’ claims to legitimize their legal status on the Bay of Tayouan to trade with Chinese. In the meantime, the Taiwan authorities detected that some Japanese traders had not returned to Japan with Heizo’s junks but stayed in aborigines’ villages. After sending out 50 soldiers to search for them, six Japanese were caught in the village of Soulang on 30 September 1627.<sup>79</sup> It is believed some of them were hiding in the village Mattau in order to join Chinese adventurers infiltrating from Wankan. Those Japanese must have urged the aborigines of Soulang and Mattau to take action in claiming their sovereignty and thus to exclude the Dutch intervention. Consequentially, when Governor Pieter Nuijts finished his diplomatic mission in Japan and returned to Taiwan on 24 December 1627 the heads of aborigines’ villages soon requested that he contribute yearly gifts in return for

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<sup>77</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. II: 1627-1629, p. 281.

<sup>78</sup> VOC 1095, *Journal van de reijse gedaen door Pieter Nuijts ende Pieter Muijser als ambassadeurs vanwegen de gouverneur general aenden keijser en rijcxraden van Japan, eerst met het schip Woerden van Tayouan near Firando, ende van daer te water naer Osacca ende voorts over Meaco te lande tot in de stadt Edo, vanden 24 Julij 1627 dat uijt Taijouan sijn vertrocken, Taiwan and Japan (24 Jul. 1627 - 4 Mar. 1628), on Ship Woerden (18 Feb. 1628), fos. 457<sup>f-v</sup>. When Pieter Nuijts replied to the question raised by an Elder of the Shogunal court, Itami Yasukatsu, on 4 October 1627, Pieter Nuijts also argued that aborigines agreed to let the Dutch build a fort and requested protection from the Dutch. When the Dutch intervened in the strife among local tribes, they automatically exercised the Dutch sovereignty there. Yasukatsu did not accept this justification. Nuijts was therefore also denied a meeting with the Shogun. See also Yōko Nagazumi, trans., *Hirado Oranda shōkan no nikki* [Diary of the Dutch Factory in Hirado] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1969), Vol. I: 1627.7-1630.10, pp. 31-32.*

<sup>79</sup> VOC 1093, *Resolutiën genomen bij de gouverneur Martinus Sonck in Pescadores en op Tayouan van 4 Augustus 1624 tot 27 Augustus 1625 tot dat overladen is, mitsgaders bij den commandeur Gerrit Fredericksen de Wit ende den raet in Tayouan van 19 September 1625 tot den 18 November 1627, the Pescadores and Taiwan, 4 Aug. 1624 - 18 Nov. 1627, Taiwan (28, 30 Sept. 1627), fos. 387<sup>f-v</sup>.*

acknowledgment of the Dutch presence.<sup>80</sup> Nuijts reported: "...shortly after we arrived [in Taiwan] the heads of the four villages nearby, Sincan, Bacaluan, Mattau and Soulang, came to us, demanding from us with brusque arrogance a yearly allowance and claiming that it was customary, because we were staying on their land."<sup>81</sup> Foreseeing this, the governor Nuijts had forbidden any deerskin trade between Japanese and aborigines after the Heizo junks departed to Japan in July 1627. This action must have also contributed to the aborigines' anger.<sup>82</sup> In the following year, when Heizō's junks visited Taiwan again, the Dutch controlled all the trade with the Chinese and aborigines by force, and excluded the Japanese. This trade conflict ended up in violence, and the Japan-Dutch trade ceased for several years, from 1628 to about 1633.<sup>83</sup>

From the above developments we can infer motivation to seize deerskin trade for the Company. Before 1636, the Company had not yet obtained sufficient power to force the aborigines to submit their sovereignty to the Dutch republic, but the immediate competition caused by the Japanese traders required aborigines to acquiesce to the Dutch regulations on this trade. The Company had to watch over the contacts of aborigines with the Chinese and Japanese. Due to this concern, they had to undertake the deerskin trade by themselves, despite its relatively humble value.

#### 4. Closure of Japan and Its Impacts on Dutch Deerskin Trade

The Dutch factory in Siam shipped about 46,000 deerskins in the summer

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<sup>80</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. II: 1627-1629, p. 95.

<sup>81</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 74.

<sup>82</sup> *De Missiven van Gouverneur in Taiwan*, Vol. II: 1627-1629, pp. 16-17.

<sup>83</sup> There have been lots of studies about this conflict, see Yōko Nagazumi, *Shuinsen* [Red-seal Junks] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001), pp. 170-197; Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 60-67; Kaim Ang, "Hsin-kang you-ke Tai-wan-wang: Shih-chi shih-chi tung-ya kuo-chia chu-chuan fen-cheng hsiao cha-chu [King of Taiwan in *Sincan*: Disputes over Taiwan's Sovereign Rights in 17th Century]," *Taiwan Historical Research* (Taipei) 15: 2 (June 2008), pp. 1-14; Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 171-179.

of 1626.<sup>84</sup> In the autumn of 1627, the Dutch factory in Japan received 97,875 deerskins from Siam.<sup>85</sup> Not only was the amount increasing, but the quality also improved when the packing problem was gradually solved.<sup>86</sup> From 1628 onwards, it became apparent that the Siamese-Japanese traders (who were also predominantly Roman Catholic) would not be allowed to participate in any further trade when the Catholic Portuguese mariners were cut off from the junks bound for Japan because of the prohibition on their nationality implemented by the Shogunal court. Although this change greatly opened up prospects for deerskins exports in Siam, the sudden halt of Dutch-Japanese trade in the same year caused by the Dutch-Japanese competition in Taiwan extinguished any further hope of trading in Japan.<sup>87</sup> This deadlock of commercial conflict between the Dutch and Japanese broke out after the Shogunal Court gradually implemented the 'closure' policy, which reduced the number of Japanese junks, and eventually forbade any Japanese abroad after 1634.

Before this closure policy was fully implemented, the Japanese market re-opened to the Dutch in December of 1632. One year before that, the Japanese traders had returned to Taiwan. When the Japanese traders arrived in Taiwan, the Dutch had suffered the aftermath of the previous Dutch-Japanese conflict in Tayouan Bay, and their attempt to cut the aborigines off from Chinese adventurers had little success.

To secure the deerskin trade so no more leverage could be provided to Japanese traders who challenged the Dutch sovereignty over the Bay of Tayouan, the governor, Nuijts, took an action against those Sinkandian villagers who had gone to Japan in January 1629, which was upgraded to a punitive expedition when those who were convicted fled.<sup>88</sup> His aim was to prevent any further contact between the aborigines and any buyer such as Chinese peddlers, Japanese merchants and Japan-based Chinese, except the Dutch. In the following summer, governor Nuijts personally led about 70 troops to search for Chinese pirates who seemed to be hiding in the village of Mattau. They were ambushed

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<sup>84</sup> VOC 854, Missive van Batavia naer Teijouhan aen commandeur [Gerrit Fredericksen] de Witt, per de jachten Heusden ende Sloten geschreven, Batavia (10 May 1627), fo. 61<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>85</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Japan [naar Batavia aen Ed. heer gouverneur generael Jan Pieterzoon Coen], Firando (1 Oct. 1627), fo. 272.

