

JUNKS TO JAVA

Chinese Shipping to the Nanyang in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century

~~~~~ Leonard Blussé

The sea is the most extensive of all things. In the southeastern islands barbarians live in great numbers, infinitely far away between the clouds and the waves. Therefore men of letters did not go there in the past. Now that the virtue and splendor of the emperor has spread everywhere, the maritime world is tranquil. Every year ships sail to faraway barbarian lands, stable and safe on the waves, as if they were coming and going over flat land.

—Phan Huy Chu, “Hai trinh chi luoc 海程誌略” [Summary of a sea voyage], *Recit sommaire d’un voyage en mer* (1833)

These idyllic lines open the travel account by the mandarin Phan Huy Chu, who departed in 1833 from the Vietnamese port of Hoian on a diplomatic mission to Batavia for the emperor of Vietnam. He sailed on a Chinese junk in an era when the predominance of these ships as carriers of the South China Sea trade was being challenged by the Western square-riggers that frequented these tropical waters in ever greater numbers. His poetic words are quite revealing. Because Confucian men of letters, that is to say writers of flowery travel accounts, hardly ever hazarded their lives on the stormy seas, Phan felt an urge to commit his own adventures to paper. It turned out not to be a hair-raising peregrination but actually quite a comfortable trip, “stable and safe” as if passing over land. By these words, the Vietnamese mandarin not only meant that the sea route was as trodden as a footpath—a *wagenspoor*, as the Dutch sailors used to call the oceanic route from Holland to Java in those days—he was also alluding to the peaceful conditions in the coastal waters of Vietnam since imperial peace had been restored after the chaos of the Tay Son rebellion.

The notable lack of written evidence about Chinese shipping amounts to a formidable obstacle for the historian who wants to restore life to China's maritime past. "Lack of surviving evidence" and "well-trodden paths": this almost amounts to a contradiction in terms. Yet it cannot be denied that, unlike Western long-distance navigation, which has produced a wealth of travel writing by sailors and adventurers high and low, the Chinese maritime tradition has left us very few useful travel accounts. Chinese sailors themselves may have been so accustomed to life at sea that they saw little use in writing up experiences that they took for granted, assuming they could write at all. In 1821, an Englishman who met the crew of the first junk visiting Singapore that year was surprised to discover that the sailors possessed neither maps nor ship's papers, nor any log book about the course they had steered.<sup>1</sup>

Thanks to a number of Chinese rutters (sailing directions) dating as far back as the Song dynasty, we do know exactly what navigational trunk routes Chinese shipping took toward the tropical regions. Overseas traffic to Vietnam, Cambodia, Siam, the Malay Peninsula, and the Indonesian archipelago skirted the western rim of the South China Sea along the so-called *Xi Yang* 西洋, or Western Ocean route. Chinese junks heading for Luzon, Mindanao, and onward in a southern direction to the Spice Islands in the eastern Indonesian archipelago would choose the *Dong Yang* 东洋, or Eastern Ocean route, island hopping along the eastern side of the South China Sea. For centuries, these two beltways served as umbilical cords connecting the islands in the "Southern Seas," the *Nanyang* 南洋, with the mountains of Tang, *Tang Shan* 唐山, as the Chinese sailors used to call their mother country. Both sailing routes have been well documented in the Chinese rutter *Zhinan Zhengfa* 指南正法 of 1720, which painstakingly records the sailing distances between promontories, islands, shoals, and other natural hazards that the junks passed.<sup>2</sup>

### Time and Space

In terms of time perspective, the Chinese junk trade to the Nanyang in the second half of the eighteenth century has some very interesting features. During the reign of the Qianlong emperor (1736–1796), the overseas trade of China's southeastern coastal provinces expanded as never before. Propelled by the northeastern monsoon, year after year Chinese junks carried tens of thousands of people abroad, thereby creating pockets of Chinese settlement all around the rim of the South China Sea. If under the preceding reigns they had mainly delivered "guest workers" such as artisans, peddlers,

and horticulturalists to the commercial hubs of Ayutthaya, the Siamese capital, and of Manila and Batavia, the Spanish and Dutch headquarters in the east respectively, they now began to carry large numbers of laborers to tin- and gold-mining camps on the Malay Peninsula and West Kalimantan (Borneo), gambier plantations on the Riau archipelago and *panglong* or lumber operations on Sumatra. Swarming out on the northern monsoon, Chinese traders and fishermen also connected with the intra-archipelago networks of the marauding Iranun bands from the Sulu archipelago or the Bugis traders and Makassar fishermen of Sulawesi (Celebes), who roamed the Indonesian waters as far as Sumatra in the west and New Guinea and Australia in the east, and who could provide all kinds of maritime products for the Chinese kitchen, such as sea cucumbers, swallows' nests, turtles, and so on. To the two main thoroughfares to the Indian Ocean, the Sunda Strait and the Melaka Strait, junks from China brought finished commodities such as tea, paper umbrellas, iron utensils, and ceramics of all kinds to exchange for what came to be known as "straits products," that is, "raw" commodities like tin, rattan, pepper, and of course also sea cucumbers and edible birds' nests. At these crossroads the Chinese sailors also began to meet with interloping English country traders who increasingly challenged the hegemony of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in the archipelago by bringing in opium and textiles from the Indian Ocean.<sup>3</sup> This period of formidable Chinese trade expansion toward Southeast Asia, which reached well into the nineteenth century, has sometimes been characterized as the "Chinese century."