<sup>86</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Firando naar Siam aen [director] Adriaen de Marees, Firando (29 Oct. 1627), fo. 296.

<sup>87</sup> George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand*, p. 56.

<sup>88</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, pp. 140-141.

by Mattau villagers and barely returned to Tayouan Bay. Later the villagers of Mattau along with Bacaluan burned down the houses of the Dutch in Sinkan, and destroyed all Dutch livestock and cowsheds, stables and goatsheds in the settlement nearby. The Soulang villagers also killed a Dutch person who had been introduced to them to learn the local language.<sup>89</sup> In 1630, the newly arrived Dutch governor Hans Putmans thus decided to take up arms against the aborigines, and first dispatched 230 soldiers to burn down most of the Bacaluan village.<sup>90</sup> As a result, in February of 1630, the Mattau villagers agreed to sign a truce with the Dutch authorities for 9 months. By this truce the company earned the right to monitor the Chinese population by levying a head-tax on them in Mattau village.<sup>91</sup>

The alternative export path with the Japan-based Chinese traders, soon resumed in the Wankan-Mattau area. The Mattau villagers welcomed the Chinese middlemen to stay in their villages for deerskin trading. The Chinese peddlers and middlemen revived the deerskin collection network, and five Japanese junks visited Tayouan Bay, carrying away 61,000 deerskins in the summer of 1631.<sup>92</sup> Since the Japan trade was in a frozen status for the Dutch, the Taiwan authorities did not prevent this trade. Among the five junks, four nominally belonged to Japanese, but the actual traders onboard were Japan-based Chinese.<sup>93</sup> These Japanese traders visited Taiwan when the Siamese deerskin exports were suffering from domestic political disturbances and had not yet resumed their normal amount. In December 1628, Siamese King Songt'am died, and the juvenile prince Jett'a was enthroned. The leader of the Japanese community, Yamada Nagamasa, was involved in the subsequent political strife amongst nobles and ministers, and unfortunately stood against the powerful usurper, Okya Clahom, who later became King Prasat T'ong. Yamada was poisoned to death, and later the Japanese community became a target of the king's suspicion.<sup>94</sup> The Dutch authorities in Batavia received the news that the

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<sup>89</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 154.

<sup>90</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, p. 165; *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, pp. 4-5 (23 Nov. 1629).

<sup>91</sup> *The Formosan Encounter*, Vol. I: 1623-1635, pp. 171-172; *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, pp. 11-12 (1-3, Feb. 1630).

<sup>92</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, pp. 51 (23 June 1631), 53 (9 July 1631).

<sup>93</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Firando naar [schipper] Willem Jansen, Firando, 18 July 1631, fo. 470.

<sup>94</sup> Sakae Miki, *The Exploits of Okya Senaphimocq (Yamada Nagamasa), the Japanese General in Siam in the Seventeenth Century* (Tokyo: Sakae Miki, 1931), pp. 16-21.



King Prasat T'ong intended to attack the Japanese quarter in Ayutthaya with 4,000 men in 1630. The Japanese were warned in advance and sailed away on vessels from Chao Phraya River. The Japanese inhabitants fled to Cambodia on about 100 vessels.<sup>95</sup> This domestic mayhem caused a reduction in Siamese deerskin exports. Because Yamada and his fellow Japanese residents used to be the most active merchants in this business, the seasonal hunt was affected. Originally there were 150,000 to 200,000 deerskins exported annually, but this plummeted to 25,000 to 20,000 skins from 1630 to 1632.<sup>96</sup> After Japan reopened its gates to the Dutch in 1632, a Dutch vessel was only able to carry

**Table 4 Price of deerskins sold in Japan (1624-1633)**

Year	Taiwan (Taels per hundred skins)	Siam (Taels per hundred skins)
1624	21 <sup>97</sup>	Three kinds 22 Barigas 31 Cabessa 36 <sup>98</sup>
1625	21 <sup>99</sup>	
1626	26 <sup>100</sup>	
1630	32 <sup>101</sup>	Three kinds 20 Barigas 32 Cabessas 40 <sup>102</sup>
1631	34 <sup>103</sup>	
1633		Three kinds 30 Brigas 36 Cabessa 55 <sup>104</sup>

<sup>95</sup> H. T. Colenbrander, ed., *Dagh-Register Gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant Passerende Daer ter Plaetse als over Geheel Nederlandts-India* (s'-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1898), [Vol. II:] Anno 1631-1634, p. 53 (5 Dec. 1631).

<sup>96</sup> VOC 1113, Missive van Joost Schoten uijt Siam naar Japan aen Pieter van Santen, Ayutthaya (8 July 1633), fo. 347<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>97</sup> Pieter van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, ed., F. W. Stapel (s'-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), Book 2, part 1, p. 415. Hereafter "*Beschryvinge*".

<sup>98</sup> NFJ 482 Missive van Japan naar Batavia aen Ed. heer gouverneur generael Pieter de Carpentier, Firando (30 Nov. 1624), not foliated. It records different prices, as Three-kinds could be sold for 35, 35 1/2 and 36 taels.

<sup>99</sup> *Beschryvinge*, Book 2, part1, p. 415.

<sup>100</sup> *Beschryvinge*, Book 2, part1, p. 415.

<sup>101</sup> *Beschryvinge*, Book 2, part1, p. 415.

<sup>102</sup> *Beschryvinge*, Book 2, part1, p. 415.

<sup>103</sup> Takashi Nakamura, "Wei-jao T'ai-wan te jih-lan kuan-his: Bin-t'ien-mi-ping-wei te he-lan-jen kung-chi," p. 114. Prof. Nakamura did not identify from which source he extracted this information.

<sup>104</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Siam aen opperhoofd sr. Joost Schoutens, Osacca, 20 Oct. 1633, fo. 20.

11,725 deerskins from Siam to Japan in 1633.<sup>105</sup> The difficulty in getting deerskins from Siam made the Japanese traders turn to Taiwanese deerskins as a replacement, contributing to its higher price, as the Table 4.

When the Taiwan deerskins' price rose in 1630 and the Siamese deerskin exports were stalled, the Japanese merchants immediately sought deerskins from Taiwan. As mentioned before, in the summer of 1631 five Japanese junks carried away about 70,000 deerskins from Taiwan. They must thus have enjoyed the profits that used to be earned by the Siamese deerskins. More Japan-based Chinese merchants soon followed suit. In 1632, a Japanese junk carrying 30,000 deerskins and other goods arrived in Taiwan from Siam. Most of its passengers were Chinese, and they remained there for winter.<sup>106</sup> In this way they may have developed connections with local Chinese middlemen in collecting deerskins. Afterwards, in the following spring of 1633, a Chinese merchant, Kiko, was entrusted by the Governor of Nagasaki, Takenaka Shigeyoshi, with capital to trade in Taiwan. It was said that he bore a pass issued by Takenaka and a recommendation letter from the Dutch senior merchant, Cornelis Nieuweroode, in order to purchase rare goods for the shogun directly.<sup>107</sup> The Dutch authorities thus would not dare to prevent their trade. Together with three other junks (all equipped by Chinese in Japan) that departed from Nagasaki, they carried about 26,000 taels of silver to Taiwan. After trading with the Chinese adventurers, they left Taiwan in July under consent of the Dutch authorities. They purchased merely a few raw silks (60 picols) and other silk products along with 22,000 deerskins at the price of 11.5-12 taels (per hundred skins for the three kinds). Around the time of those Japanese junks' arrival, the Governor, Putmans, also received the news that the Shogunal court had lifted the ban on Dutch ships.<sup>108</sup> Governor Putmans decided to join the price battle in collecting deerskins with

<sup>105</sup> VOC 1113, Missive van Joost Schouten uijt Siam naar Batavia aen Ed heer gouverneur generael Hendrick Brouwer [over Japan], Ayuttahaya (8 July 1633), fo. 344<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>106</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 77 (27 Oct. 1632).

<sup>107</sup> VOC 1109, Resolutie bij gouverneur Putmans ende den raedt in Tayouan van dato 28 Januarij 1633 op het vertreck van Willem Jansen genomen, Taiwan (28 Jan. 1633), fo. 220<sup>v</sup>. The governor of Nagasaki was named 'Onnemonddomme', which is an official title and at the time refers to 'Takenaka Shigeyoshi 竹中重義'. See Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo, ed., *Diaries Kept by the Heads of the Dutch Factory in Japan* (Tokyo: Yoshida Printing Co., 1974), Vol. I: 6 Sept. 1633-31 Dec. 1635, p. 29, note 74. The Chinese merchant 'Kiko' has the Japanese name 'Kiemon 喜右衛門'. See Yōko Nagazumi, "He-lan te T'ai-wan mau-i [The Dutch Taiwan Trade]," in Naojirō Murakami, et al., *He-lan shih-tai T'ai-wan shih lun-wen-chi* [Studies on Taiwan History under the Dutch], trans., Hsien-yao Hsu, p. 322 (note 132).

<sup>108</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 84 (16-17, Jan. 1633).

these Japanese traders (actually Chinese residents in Japan). Because of this free competition in collecting deerskins, the Dutch merchants had to pay 2 taels more for each kind of deerskins that they had ordered from the Chinese middlemen before.<sup>109</sup> After the Japanese junks departed, the Taiwan authorities were still able to send 16,500 deerskins to Japan.<sup>110</sup> Besides, they had also planned to ship another 56,000 skins from the Taijouan warehouse but failed.<sup>111</sup> As Table 3 shows, the total amount of deerskin exports from Taiwan in 1633 was 94,500 skins. Since Japanese junks departed from Taijouan in July and the Dutch planned to ship 56,000 deerskins in the middle of August, apparently the Dutch authorities won this price competition for collecting deerskins. As mentioned before, the tension between the Dutch and aborigines made it difficult for the middlemen to access villages north of Mattau. The Dutch authorities thus took up arms against the Chinese middlemen who stayed in those villages and supported the Japanese. Chinese middlemen on the Dutch side had requested protection from the Dutch force when purchasing deerskins from aborigines' villages, probably even to exclude the middlemen who intended to cooperate with the Japanese traders. On 13 March 1633, Taiwan authorities dispatched a yacht with two Chinese junks to the Wankan area in order to capture three junks which they suspected would plunder other Chinese junks which intended to purchase deerskins from there. Long before this request, the Dutch authorities had issued these three junks with passes to practice trade in the Wankan area in the end of February. Their anchorage was at "Haijoncot", the waters just outside the Soulang River. The leader of this patrol squadron, Claes Jansen, was ordered to use disguises in order to access the targeted junks without stirring awareness. And those susceptible pirates were to be taken back to Tayouan harbor alive.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Batavia aen de Ed. heer gouverneur generael Hendrik Brouwer, Osaka (20 Oct. 1633), fo. 5.

<sup>110</sup> VOC 1113, Facture van de coopmanschappen door Hans Putmans gescheept ende gelaeden in het schip Venlo, gaende naer Japan in Firando, gerichtaen den president Nicolaes Couckebacker, Chiulung River (17 Aug. 1633), fo. 629. Another copy see NFJ 762, the same title, no folio number.

<sup>111</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Tayouan aen de Ed. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans, Osaka (20 Oct. 1633), fo. 17. The Dutch had planned to use yacht the *Brouwerhaven* to carry 56,000 deerskins from Taijouan. However, from other sources it was curtained that it did not reach Japan but stroke by typhoon after it departed. It went aground at southwest coast of Taiwan while the hulk remained mostly intact. The Taiwan authorities later dispatched several junks to unload and save its cargo. See *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 111.

<sup>112</sup> VOC 1113, Instructie voor Claes Jansen schipper opt jacht de Kemphaen gaende met twee Chinese joncquen omme de Noort, Taiwan (13 Mar. 1633), fo. 756f; *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, pp. 86-87 (13 Mar. 1633).

In this way the Dutch authorities curbed any middlemen who preferred to sell goods to the Japanese. This record also revealed that Chinese middlemen departed from Tayouan and sailed north to Wankan, Gillim and Begilim to purchase deerskins which used to be collected in Wankan by Chinese adventurers and delivered to Japanese junk traders as mentioned earlier.

In the following year of 1634, the aforementioned Chinese merchant in Japan, Kiko, applied for a recommendation letter from the Dutch senior merchant Pieter van Santen, but was refused. This was because his patron, Takenaka Shigeyoshi, was taken into custody due to infringing on the Shogunal privilege of issuing passes for foreign trade. Additionally, the Shogun Hidetada passed away and the court became too busy to deal with the issue of the trading status of Taiwan.<sup>113</sup> Although Japanese traders were cut off from foreign trade by their own government, the shogunal passes may still have been issued to the Chinese junks intending to visit other harbors in Southeast Asia. The question was how Taiwan's authorities should deal with this kind of Chinese traders. In the summer of 1634, the Governor General Hendrick Brouwer wrote to the senior merchant in Japan, mentioning that an order was given to the Governor of Taiwan, Putmans: "He should attack all Japan-based Chinese junks which seek to trade in Taiwan without proper documents, without giving any warning in advance, and confiscate all crew and wares. He should send those Chinese in custody with the first departing ship to Batavia, where the head would be sentenced to death, but his company would be excused. But if he were a Japanese smuggler who appeared in Taiwan, in order to avoid any offence to Japan, he should only avoid any contact and trade. He should only accept the Japanese junks equipped with authentic passes from the Shogun and should trade with them."<sup>114</sup> Before Putmans received this letter in Taiwan, a Japanese junk arrived in Tayouan harbor from Cambodia bearing an outdated pass issued by Takenaka in May 1634. Governor Putmans required them to purchase deerskins at the price that the Dutch had already settled with the Chinese middlemen, but the Japanese traders violated this regulation. The price was driven up to 9 1/2 taels and even to 11 taels. The governor Putmans thus claimed all deerskins carried by small boats to Tayouan harbor should be provided to the Dutch

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<sup>113</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Tayouan aen de Ed. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans, Firando (15 Feb.1634), fo. 57.