During the seventeenth century, the Dutch East India Company had been the most powerful trading power in the Eastern Seas, but in the second half of the eighteenth century it was confronted with increased competition from European rivals in the China trade and their intrusion in the seas of Maluku, which the company had successfully sealed off from foreign competition for more than a century. It revamped the routes of its own shipping to and from the Middle Kingdom while trying to protect its Maluku spice monopoly, and attempted to force the Chinese junk trade to continue sailing to its headquarters at Batavia, on Java. In retrospect, VOC documents referring to the dogged efforts by Chinese junk skippers to dodge Dutch regulations help us understand how and why the Chinese junk traders ultimately chose destinations other than Batavia. The shifting patterns of trade made it far more attractive to sail to new ports rather than to continue sailing to malaria-infested Batavia.

Some twenty years ago I hinted at these late developments in a chapter

about the administrative problems the VOC had in controlling the junk trade to Batavia during the two hundred years of its existence.<sup>4</sup> Based on newly discovered material, I shall presently focus on the period between 1750 and 1800, and deal in greater detail with the changing fortunes of Chinese shipping to the Indonesian archipelago. This will enable me to rephrase some earlier conclusions or to underline them in greater detail. Why begin in the 1750s, and why draw a seemingly abrupt dividing line at the end of that century? Both periods are significant in the decline of the Dutch East India Company as the hegemonic playmaker in Indonesian waters and the concurrent rise of the Iranun pirates, the Bugis traders, and Western country traders — in short, in the shifting balance of maritime trade in the Eastern Seas.<sup>5</sup>

These developments were not yet apparent in 1755, when the management of the VOC, the Gentlemen XVII, decided to establish a direct shipping link between the Netherlands and Canton at the expense of its headquarters in the Orient, Batavia. This change of policy had a big impact on the existing trading link between Canton and Batavia, which had hitherto been an inherent part of the company's intra-Asian trading network. Fifty years later, in 1800, when the bankrupt VOC was dissolved as a trading organization and all connections with the Dutch Republic were broken off as a result of the Napoleonic Wars, the rules of the game in the trade between China and Java changed fundamentally again. American ships moved in to save the Dutch on Java and in Canton and Nagasaki, and what was left of the junk trade to Batavia continued to hold its own, although not without undergoing important changes in organization and management. In the two decades that followed, the so-called ocean guilds, *Yanghang*, which had been running the Chinese shipping business with Batavia for almost one hundred years, went into decline and were replaced by independent shipping companies, the *Shang Hang*. Why the Chinese overseas security merchants were replaced by independent traders on the shipping lanes to the Nanyang is an interesting question that begs an answer, but basically the same developments were taking place in European shipping, where independent shipping firms were replacing the chartered East India companies, the dinosaurs of the ancien régime.

Now that the scene and the time period of this essay have been fixed, let us join again our learned Vietnamese voyager and follow him on his way to Batavia. Phan Huy Chu's ship sailed the centuries-old course that all Chinese junks used to steer toward overseas destinations in the Nanyang, once they had crossed over from China's southernmost island, Hainan, to the Vietnamese coast. Propelled by the northeastern monsoon, the vessel sailed

southward, coasting the Indochinese Peninsula, “plowing through the wild waves that roared like ten thousand galloping horses,” as Phan put it. This particular stretch of the sea route is indeed known for its choppy seas because of its shallow waters. The crew of Phan’s junk plumbed the sea bottom to be no deeper than twenty to thirty fathoms and at shallower spots only five to ten fathoms.

A few days later, Cape Varella was passed and a new course was plotted to Pulau Condor (Con Lon), lying just below the southernmost point of Vietnam. Once this island had been passed in the night, the junk arrived in the “converging waters,” marking the interface between Vietnamese waters and the Java Sea. Here the author meant the dark seas of the Gulf of Siam, the greater depth of which, as he remarked, soon produced a much gentler and longer wave pattern. After two more days and nights, Phan and his crew sighted the island of Tioman, near the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula and a traditional rendezvous where passing ships used to fetch fresh water.

From Tioman, the junk pursued its course via Riau and Lingga and headed for Selat Bangka, the strait between the mountainous island of Bangka and Sumatra. On passing these narrows, the junk headed south straight for Pulau Seribu (Thousand Islands), which stretched along the horizon in an emerald line, “like a flock of green birds floating on the water.” The ultimate destination was almost in sight, because these isles formed the perimeter of the Bay of Kelapa (Sunda), or Batavia. On the outer roads, European square-riggers rode at anchor; closer inshore was the anchorage for Indonesian craft and the large trading junks from Amoy.

The indefatigable George Windsor Earl, who roamed the Eastern Seas in the early 1830s, describes in vivid detail how thrilling the yearly arrival of the junks from China was for those living abroad.

The first junk, which arrives generally a little before Christmas, is most anxiously looked for, and when its approach is notified by the crew of a Malay sampan which has been on the look out to the eastward, the greatest bustle pervades the Chinese community: some running along the streets to communicate the important intelligence to their friends, come in contact with others rushing from the opposite direction, and many hasten off to the vessel to learn the news from China, every thing that will float, from a sampan to a cargo boat, being put in requisition.

The first boat reaches the junk when she is still several miles distant, and as she nears town, she gains an accession of bulk at every fathom, until at last the unwieldy mass slowly trails into the roads, surrounded by

a dense mass of boats, having the appearance of a locust which has inadvertently crossed an ant's nest, and is dragging after it countless myriads of the enraged inhabitants attached to its legs and feelers. As the decks of the junk are always crowded with emigrants, the greater proportion of the visitors are obliged to remain in the boats, and these endeavour to gain as much information as they can by shouting out questions to the people on board.