<sup>114</sup> NFJ 277, Missive sendt door Hendrick Brouwer van Batavia naar Japan aen mr. Nikolaes Kouckebacker, Batavia (24 May 1634), fos. 39-40; Yōko Nagazumi, "He-lan te Taiwan mau-i," p. 286. My translation is slightly different from Prof. Nagazumi.

authorities with priority.<sup>115</sup> Anyway, the Dutch authorities in Taiwan realized that the Chinese traders in Japan were not able to compete with them, because no more Shogunal passes would be issued to them, and they had no more strong patrons to be their backup either. As Table 3 shows, 89,300 deerskins were collected from the aborigines' villages that year. Thus, although the Japanese challenge to the Dutch claim of sovereignty was no longer a threat for the Taiwan authorities and the motivation to exclude Japanese from deerskin trade also faded away, the Company gladly received this fruit as a by-product of their violent intervention. The Chinese middlemen were tamed in the process, from 1624 to 1634. Without Japanese competitors now, the Dutch became the only price maker in the deerskin trade of Taiwan. They eventually took over the Wankan-Mattau network of collecting the deerskins and began to use it to meet the supply gap left by Siamese deerskins.

## **5. Abnormal Expansion of Taiwan Deerskin Exports in the Late 1630s**

Because Japan opened its gates to the Dutch again at the end of 1632, the Company accordingly opened its Siamese factory in 1633 and began to export Siamese deerskins. The aftermath of political turbulence continued, and the Dutch merchants could not purchase from Japanese collectors but only from some adventurers, so the amount was low, only 11,725 skins.<sup>116</sup> When the following harvest season of deerskins began in September 1633 (in preparation to ship them in 1634), the Dutch senior merchant Joost Schoten eventually signed contracts with some Japanese traders for purchasing deerskins.<sup>117</sup> After Japanese inhabitants gradually returned to Ayutthaya, the deerskin collecting business had also revived. In 1634, the Dutch obtained 71,700 deerskins from

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<sup>115</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 176 (29 May 1634).

<sup>116</sup> VOC 1113, Missive van Joost Schouten uijt Siam naar Batavia aen Ed. heer gouverneur generael Hendrick Brouwer [over Japan], Ayutthaya (8 July 1633), fo. 344<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>117</sup> VOC 1109, Extract uijt de journaelse aenteijckeninghe van 't notabelste, dat in 's Compagnies affairen, onder de directie van mij Joost Schouten voorgevallen is, sedert 10 April 1633 dat met 't schip Delff als opperhoofd nae Siam (om 't comptoir te restabileeren) vertrocken ben, tot op 6 November volgende dat 't schip Hoorn nae Battavia is gedepascheert, Ayutthaya (13 Sept. 1633), fo. 48<sup>f</sup>.

there.<sup>118</sup> The following year, 1635, 49,800 deerskins were sent to Japan from Siam.<sup>119</sup> In 1636, there were 50,000 deerskins exported by the Dutch.<sup>120</sup> Since, as mentioned before, the Siamese field was able to provide about 200,000 skins, the revival of the deerskins export in Siam was not exactly ideal. Furthermore, the old problem of the deerskin packing continued to vex the Dutch merchants, because most skillful Japanese craftsmen were lost during the political dismay. This problem was only solved when a group of Chinese craftsmen were eventually able to replace the Japanese there in 1637. As the Dutch merchant van Vliet reported:

Complaints that we received from Japan each year due to the deerskins' packing, have been solved after this harvest of deerskins in a totally different way. The Japanese craftsmen who collected, flattened, dried and cleaned the deerskins in previous days are no longer hired. This year, Chinese have taken charge of the packing job. Japanese inhabitants here imagined that no one could pack the deerskins as they did, and we would not be able to process them without their help. They believed this arrogant principle and were convinced that (when we were forbidden by the tyrannical king to hire any craftsmen) they would never come to Dutch factory to bind deerskins unless the Dutch senior merchants visited their leader (a Siamese official) with presents. If the leader consented and his hands were kissed with courtesy and the wages were doubled, they should be willing to work. However when we heard about such arrogant words, we began to hire Chinese. We then saw a marvelous change, as the arrogance of the Japanese diminished. The

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<sup>118</sup> VOC 1118, Missive [door het Siam opperhoofd Joost Schouten] naer [de Ed. heer Hans Putmans gouverneur tot] Taijouan, Ayuttahaya (26 June 1634), fo. 28<sup>r</sup>; NFJ 762, Factura van de coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door d' E. Joost Schoutens opperhoofd opt comptoir Siam, in 't schip (dat godt bewaert) genaempt 't Wapen van Delft daer oppercoopman op is Jan Coen, ende schipper Willem Janssen vertreckende van hier nae Jappan sijnde geconsingneert aen d' E. Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd op 't comptoir Firando, Ayuttahaya (10 July 1634), not foliated.

<sup>119</sup> NFJ 762, Factura van de coopmanschappen gscheept ende geladen door d' E. Joost Schouten opperhoofd op 't comptoir Siam in 't schip dat godt beware genaemt Huijsduijnen gaende van hier (onder cognossement van den schipper Pieter Omnisz. ende coopman Mattijs Andriesz. geconsingneert aen d' E. Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd op 't comptoir Firando, Ayuttahaya (30 July 1635), not foliated; NFJ 762, Factura van de coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door d' E. Joost Schouten opperhoofd op comptoir Siam, in 't schip dat godt beware genaemt Warmont gaende van hier (onder cognossement van den schipper Floris Jansz. ende coopman Jan de Waert naer Japan geconsingneert aen d' E. Niloclaes Couckebacker opperhoofd op 't Comptoir firando, Ayuttahaya (not dated, 1635), not foliated.

<sup>120</sup> NFJ 763, Factura van de coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door uijt Jerenmas van Vliet coopman over 's Compagnies comptoiren in Siam met het schip (dat godt beware) genaempt Noortwycq naer ende van hier onder cognossement van de schipper Floris Jansz. ende coopman Gillus de Garges nae Japan, geconsingneert aen d' E. Nicolaes Couckebacker president, Ayuttahaya (19 July 1636), not foliated.

representatives of the Japanese quarter complained about the poverty of their people, and about how the low wages for deerskin and ray-fish-skin packing (that they were hired to do in our lodge) could barely feed them. If we hired the Chinese, they would fall into a bigger crisis. Besides, they [being Japanese] have been despised by the king, officials and common people there, and such contempt has been spreading to other countries such as Japan, CochinChina and Cambodia etc. We told those representatives about the constant pressures from Japan. Each year we had received complaints from Japan, therefore we had urged them to improve the packaging quality from time to time politely. Thereafter, the quality had gone from bad to worse. So we hired Chinese to pack deerskins with far lower wages than the Japanese craftsmen, and we would not withdraw this decision.<sup>121</sup>

Knowing that the Siamese deerskin supply was not stable in quantity and quality, it becomes easier to understand why the Dutch authorities kept their eye on the deerskin exports in Taiwan. If we compare the profits earned per hundred deerskins in Japan that were purchased separately in Siam and Taiwan during 1634-1636, the result shows clearly that the profit margin of Taiwanese deerskins was gradually matching up with the Siamese deerskins.

After 1634, the risk of Japanese merchants challenging Dutch sovereignty on Taiwan was no more. It was also from the same year, 1634, onwards, that the strife with the Chinese officials and pirates was gradually eased, and consequently the Dutch governor, Hans Putmans, in Taiwan was able to focus his full attention on improving the deerskin collection.<sup>122</sup> Meanwhile, the Chinese middlemen were gradually brought in under Dutch protection and surveillance as a consequence of several Dutch expeditions to the aborigines' villages during 1628 to 1635. Apart from that, as mentioned above, the Dutch merchants in Siam were not able to fully tackle the processing and packing problems of deerskins in Siam until 1637. The Siamese deerskin exports were still under recovery and could not meet the demands of the Japanese market, while the profit margins of Taiwanese deerskins were becoming equal to those of the Siamese deerskins, and became the best replacement. Furthermore, there

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<sup>121</sup> VOC 1125, Missive gesonden bij Jeremias van Vliet tot Siam aen president Nicolaes Couckebacker tot Firando, Ayutthaya (29 June 1637), fo. 558<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>122</sup> Pol Heyns, "Deer Hunting in Dutch Formosa," pp. 67-68; Thomas O. Höllman, "Formosa and the Trade in Vension and Deerskins," p. 274; Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 303; Yung-ho Ts'ao, *Chin-shih t'ai-wan lu-p'i mao-i k'ao: Ch'ing-nien ts'ao-yung-ho te hsueh-shu-ch'i-hang*, pp. 158-178; Hsin-hui Chiu, *The Colonial 'Civilizing Process' in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662*, pp. 65-66.

were some other factors preventing the Dutch merchants from obtaining deerskins from Siam in later years, through 1637-1639. The Japanese political refugees who had fled from Ayutthaya settled down in Quinam, and from there they wanted to resume their prominent status in the deerskin exports from Cambodia and Siam. In the spring of 1637, four Japan-based Chinese junks suddenly appeared in Cambodia. They were financed by Japanese merchants in Quinam, and brought big capital to purchase deerskins. This move drove the deerskin prices in Siam up, which compelled the Dutch to also raise the amount of their payment. Two of those junks were loaded with 30,000 Cambodia deerskins and left to Japan that year. The Dutch factory in Siam thus could not enjoy the fruits of the revival of deerskins exports as expected.<sup>123</sup> Those Japan-based Chinese traders went to Siam and purchased deerskins in the following year, 1638, at a dear price of two taels more per hundred skins for all kinds of deerskins.<sup>124</sup>

Eagerly seeking a replacement deerskin supply in Taiwan, the Dutch authorities swept their neighbor aborigines' villages starting in late 1635 and established control covering Mattau, Soulang, Baccalouan and Sinkan, with proper treaties of sovereignty transition. In the name of these treaties, in about 1636, the governor Hans Putmans introduced a deer hunting license system. By issuing deer hunting licenses to Chinese hunters, he expected to enlarge the deerskin exports under a fixed purchasing price. Coincidentally, the aborigines' villages were struck by an epidemic for a few years after 1635. The epidemic de-populated aboriginal hunters, and thus allowed Chinese hunters to fill the vacancy. All those factors, the seizure of the Mattau-Wankan networks, the control over Chinese middlemen and the introduction of Chinese hunters, contributed to the peak of Taiwanese deerskin exports in 1638 and 1639, which was driven by the Dutch authorities' desire to find a supplement to fill the deerskin demand in the Japanese market that Siamese deerskins used to supply. As Table 2 shows, this peak of deerskin exports during 1638-1639 (148,910 and 131,301 skins) became the all-time peak, never to be broken in the years that followed. In 1637, only 43,793 Siamese deerskins arrived in Japan.<sup>125</sup> A suddenly

<sup>123</sup> W. P. Coolhaas, J. van Goor, and J. E. Schooneveld-Oosterling, eds., *Generale Missiven van Gouverneur-Generaal en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, Deel 1: 1610-1638, p. 642.

<sup>124</sup> VOC 1127, Missive van den gecommiteerde Jeremias van Vliet naar Batavia [aen d'Edele heer Anthonio van Diemen gouverneur generael], Ayuttahaya, 22 Oct. 1638, fos. 304<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> NFJ 483, Missive door Nicolaes Kouckebacker naar Siam aen opperhoofd d' E Jan Dircxz Galen, Firando (1 Dec. 1637), fo. 333.



**Table 5 Comparison of Deerskin Profits from Siam and Taiwan (per hundred skins)**

Year	Deerskin purchase price in Siam (taels)*	Deerskin selling price in Japan (taels)	Profit (%)	Deerskin purchase price in Taiwan	Deerskin selling price in Japan (taels)	Profit (%)
1634	Threesorts 10-14 Cabessa 16 Barigas 14 <sup>126</sup>	Threesorts 30-34 Cabessa 57 Barigas 37 <sup>127</sup>	114-240 256 164	Cabessa 13 Barigas 11 Pee 5.5 <sup>128</sup> 9 1/2 <sup>129</sup>	Cabessa 32 Barigas 22 Pee 12 <sup>130</sup>	146 100 118
1635	Threesorts 11-13 Barriga 14 <sup>131</sup>	Threesorts 45-55 Barriga 60	246-400 328	Cabessa 12 Barriga 10 Pee 5 <sup>132</sup>	Cabessa 38-51:5 Barriga 25-36:8 Pee 12-17:5 <sup>133</sup>	216-329 150-268 140-250
1636	Threesorts 10 1/2 Barriga 13 1/2 Pee 5:7 <sup>134</sup>	Threesorts 35 Barriga 45-30 Pee 15 <sup>135</sup>	233 122-233 163	Cabessa 13 Barriga 11 Pee 5 1/2 <sup>136</sup>	Cabessa 45 Barriga 34 Pee 14 <sup>137</sup>	246 209 154

<sup>126</sup> NFJ 762, Factura van de coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door d' E. Joost Schoutens opperhoofd op 't comptoir, Siam in 't schip (dat godtt bewaert) genaempt 't Wapen van Delft daer oppercoopman op is Jan Coen, ende schipper Willem Janssen vertreckende van hier nae Jappan sijnde geconsingneert aen d' E. Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd opt Comptoir Firando, Ayuttahaya (10 July 1634), not foliated. Each Japanese tael equals 71 stuivers while 1 Siamese tael equals 120 stuivers.