The Chinese sailing-master, who struts about on the top of the thatched habitation on the quarter deck, with all the importance of a mandarin with a peacock's feather, endeavours in vain to make himself heard above the noise, so that the junk is generally brought up in the outer roads until sufficiently cleared of its visitors to render it safe for it to enter into the inner anchorage.

Other junks soon arrive, and although these do not excite quite so much interest as the first, the same scene is acted over in each. For a day or two after their arrival there is little business transacted, as the crews are all engaged in building roofs over the vessels to shelter the wares which are exposed for sale on the decks. When these arrangements are completed, the fair commences and the junks are surrounded from morning till night by the boats of the Chinese traders from the shore.<sup>6</sup>

#### Lack of Quantitative Data

Not much precise serial source material has been preserved about the Chinese shipping figures along the eastern and western trunk routes, but there are a few notable exceptions. Throughout the eighteenth century, the arrival and departure of all junks that sailed along the western route to Batavia were duly noted by the *shahbandar*, or harbormaster, of Batavia. The shipping lists give the port of departure in China, the approximate tonnage of the vessel, and the total number of crew and passengers on board. These data on the Chinese junk trade have been entered into a database that is now available on the Internet. Some of this has also been published in the form of graphs and diagrams.<sup>7</sup>

In the late 1970s, a team from Leiden University fed into a computer all quantitative data about outgoing and returning VOC shipping during the two hundred years of the company's existence, and then made these data available to the general public.<sup>8</sup> A similarly detailed database cannot be created for the Chinese junk trade because there is (with a notable exception) no precise serial information available under headings like the names of the junks, duration of voyage, names of *nachodas* (Chinese supercargoes), num-

**Table 1** Redemption Fees on Total Cargo According to the Size of Vessels and the Port of Origin

|             | Amoy<br>(Xiamen) | Canton<br>(Guangzhou) | Ningpo<br>(Ningbo) |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Large junks | 2200 rds         | 3000 rds              | 3600 rds           |
| Small junks | 1680 rds         | 2800 rds              | 3000 rds           |

Source: Zhou Kai, *Xiamen zhi* (Xiamen: 1832), chap. 7 on taxes, 美赋略·关税科则.

bers of people on board, ports visited en route, and total value of the cargo, to say nothing of the home voyage and the occasional shipwreck.

What is more, almost no serial data are available about the cargoes of the junks that sailed annually from China to Batavia, because as early as 1644 the Collectors of Revenue in this Dutch emporium gave up inspecting the merchandise carried by the Chinese vessels as this caused too much haggling and quarreling with the nachodas and the many itinerant peddlers on board. An entry in the *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek* describes in detail how the Chinese merchants complained: “They always arrived in the midst of the rainy season and were forced to have their vessels examined by the tax farmer and his servants and have everything which was in the hold of the ship piecemeal fashion noted down, before they were allowed to bring the merchandise under a shelter. During these procedures part of the merchandise was either broken or got wet and rotted away owing to the recurrent rain showers.”<sup>9</sup>

The Batavian harbor authorities therefore decided to slap a “redemption” fee on the total cargo according to the size of the vessels and their port of origin. As time passed, these fees were adjusted. In the period under study the redemption fees were levied as shown in table 1.<sup>10</sup>

The cargoes from Amoy were considered less valuable than those from Canton and Ningpo. The levies were intended to be equal to about 5 percent of the cargo’s actual value. This would mean that the value of a large Amoy junk was about 40,000 rijksdaalders (rds). The junks from Canton generally carried large cargoes of tea (estimated value 60,000 rds), while those from Ningbo were said to bring large quantities of Japanese copper (estimated value 70,000 rds). The junks from Xiamen primarily served the Fujianese settlements overseas by furnishing all sorts of ceramics and utensils, and more important, they brought to the Batavian labor market large numbers of itinerant workers and settlers whose actual “value,” of course, cannot be expressed in terms of money.

Owing to these tariff regulations, which continued until the end of the junk trade, hardly any data are available about the quantities or value of the commodities imported into and exported from Batavia.<sup>11</sup> We find occasional references to the quantities of tea that were brought in the ledgers of the VOC factory in Canton. The company also enumerated the commodities they sold to foreign ships calling at Batavia, including the junks. However, these were aggregate lists, and it is impossible to figure out what share of the goods was sold to the junks.

### Paroles, Paroles, Paroles

Throughout the eighteenth century, a discussion dragged on between company officials in the Dutch Republic and Batavia about the significance and the utility of the Batavian junk trade to the treasury of the company. Nobody denied that the Chinese connection was of enormous economic importance to the prosperity of the company's headquarters in Asia, in particular its Chinese population, and also Batavia's trade with its satellite ports in the archipelago. The junk trade attracted Bugis and other Indonesian traders and fishermen, who collected the bulk of the forest and marine export commodities for the China market and transported them to Batavia where they could barter their wares for Chinese commodities as well as textiles or opium from the Indian subcontinent. All this was an asset to the company because most of the ceramics and utensils imported into the archipelago by the Chinese were of little value to Europeans and came from ports where the latter were not admitted.<sup>12</sup>

The stockholders of the VOC in the Low Countries nonetheless could not help wondering how this trade with Chinese bottoms actually benefited the company, which made a great deal of money on the profitable tea trade with China. The question of whether it would be preferable to establish a direct shipping link between the Netherlands and China without having to involve Batavia in these operations was posed over and over again. Throughout the seventeenth century, the company had persistently sought openings in the direct trade with China and sent VOC ships from Batavia to Guangzhou, Xiamen, and Fuzhou. The continuous problems regarding the China trade eventually became a nightmare for the management, as the company's executive director, Pieter Van Dam, remarked.<sup>13</sup> The Gordian knot was cut through in the 1690s when the high government at Batavia decided to give up trading in China using its own vessels. The transactions there yielded such meager profits and were so hindered by the local mandarins that the same ships could ply more remunerative routes in the Indian Ocean.<sup>14</sup> At the time, this



conclusion was natural and sensible because Chinese junks from Xiamen were already serving Batavia, which provided Batavia with most of the commodities it needed from China.

To prove the wisdom of his decision, in 1694 Governor-General Willem van Outhoorn reported to the Gentlemen XVII in the Netherlands that in that year, twenty-one Chinese junks and one Portuguese vessel from Macau had sold to the company 108,498 rds of imported merchandise from China but had purchased from the company more than double that amount, 230,581 rds, in export wares. In addition to this, the junk trade yielded 17,665 rds in customs fees, poll taxes imposed on the crews while they were in Batavia, safe-conduct fees (for the protection of the junks against pirates), and so on.<sup>15</sup>

The discussion flared up again in the 1720s, when the conditions in the China trade had changed considerably for a few reasons. Several years earlier, in December 1716, the Yong Zheng emperor had suddenly issued a proclamation forbidding any Chinese shipping from sailing to the Southern Ocean. Recurrent piracy along the coast and illegal shipments of rice to overseas destinations so irritated the Son of Heaven that he ordered an end to all relations with Manila and Batavia, “asylums for the Chinese outlaws, and headquarters of Chinese pirates.”<sup>16</sup> This sudden halt in China’s long-distance navigation played havoc with the Batavian economy, and although the traffic was stealthily resumed, the Dutch authorities drew the lesson that in the future such a dependence on the Chinese network had to be avoided at all costs. The imperial *Haijin*, or maritime prohibitions, were not formally lifted until 1727, after persistent requests by the Fujianese provincial authorities.

There was yet another reason why the Gentlemen XVII in the Dutch Republic were eager to reconnect with the China market. Facing increasing competition in the tea trade from European rivals, they felt a need to establish a direct shipping link between Europe and China. The English East India Company and the Oostende Company of the Spanish Netherlands were already sending ships to Canton, where they could select and purchase tea on their own terms, whereas the Dutch in Batavia were completely dependent on the quality and quantities selected and shipped in Chinese junks.

J. de Hullu has described in detail how the Dutch China trade with VOC ships to Canton was resumed in 1727, showing that between the 1730s and 1750s this new trade connection did not reap the expected profits owing to organizational problems. The ongoing trade in Chinese tea via the Amoy junk network to Batavia also remained a formidable competitor.<sup>17</sup> Indeed,

**Table 2** Number of Junks Visiting Batavia, with Ports of Origin, per Five-Year Period

|              | Total | Xiamen | Ningbo | Guangzhou | Others |
|--------------|-------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 1751–55      | 37    | 26     | 4      | 6         | 1      |
| 1756–60      | 39    | 33     | 1      | 5         | 0      |
| 1761–65      | 34    | 23     | 2      | 9         | 0      |
| 1763 missing |       |        |        |           |        |
| 1766–70      | 33    | 27     | 1      | 5         | 0      |
| 1771–75      | 21    | 20     | 1      | 0         | 0      |
| 1772 missing |       |        |        |           |        |
| 1776–80      | 25    | 25     | 0      | 0         | 0      |
| 1781–85      | 33    | 22     | 0      | 11        | 0      |
| 1786–90      | 52    | 13     | 0      | 11        | 28     |

Source: Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women, and the Dutch in voc Batavia* (Leiden: Foris, 1986), 146.

the Batavian authorities were unhappy with the initiatives taken by the VOC management in Holland because they feared that Batavia's economic position would be undermined if the company's ships began competing with the junks and bypassed Batavia. One member of the Council of the Indies in particular, Wijbrand Blom, showed himself a vocal advocate of the junk trade and a vociferous opponent of the directors' new policies, which he dismissed as nothing less than a nightmare.<sup>18</sup> His forebodings turned out to be wrong because the Canton-bound ships from Holland continued to call at Batavia on the round trip and did not seem to impinge on the activities of the junks from Xiamen. The junk traffic continued at the same pace with an average of about seventeen junks a year until the year of calamity, 1740, when almost all the Chinese living within the walls of Batavia were slaughtered.<sup>19</sup> After an initial slump, the number of annual visits soon picked up and varied between five to eight junks a year until the collapse of the company in the 1790s (see table 2).

In November 1752, Governor-General Jacob Mossel sent his "Considerations over the Intrinsic State of the Company" to the Gentlemen XVII, in which he voiced his concerns about the marked decline in the company's trade within Asia.<sup>20</sup> He believed that the company's establishment in Canton could play an instrumental role in redressing this unfortunate situation, because of the enormous profits then being made in the tea trade between China and Europe. He conceded that many other European nations were also sending ships to Canton, but hastened to add that the position of the VOC

was much more advantageous than that of its rivals, who did not command such an extended intra-Asian trading network as the Dutch. Batavia could send local products—tin, pepper, cotton, wax, spices, and other goods—to Canton, but their competitors in the China trade who were sending their ships directly to Canton from Europe had to pay for Chinese tea with precious metals.