<sup>127</sup> VOC 1114, Missive van president Nicolaes Couckebacker uijt Firando aen den heer Joost Schoutens [in Siam], Firando (24 Nov. 1634), fo. 184<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>128</sup> NFJ 762, Factura vande naergenomineerde coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen (door ordre van d' E. heer Hans Putmans gouverneur) in 't jacht dat godt bewaere gnaempt Bredamme gaende van hier onder cognossement vanden schipper ende coopman van 'tselve jacht naer Jappan geconsingneert aen d' E. president Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd over des Compagnies negotie op 't comptoir Firando, The Pescadores (12 Aug. 1634), not foliated.

<sup>129</sup> *Zeelandia Dagregisters*, Deel I: 1629-1641, p. 176 (29 May 1634). Japanese merchants pay at this price.

<sup>130</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Tayouan aen de Ed. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans, Firando (24 Nov. 1634), fo. 97.

<sup>131</sup> NFJ 762, Factura van de coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door d' E. Joost Schouten opperhoofd op comptoir Siam, in 't schip dat godt bewaere genaemt Warmont gaende van hier (onder cognossement van den schipper Floris Jansz. ende coopman Jan de Waert naer Japan geconsingneert aen d' E. Nicolaes Couckebacker opperhoofd op 't comptoir firando, Ayuttahaya (not dated, 1635), not foliated.

<sup>132</sup> NFJ 763, Factura van coopmanschappen gescheept door ordre van gouverneur Hans Putmans in 't schip Amsterdam, gaende van Pescadores naer Japan; gericht aen president Nicolaes Couckebacker, The Pescadores (18 Aug. 1635), not foliated.

<sup>133</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Nicolaes Kouckebacker naer Taijouan aen de Ed. heer gouverneur Hans Putmans, Firando (13 Nov. 1635), fo. 174.

<sup>134</sup> VOC 1120, Prijs courant van dese jarige gecomene kargoesoenen, hoe veel die incoops comen te monteeren, tot wat prijs eenige derzelver gebeneficieert, ende aen de man gehopen, Firando (not dated, 1636), fo. 669.

<sup>135</sup> NFJ 483, Missive van Japan naar Siam [aen Ed. coopman Jeremias van Vliet], Firando (17 Nov. 1636), fo. 237.

<sup>136</sup> VOC 1120, Prijs courant van dese jarige gecomene kargoesoenen, hoe veel die incoops comen te monteeren, tot wat prijs eenige derzelver gebeneficieert, ende aen de man gehopen, Firando (not dated, 1636), fo. 669.

1637	Barriga 7:6 Pee 4:2 <sup>138</sup>	Threesorts 37 Schangamaes 59 <sup>139</sup>		Cabessa 13 Barriga 11.8 Pee 5.4 <sup>140</sup>	Cabessa 50 Barriga 35 1/2 Pee 21 <sup>141</sup>	384 300 388
1638	Barriga 7:6 Pee 4:2 <sup>142</sup>	Higher than last year.		As above.	Higher than last year. <sup>143</sup>	
1640	Threesorts 10:9 Cobito 8:4 Pee 5:0:7 <sup>144</sup>	Threesorts 28 Cobito 20 Pee 10 <sup>145</sup>	256	Cabessa 13 <sup>146</sup>	Cabessa 22 <sup>147</sup>	169
1641	Threesorts 9:7 Barriga 8:0:2 Cobito 7:6 <sup>148</sup>	Threesorts 25 Barriga 18 Cobito 10 <sup>149</sup>	257 224 131	Cabessa 13 <sup>150</sup>	Cabessa 20:5 Barriga 12:5 Pee 8 <sup>151</sup>	157

\* The “tael” here is originally Siamese tael but for the benefits of readers, the author converted it to Japanese tael.

\*\* The deerskin are classified into three qualities: cabessa (grade A), barriga (grade B) and pee (grade C) which came from Portuguese terms for “head”, “belly” and “foot.”<sup>152</sup> “Three-sorts” is translated literally from the Dutch “3 soorten”. It is a classification by the Japanese traditional packing style. One Three-sorts pack contained 30 skins of “pee”, 13 skins of “barriga”, and 7 skins of “cabessa”.<sup>153</sup> From the middle of the 1630s, the deerskin classifications in Siam added jammana (cavalía de matta), chemen (cabessa), attamat (bariga de

<sup>137</sup> VOC 1120, Prijs courant van dese jarige gecomene kargoesoenen, hoe veel die incoops comen te monteeren, tot wat prijs eenige derzelve gebeneficiert, ende aen de man gehopen, Firando (not dated, 1636), fo. 669.

<sup>138</sup> VOC 1127, Missive van den gecommiteerde Jeremias van Vliet naar Batavia [aen d’Edele heer Anthonio van Diemen gouverneur generael], Ayuttahaya (22 Oct. 1638), fos. 304<sup>f-v</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> NFJ 483, Missive door Nicolaes Kouckebacker naar Siam aen opperhoofd d’ E. Jan Dirxsz Galen, Firando (1 Dec. 1637), fo. 333.

<sup>140</sup> J. De Hullu, ed., *Dagh-Register Gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant Passerende Daer ter Plaetse als over Geheel Nederlands-India* (s’-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1903), [Vol. VIII:] Anno 1644-1645, pp. 143-144. The price remained at this standard during 1633-1642.

<sup>141</sup> VOC 1124, Missive van president Nicolaas Couckebacker uijt Firando aen Johan van der Burch, Firando (20 Nov. 1637), fo. 90<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> VOC 1127, Missive van den gecommiteerde Jeremias van Vliet naar Batavia [aen d’Edele heer Anthonio van Diemen gouverneur generael], Ayuttahaya (22 Oct. 1638), fos. 304<sup>f-v</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo, ed., *Diaries Kept by the Heads of the Dutch Factory in Japan* (Tokyo: Yoshida Printing Co., 1977), Vol. III: 9 Aug. 1637-3 Feb. 1639, p. 316 (12 Oct. 1638).

<sup>144</sup> Hirado City Historiography Committee, ed., *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado: Journal 1640 and 1641* (Nagasaki: Hirado-shi, 1998), p. 36 (20 Aug. 1640). Hereafter “*The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*”.

<sup>145</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 135 (21 Feb. 1641).

<sup>146</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 51 (10 Sept. 1640).