In March 1754, the Gentlemen XVII responded to Mossel, whose basic arguments they agreed with.<sup>21</sup> However, they differed fundamentally with his proposals on the China trade. They announced that they envisaged a complete reorganization of the Canton trade. Not only did they believe that many of the commodities Mossel proposed to sell in China could be sold in Europe as well and perhaps at even better prices, they also complained about the company vessels idling on the Batavia roads before they proceeded to China or returned to Patria. They pointed out that because Dutch ships called at Batavia, their European rivals were able to ship their cargoes of the new tea harvest much faster to Europe, where they consequently arrived on the market in better shape. One year later, the Gentlemen XVII emphatically determined that the tea trade should henceforth bypass Batavia. In 1755, they decided to assert full control over this domain of trade and set up the “China Committee,” which from then on was authorized to manage the direct trading link between the Netherlands and Canton. By 1757, the high government in Batavia had effectively lost its grip on the company’s trade with China.<sup>22</sup> This time the reforms made an impact on Batavia, the receiving end of the junk trade.

### Chinese reforms

No less important than the changing attitudes toward the junk trade to Java were the sweeping institutional reforms introduced on the Chinese side on the lifting of the maritime prohibitions in 1727. It is really against the background of the Qing imperial court’s new rules about the overseas trade that we should look at the developments in junk shipping in the following decades. According to the *Qingchao Wenxian tongkao* (1747), new regulations were introduced that applied to the securities given by the merchants participating in a commercial venture, the ownership of the junks, the composition of the crews, and the enforcement procedures concerning the return of those who went abroad. Under the new regulations, there was a considerable difference in the duties imposed on the ocean junks leaving from Guangzhou and Xiamen. The Cantonese ships were measured according to length and beam and subdivided in four categories of size (charters). Junks of the first and largest charter had a length of 7.3 zhang and a beam of 2.2 zhang

**Table 3** Import Taxes on Overseas Commodities

| 品名                                          | 单位                        | 通用税率 | 厦关税率 | 备注                      |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------|------|-------------------------|
| 嗶嘰緞<br>Biji satin                           | 丈<br>3.3 meter            | 一钱五分 | 一钱五分 | 厦关一丈五尺为一身，每匹作五身，每身例一钱五分 |
| 嗶嘰纱/绒<br>Biji yarn                          | 身（二丈为一身）                  | 一钱五分 |      |                         |
| 鹿皮<br>Deerskin                              | 百张<br>100 pieces          | 五钱   |      |                         |
| 牛皮<br>Cow-hide                              | 百张                        | 五钱   |      |                         |
| 牛马皮条<br>Strips of Ox-<br>and horse-<br>hide | 百斤<br>100 jin (half kilo) | 一钱   |      |                         |
| 藤（洋藤芯）<br>Rattan                            | 百斤                        | 八分   |      |                         |
| 靴鞋底<br>Shoe soles                           | 百双<br>100 pairs           | 六分   |      |                         |
| 鹿脯<br>Dried venison                         | 百斤                        | 一钱五分 |      |                         |
| 鹿筋/腿<br>Deer sinews                         | 百斤                        | 二钱   |      |                         |
| 燕窝<br>Birds' nests                          | 百斤                        | 三两四钱 |      | 三两四钱，红者征二两              |

or more. One zhang being approximately 3.3 meters, this meant in effect a vessel of 25 meters long by 7 meters wide, measuring about 400 tons. The Fujianese vessels were measured likewise by taking different dimensions.

The Yanghang or “authorized ocean firms” that were introduced as a new form of overseas trading guild under the new regulations consisted in effect of *ya hang*, or brokers, whom the authorities provided with brokerage certificates allowing them to manage the foreign trade. Henceforth the Yanghang purchased the cargo of the junk, assessed its total value, paid the export tariffs, and stood surety for the traveling merchants and were held responsible for their behavior abroad.<sup>23</sup> These Chinese junks also had to pay on their return to China the usual import taxes on various overseas commodities. These taxes are presented in table 3, which describes the taxes in the thirteenth year of the Yongzheng reign (1735).<sup>24</sup>

**Table 3** Continued

|                                |    |      |      |                    |
|--------------------------------|----|------|------|--------------------|
| 虾干<br>Dried prawns             | 百斤 | 一钱   |      |                    |
| 虾壳/皮<br>Dried small<br>shrimps | 百斤 | 三分   |      | 虾壳（多属洋船回<br>日，税免征） |
| 白糖<br>White sugar              | 百斤 | 一钱   |      |                    |
| 黑糖/乌糖<br>Brown sugar           | 百斤 | 三分   |      |                    |
| 胡椒<br>Pepper                   | 百斤 | 八钱   |      |                    |
| 壳珠<br>Pearls                   | 千粒 | 四分   |      |                    |
| 锡/番锡<br>Tin                    | 百斤 | 六钱   |      |                    |
| 铅<br>Lead                      | 百斤 | 二钱五分 |      |                    |
| 檀香<br>Sandalwood               | 百斤 | 一两   | 九钱一分 |                    |
| 丁香<br>Nutmeg                   | 百斤 | 二两   |      |                    |
| 苏木<br>Sappanwood               | 百斤 | 二钱   | 一钱六分 | 惟暹罗者一钱八分           |

Source: Zhou Kai, *Xiamen zhi* (Xiamen: 1832), chap. 7, on taxes, 关赋略·关税科则.

Inevitably there was plenty of pilfering by the provincial and military personnel, who did not care much about the official rules. In 1768, a coastal defense commander, Huang Shijian, complained in a report to the throne that local officials had extorted from the crews of returning ships 500 to several thousand yuan (Mexican dollars). Informed of this matter, the Qian Long emperor ordered an investigation. The results were shocking. According to the secretary of the Ministry of Punishments, the Yanghang had to bribe local mandarins with gifts like edible birds' nests, silver, camlets and other cloths to a value of no less than 36,900 dollars per year. All echelons of the provincial hierarchy from the governor-general all the way down to the county officials thus profited from the overseas trade to the Nanyang.<sup>25</sup>

## The Economic Importance of the Junk Trade

The importance of the junk trade to China's domestic economy is illustrated by the following discussion, which took place at the Chinese imperial court in the aftermath of the massacre at Batavia in 1741. The debate focused on the issue of whether to continue trading with Batavia or to prohibit it. Among the defenders of the trading system, the voice of Qing Fu, the governor of Guangxi and Guangdong, was without doubt the most stridently insistent. This high-ranking mandarin declared that the promulgation of another overseas trading ban should be out of the question. According to him, more than one hundred vessels from the southern coastal provinces annually plied the waters of the Nanyang, providing 500,000 to 600,000 people in South China's coastal provinces with export and import trade-related jobs. A new prohibition would cut off an annual inflow of 10 million taels of silver coins: "The resulting situation would render people homeless and cause them to wander from place to place, as there would be no food left for thousands of persons, because neither would the merchants have merchandise, nor would the farmers have produce."<sup>26</sup>

A spectacle similar to the roaring reception of the first Chinese junk to reach Singapore or Batavia at the beginning of the wet monsoon could be seen elsewhere. The visits of the junks in Southeast Asian port principalities were likened to annual fairs, where people from all walks of life came flocking in to gape at the articles displayed, to spend their money, or to steal what they could not afford or were unwilling to pay for.

This was the case in the port of Banjarmasin on the south coast of Borneo, where every January one or sometimes two *wangkang* (a junk of about 250 tons) from Amoy would arrive at the mouth of the Barito River. Sixty to eighty small *prahu* towed the junk upriver until it reached the temporary abode of the sultan in Tatas. On being informed of the junk's arrival, the sultan would come down from his *kraton* at Kota Inten with a large troupe of two to three thousand followers, including *ronggeng* dancers, clowns, and children in fancy dresses. A great number of *prahu* decorated with flags and pennants carrying princes and princesses in their most beautiful garb would also welcome the Chinese junk. Aboard the *wangkang*, ashore and in the Chinese quarter, hundreds of stalls were set up displaying silks, glassware, earthenware and iron pans, and sweet delicacies. The local people came in flocks to purchase these exotic articles on credit, giving goods and even people as securities for their outstanding debts.

A Dutch commissioner who happened to be visiting Banjarmasin when a

junk arrived and tried to maintain some order among the buyers and sellers promptly drew the ire of the local ruler.<sup>27</sup> In Banjarmasin as well as in Makassar, on the island of Sulawesi, where the ruler of Bone, a staunch ally of the VOC, insisted on the yearly visit by a Chinese junk, the local nobility were esteemed by their people because of the annual visits of the junks, which attracted many visitors from the surrounding regions.

#### Attempts at Batavian Intervention

On various occasions the high government at Batavia tried to discourage or even to forbid outright Chinese junks from trading in Banjarmasin, Makassar, and Melaka, but each time it had to relent in the face of local opposition or because the junk skippers simply chose to risk arrest and stubbornly continued to come.

On 28 January 1746, the Batavian administration forbade navigation to Makassar and Banjarmasin, because the Chinese tax farmer of Chinese-cut tobacco in Batavia had complained about the “illegal” import to Java via these two ports. Nonetheless, on 25 November of the same year, a Chinese junk showed up in the Makassar roads feigning distress and actually got away with it, so happy was everybody about its unexpected appearance.<sup>28</sup> On 9 July 1754, one Chinese junk was allowed into Makassar (despite a prohibition of 8 May 1753), and one or two sailed to Banjarmasin. In the latter case, this was done in order to “cajole” the sultan into cooperation.<sup>29</sup> In 1765 and 1766, the high government again tried to close down the junk trade to Malacca and Makassar but Chinese shipping to Makassar was reopened in 1769 on the insistence of the ruler of Bone. It was not hard to acquiesce to the wishes of this ruler, because in retrospect the Batavian Chinese agreed that one junk a year to Makassar could hardly make a dent in their own business. Many Chinese in Batavia partook in this Makassar venture. The annual public auction (in Batavia) of the pass allowing the navigation from Amoy to Makassar and vice versa actually contributed a hefty sum of money to the company treasury.<sup>30</sup>

Probably the most enlightening policy statement on the junk trade and the limited power of the company to curtail it was that of 9 April 1778, when Governor-General Reinier de Klerck and the Council of the Indies spoke their minds about the navigation and trade of Chinese junks in the archipelago. Only in those regions where the company reigned as *heer en meester* could it afford to prohibit this navigation. Elsewhere, in places like Trengganu, Patani, Sangora (Sonkhla), or even Johor, where Chinese junks used to sail to purchase pepper, the company simply could not prohibit such

trade. Of course, it was suggested the sultan of Banjarmasin be bought off by promising him 2,000–3,000 rds a year if he would surrender his rights to the visits by junks from China, but the latter had no intention of doing so.