<sup>147</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 135 (21 Feb. 1641).

<sup>148</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 157 (1 Aug. 1641).

<sup>149</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 157 (1 Aug. 1641).

<sup>150</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 156 (21 July 1641).

<sup>151</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, p. 176 (3 Oct. 1641).

<sup>152</sup> Thomas O. Höllman, “Formosa and the Trade in Venison and Deerskins,” p. 271 and note 40.

<sup>153</sup> NFJ 482, Missive van Firando naar Siam aen [director] Adriaen de Marees, Firando (29 Oct. 1627), fo. 296.

cabessa), bariga and pee. This means that higher quality deerskins were identified during the period. In our table, only the prices for similar grades are listed for comparison. “schangamaes” sounds like “chemen” and thus equals “cabessa”.<sup>154</sup> In a Dutch invoice, the term “cobito” is marked with Dutch “bochevellen” which means “goat skin”, so since in both Spanish and Portuguese, a similar term “cabrito” means “baby goat”, it seems possible origin of “cobito”.<sup>155</sup> The author thanks Mr. Kent Suarez for information on this special term. Although “cobito” may refer to a baby goat, it is always under the classification of “deerskin” rather than “goat skin” when listed. There is no agreement between scholars on what “cobito” actually referred to. The author suggests that it may refer to a different kind of deer which size is smaller.

enlarged amount of deerskins exports from Taiwan must have given the VOC merchants great comfort. On the other hand, the VOC authorities in Batavia thus hastily initiated contact with the King of Cambodia and established a trade eventually in 1639. In July of 1639, the Merchant Johannes van der Haegen purchased 125,083 skins of Cambodian deerskins there successfully.<sup>156</sup> Apparently the Dutch outran the Japan-based Chinese merchants there and got the cooperation of the Japanese refugees’ community there. From then on, as we see from the Table 5, the Siam deerskins regained their competitiveness in profit margins, and became cheaper and a larger supply source than Taiwan again. As the Table 6 shows, the total quantities of deerskins provided by Siam and Cambodia in sum also exceeded Taiwan’s regular supply amount in 1640. When the senior merchant in Cambodia, Johannes van der Haegen, wrote a letter to the governor of Taiwan, Jan van der Burgh, at the summer of 1639, to report his successful procurement in Cambodia, the strong drive to take the deerskins from Taiwan as seen in 1637-1639 slackened.<sup>157</sup> The Taiwan authorities accordingly began to retreat from military expansion upon aborigines’ villages, and were content with the grounds that they had already subjugated.

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<sup>154</sup> George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>155</sup> NFJ 766, Factura vande naervolgende harten rochvellen metsgaders narack bassomba sappanhout als andere coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door ordre vande Ed sr. Paulus Traudenus gouverneur dees plaetse in ’t fluijtschip dat godt beware genaemt de Zaijer gaende van hier onder congnoissement van den oppercoopman ende schipper deselfs naer Japan geconsigneert aen den E. Joan van Elsrack oppercoopman ende opperhoof over des Compagnies negotie ende vordre consitutie ofte sijn Es. gecomitteerde aldaer, alles geassorteert ende gepact als hier onder in ’t cargo te sien is, ende costen als volcht, Taiwan (20 Aug. 1642), not foliated.

<sup>156</sup> Hendrik P. N. Muller, ed., *De Oost-indische Compagnie in Cambodja en Laos: verzameling van bescheiden van 1636 tot 1670* (’s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1917), p. 141.

<sup>157</sup> Hendrik P. N. Muller, ed., *De Oost-indische Compagnie in Cambodja en Laos: verzameling van bescheiden van 1636 tot 1670*, p. 141. This letter was dated on 20 July 1639 and presumably arrived in Taiwan before April of 1640.

**Table 6 Deerskin Exports in Siam and Taiwan Arrived in Japan Carried by the VOC (1633-1642)**

year	Deerskin Exports from Siam	Deerskin Exports from Taiwan <sup>158</sup>
1633	11,725 <sup>159</sup>	16,500
1634	71,700 <sup>160</sup>	102,660
1635	49,800 <sup>161</sup>	70,060
1636	50,000 <sup>162</sup>	60,295
1637	43,793 <sup>163</sup>	81,700
1638	35,999 <sup>164</sup>	148,910
1639	-	131,301
1640	75,090 (+75,530 Cambodia) <sup>165</sup>	7,080
1641	50,370 <sup>166</sup>	62,810
1642	51,295 <sup>167</sup>	19,140

## 6. Conclusion: Deerskin Trade and Chinese Middlemen

When at the end of 1642 the Dutch Governor François Caron recognized that the Japanese demand for deerskins could be satisfied by Siam and

<sup>158</sup> See Table 2.

<sup>159</sup> See note 97.

<sup>160</sup> See note 118.

<sup>161</sup> See note 119.

<sup>162</sup> See note 120.

<sup>163</sup> NFJ 483, Missive door Nicolaes Kouckebacker naar Siam aen opperhoofd d' E Jan Dircxz Galen, Firando (1 Dec. 1637), fo. 333.

<sup>164</sup> VOC 1127, Missive van den gecommiteerde Jeremias van Vliet naar Batavia [aen d'Edele heer Anthonio van Diemen gouverneur generael], Ayuttahaya (22 Oct. 1638), fos. 304<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>165</sup> *The Account Books of the Dutch Factory in Hirado*, pp. 34 (10 Aug. 1640), 36 (20 Aug. 1640).

<sup>166</sup> NFJ 766, Factura van de naervolgende coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door mij Reijnier van Tzum coopman op 't comptoir Siam in 't schip (dat godt beware) genaempt de Coninginne gaende van hier onder cognissement van den schipper Jacob Jansen ende ondercoopman Godert Brugger na Japan geconsigneert aan den oppercoopman Maximiliaan Le Marie opperhoofd aldaar gesorteert gepackt genombeert ende costende, Ayuttahaya (20 June 1641), not foliated.

<sup>167</sup> NFJ 766, Factura van de naervolgende coopmanschappen gescheept ende geladen door mij Reijnier van Tzum opperhoofd des comptoirs Siam in 't schip dat godt beware genaempt Nassauw gaende van hier naer Japan onder cognoscement van schipper Jan Jelis ende ondercoopman Hendrick Boudewijn van Lockhorst geconsigneert aen den E. Johan van Elserack opperhoofd over 's Compagnies ommeslach aldaer geassorteert ende gepackt als hier onder in 't cargo te sien is ende costen als volcht, Ayuttahaya (18 June 1642), not foliated.