The evidence produced by Gerrit Knaap and Heather Sutherland on the importance of the junk trade to the local economy of South Sulawesi, and the fascinating monograph by Jim Warren on the links between the Chinese junk trade and the prosperity of the Sulu sultanate at the end of the eighteenth century, leave no doubt about the relative importance of the visits of the junk vessels to Southeast Asian regional economies.<sup>31</sup>

The selling of commodities and the purchase of tropical products from the hinterland of course required resident Chinese all over Southeast Asia, but the Chinese junk trade also connected with other circuits of trade and shipping such as the Bugis network, in which the Chinese themselves played little or no direct role. Using information about shipping movements derived from harbor masters' registrations, Gerrit Knaap has cogently illustrated this aspect in his study on the Pasisir trade of Java, *Shallow Waters, Rising Tide*. He discerns a three-level hierarchy, with Batavia serving as the international emporium. Pasisir ports like Surabaya, Gresik, Semarang, and Cirebon functioned as small emporia linking Java to other islands in the Java Sea, and finally Banten, Tegal, Jepara figured as gateways to the production centers of agricultural products in the hinterland. Knaap makes the point that the flourishing economy of Java's northeast coast produced a marked increase in coastal shipping. This VOC "granary" and "timber yard" underwent considerable growth after coming under company control in 1755, and it contributed a great deal to the growing importance of Batavia as the hub of local shipping networks.<sup>32</sup> Knaap's optimistic assessment, however, does not tally well with the pessimistic opinions of contemporary Batavian authorities, who, without exception, spoke about the rapid decline of Batavia as a trade emporium.<sup>33</sup>

Even if the attempts of the VOC to concentrate in Batavia the Chinese junk trade serving Java were quite effective, there was no way in which the company could deal with junks sailing to Malay ports that fell outside its control. When increasing numbers of junks started to sail to previously peripheral ports like Pahang, Johor, Siak, Riau, and Trengganu, the Dutch could do little but watch control of the Chinese trade in the archipelago slip out of their hands. Haphazard measures were the result: the easily policed Melaka Straits were temporarily closed to junks, a move that drew justifiable protests from the Chinese community in Melaka itself, which now saw all trade go to neighboring Johor and the Riau archipelago.



A few general remarks about the shifting balance of trade at the end of the eighteenth century seem necessary here. It is easy for a contemporary historian to throw out observations on “increasing numbers” of junks, “flourishing and declining” economies, the “rise of the country trade,” the “expansion of the Bugis and Iranun networks,” and so forth, as though we are dealing with developments that were plainly visible and clear to contemporary observers when they occurred. The contrary is true, however. These were all phenomena that occurred over a period of several decades, and although they were indeed noted with alarm when they became apparent, the causes remained very difficult to point out, insofar as it makes sense to speak about “causes” in history.

Anyone who has lived through the last few decades, when we are much better informed about global economic developments, will agree that even nowadays it is very difficult to develop farsighted policies within the constraints of the sociopolitical environment in which we are living. It was no different in the eighteenth century for the directors of the VOC or the high government in Batavia, who had to guarantee a continuous flow of goods from a complex and diffuse network in Monsoon Asia to Europe. In that context, the decision in 1755 of the Gentlemen XVII to reform the tea trade with China and the establishment of the largely autonomous “China Committee” should be seen as a dramatic step, and one they knew would deal a heavy blow to the prosperity of Batavia.

#### The Trading Figures of 1750–1759

Once the die was cast, the directors tried to find out how the direct shipping link between Canton and Holland might affect the imports and exports of the Chinese junk trade to Batavia.<sup>34</sup> Thanks to that question, we have a rare glimpse behind the scenes. At the request of his superiors, the shahbandar of Batavia, Christiaan Elsevier, drew up a list of all Chinese shipping to and from Batavia in the years 1750–1759.<sup>35</sup> In his report Elsevier regretted that he was unable to give detailed information about imports because of the regulation of 22 September 1752, which stipulated that incoming junks only had to pay redemption fees. On the other hand, he was able to provide data on the ships, their size, the names of the nachodas, and the cargoes they exported from Batavia to three different destinations in China, not forgetting the number of passengers they carried. However, the data on the passenger traffic were totally false and unreliable.

What does table 4 tell us? Between 1750 and 1759, some forty junks visited Batavia one or more times. A few came quite frequently: *Thajj Assien*

**Table 4** Accounted for in *Rijksdaalders* (rds) and *Stuivers* (st)**1750 13 junks**

10 FROM EIJMUIJ (XIAMEN)

| Name of the junk | Name of nachoda |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Hok Eeng         | Oen Tyeko       |
| Soemie           | Lie Honko       |
| Jaenne           | Oeij Loengko    |
| Tengoan          | Lim Hoaijko     |
| Sienkiomhien     | Oeij Tohsko     |
| Am-pho           | Tan Ganho       |
| Soehoengoan      | Kan Inko        |
| Oijee Sientjioen | Po Pieko        |
| Jonghien         | Que Ti Ecko     |
| Gansoen          | Que Quanko      |

10 junks, cargoes unknown, each junk 100 last  
 [1 last is approx. 1,500kg], people on board 3,066 men,  
 each junk paying in import and export levies

|                                          |     |           |
|------------------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| 2,200 rijksdaalders: in total            | rds | 22,000    |
| 3,066 men pay 12 stuivers each: in total | rds | 766:24    |
| (Taxes in) total                         | rds | 22,766:24 |

3 FROM CANTON (GUANGZHOU)

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Kengoan    | Ang Siequa  |
| Hapsoen    | Nio Hapko   |
| Sonhonkien | Ang Sonquan |

|                                                  |     |       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 3 junks, each junk 100 last, crew 548 men, 3,000 | rds | 9,000 |
| 548 men pay 12 st. each                          | rds | 137   |
| total                                            | rds | 9,137 |