Cambodia rather than Taiwan, he also ordered that no Chinese peddlers would be allowed to live in aboriginal villages in future but would have to move to the villages under Company surveillance in the vicinities of Fort Zeelandia and Saccam. After 1644, the peddlers were no longer allowed free entry to aboriginal villages, but a number limited to between 6 and 10 of them could purchase the sole right to trade in each village.<sup>168</sup> This was a system which scholars term the village-leasing system. Under this system, the contact between aborigines and Chinese was minimized, while the trade between the aborigines and outer world continued. The Dutch authorities profited by making peddlers compete with other peddlers in the auction of the rights to certain villages. On the other hand, since the Dutch guaranteed no peddler would venture to the villages that he had not secured access rights to, the income of the authorized peddler in each village was guaranteed too. In this way the Dutch authorities satisfied the needs of the aborigines and Chinese peddlers at the same time. When the Chinese peddlers subjugated themselves to the Dutch in exchange for protection, the aborigines' consumption of foreign goods was fully under the Company's supervision. Without further material incentives, it seems that the aborigines lacked motivation to develop more connections with the outer world. Such a motivation would have mired them in diplomatic interactions inextricably bound up with the rivalries among the Europeans and the surrounding native kingdoms, not to mention developments among some other Austronesian inhabitants in the Indonesian archipelago, Philippine Islands and the *insular arc* between Taiwan and Japan, for example, the sultanate of Sulu and the kingdom of Okinawa. From this perspective, the function of the village-leasing system was more political than economic. It also explains why the deerskin exports, although not impressive to anyone looking into the accounting books of the Taiwan factory, still cost the authorities lots of efforts. After examining the initial stage of the deerskin exports in Taiwan, we can see that throughout the whole process from 1624 to 1640, the desire to attract Chinese middlemen to the service of the Company received more and more attention, rather than the actual income generated by the deerskin exports. In the strife between the Japanese traders (including Japan-based Chinese) and the VOC authorities in Taiwan, the bulk of interest lay on the silk-for-silver transitory trade. However, the Dutch had no

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<sup>168</sup> Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 204-205.

way to deny the imperatives of the Shogunal court if the Japanese traders used the deerskin trade to incite the aborigines to challenge the Dutch control over the silk-for-silver trade in Taiwan. In defending their sovereignty over Tayouan Bay, the Dutch authorities realized that it was impossible to claim it without the aborigines' consent. On the other hand, they found that the Chinese middlemen would be glad to subjugate themselves to Dutch sovereignty in exchange for protection. Having the loyalty of Chinese middlemen, the Dutch authorities could effectively prevent contacts between Japanese and aborigines. Therefore it also expunged the possibility that aborigines could express any feelings of dissatisfaction with Dutch rule to a foreign sovereign. The village-leasing system, as an ultimate result of the process, fit well with this original goal. The deerskin trade which brought about this village-leasing system actually functioned as a safeguard to ensure that the other lucrative transit trade run by the Dutch would not be interfered in by other neighboring nations.

Comparing the deerskin export environments in Siam and in Taiwan, the lack of a Japanese immigrant community in Taiwan before Dutch arrival is striking. The skilled workers in the Japanese streets in Siam combined with the silver capital from their homeland constructed an impenetrable wall protecting their monopoly on deerskin exports. (Had there been a strong Japanese community in Taiwan before the Dutch arrival, the story may have been quite different.) However, the domestic political turbulence in Siam and the closure of Japan from the outside world undermined this wall from two sides. It gave the Dutch an opportunity to enter this lucrative business, and again the support of the Chinese skilled workers was crucial. Yet, in the struggle to establish a stable business in this trade, the Dutch were lucky to have Taiwan at hand, where there was no sovereign like the Siamese monarch to prevent the use of armed force.

The Chinese adventurers, usually Japan-based Chinese traders, were also losers in this story. They were unable to leverage the authority of the Japanese shogun to dodge Dutch intervention in their already existing trade with Taiwanese aborigines as Japanese traders intended to, and thus the Chinese adventurers gradually lost their connections with local Chinese peddlers in Taiwan. They had a window for several years that allowed them to capture the Siamese deerskin exports by cooperating with the Japanese investors based in Quinam, but eventually they were sidelined by their Japanese investors, who decided to shift the partnership to Dutch traders – a reasonable decision, since those Japanese were considered to be in exile and no longer protected by the

Japanese shogun, while the Dutch were running the business legally both in Japan and Siam, and doing as well as the Chinese did. In conclusion, this story reveals how, despite a constant concern for economic evaluation, the political means were never forgotten. Meanwhile the economic designs could also serve a political goal, seemingly with no harm to the receivers. Although the Taiwan aborigines suffered from the village leasing system, their discontent never led to overthrow of the Dutch rule. Later the Chinese adventurers and traders also sought protection in the name of a state or a monarch. In the 1650s, the partiality shown by the Siamese monarch Narai toward the Chinese traders did cause the VOC great problems in the export of Siamese deerskins.<sup>169</sup> However, as they were expelled from Taiwan, they did not have another chance to gain a foothold in the deerskin trade before the VOC itself was driven away in 1662.

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<sup>169</sup> Wei-chung Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy in the China Seas, 1622-1683* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 156-159, 187-188; George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand*, p. 78.

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# 荷蘭東印度公司（VOC）經營臺灣鹿皮 出口貿易的緣起（1624-1642）

鄭維中

## 摘 要

荷蘭東印度公司於 1624 年在臺灣建立商業據點，作為日本外貿市場的供應者之一，嘗試由東南亞各國進口鹿皮。他們發現，在臺灣向原住民收購鹿皮，不若暹羅有體制性阻礙。公司嘗試取代臺灣唐人商販地位與日本朱印船商競爭。雖然鹿皮貿易價值佔當地中日貿易總額不多，卻被當成立足大員港的正當性來源。荷日商人競爭迅速惡化，於 1628 年造成衝突。公司與日本之交易中斷。德川幕府在 1634 年起發佈鎖國命令禁止日人出境，並選擇基督教荷蘭人為交易伙伴，終止與西、葡天主教徒交往後，才改變局勢。

在暹日人於山田長政帶領下，掌握鹿皮出口。1628 年，山田捲入頌曇王過世後的宮廷鬥爭，打斷暹羅鹿皮出口，帶動臺灣鹿皮聲勢。1628 至 1632 年間，臺灣當局容許在日唐人經營此一貿易，臺灣鹿皮之利潤逐漸追上暹羅鹿皮。1634 年貿易局勢大變，公司當局決意大肆擴張臺灣鹿皮出口，遂數次征討中部原住民部落，開放鹿場。暹羅鹿皮出口於 1640 年後回穩，荷人擴張動力亦弛。大約 1645 年「村落承包制」設立，削減唐人與原住民接觸的同時，提供相當數量鹿皮。本文藉由釐清公司於臺灣發展鹿皮貿易的早期經緯，主張此一貿易有三項作用：作為暹羅鹿皮之補充、正當性的來源，並隔離公司官員及其所轄唐人以外的買主，與原住民接觸。

**關鍵詞：**荷蘭東印度公司、臺灣、鹿皮、在暹日本人、在日唐人、臺灣原住民