**1751 8 junks**

5 FROM XIAMEN

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| Soehoengoan | Kan Engko   |
| Hok Eeng    | Swa Ki-Ecko |
| Khidie      | Lim Phouwko |
| Ouwpo       | Que ti Ecko |
| Cai-asien   | Que Maseeng |

|                                             |     |           |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| 3 junks, each junk 110 last, 2,200 rds each | rds | 6,600     |
| 2 junks, each junk 60 last, 1680 rds each   | rds | 3,360     |
| 1,913 men 12 st each                        | rds | 478:12    |
| total                                       | rds | 10,438:12 |

**Table 4** Continued**1751 8 junks (continued)**

2 FROM GUANGZHOU

|                    |                   |     |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----|------------------|
| <i>Inaangtjauw</i> | <i>Kinjoeke</i>   |     |                  |
| <i>Kenwantjouw</i> | <i>Ang Siequa</i> |     |                  |
| 2 junks of 80 last | 2,800 rds each    | rds | 5,600            |
| 329 men            | 12 st each aboard | rds | 82: 12           |
| total              |                   | rds | <b>5,682: 12</b> |

1 FROM NIMPHO (NINGBO)

|                    |                     |     |                  |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----|------------------|
| <i>Japoentjouw</i> | <i>Tyan Tjiecko</i> |     |                  |
| 1 junk, 100 last,  | 3,600 rds           | rds | 3,600            |
| 166 men            |                     | rds | 31: 24           |
| total              |                     | rds | <b>3,631: 24</b> |

**1752 8 junks and 1 brigantin**

4 FROM XIAMEN

|                    |                       |     |                  |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----|------------------|
| <i>Tay Assies</i>  | <i>Aque Kanko</i>     |     |                  |
| <i>Opho Kouw</i>   | <i>Kouw Heijonko</i>  |     |                  |
| <i>Hock Eng</i>    | <i>Lim Phoko</i>      |     |                  |
| <i>Toea Sieeng</i> | <i>Ong Eng Sioeng</i> |     |                  |
| 4 junks, each junk | 100 last, 2,200 rds   | rds | 8,800            |
| 793 men            |                       | rds | 198: 12          |
| total              |                       | rds | <b>8,998: 12</b> |

3 FROM GUANGZHOU

|                    |                     |     |                  |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----|------------------|
| <i>Sun Thaij</i>   | <i>Eauw Jak</i>     |     |                  |
| <i>Tian Tjoen</i>  | <i>Tjoa Pinko</i>   |     |                  |
| <i>Koe Kieauw</i>  | <i>Kung Tjoequa</i> |     |                  |
| 3 junks, each junk | 100 last, 3,000 rds | rds | 9,000            |
| 631 men            |                     | rds | 157: 36          |
| total              |                     | rds | <b>9,157: 36</b> |

1 FROM NINGBO

|                 |                   |     |                  |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----|------------------|
| <i>Soenghap</i> | <i>Tan Tyapko</i> |     |                  |
| 1 junk 80 last  |                   | rds | 3,000            |
| 101 men         |                   | rds | 25: 12           |
| total           |                   | rds | <b>3,025: 12</b> |

**Table 4** Continued**1752 8 junks and 1 brigantin (continued)**

1 FROM TONQUIN (TONKIN)

|                                                                  |                                            |       |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------|--|
| Brigantin <i>De Hoop</i>                                         | Lieutenant Chinese Tan Wanseeng of Batavia |       |  |
| Ship arrived new and empty from Java, and paid export duties on: |                                            |       |  |
| 50 piculs powdered sugar à 12 st                                 | rds                                        | 12,24 |  |
| 40 piculs candy sugar à 24 st                                    | rds                                        | 20    |  |
| Pass and seal money                                              | rds                                        | 20    |  |
| total                                                            | rds                                        | 52:24 |  |

**1753 7 junks and 1 brigantin**

6 FROM XIAMEN

|                             |              |           |  |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|--|
| Kede                        | Kau Hijongko |           |  |
| Hok Eeng                    | Swa Ki Etko  |           |  |
| Tagasien                    | Lim Hooijko  |           |  |
| Soenhoengaan                | Lim Thimko   |           |  |
| Soenhapsoen                 | Que Gonko    |           |  |
| Ton Sonhie                  | Tan Tjenkyko |           |  |
| 6 junks, each junk 100 last | rds          | 13,200    |  |
| 1,513 men                   | rds          | 378:12    |  |
| total                       | rds          | 13,576:12 |  |

1 FROM NINGBO

|                 |           |          |  |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|--|
| Consie          | Tan Siqua |          |  |
| 1 junk, 80 last | rds       | 3,000    |  |
| 110 men         | rds       | 27:24    |  |
| total           | rds       | 3,027:24 |  |

1 FROM TONKIN

|                                                              |                                            |     |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----|--|
| Brigantin <i>De Hoop</i>                                     | Lieutenant Chinese Tan Wanseeng of Batavia |     |  |
| Paid import fees on commodities from Tonkin                  |                                            |     |  |
| 50,000 salted eggs                                           |                                            |     |  |
| 20,000 porcelain bowls                                       |                                            |     |  |
| 1,000 nests of lacquered boxes                               |                                            |     |  |
| 100 iron pans                                                |                                            |     |  |
| In total 16000 rixdollars import taxes at rate of 6/100      | rds                                        | 960 |  |
| Export taxes on 50 piculs candy sugar à 24 stuiver per picul | rds                                        | 25  |  |
| Pass and seal money                                          | rds                                        | 20  |  |
| total                                                        | rds                                        | 45  |  |

**Table 4** Continued**1754 6 junks and 1 brigantin**

## 5 FROM XIAMEN

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| Tona Kientsien | Lim Houko     |
| Opo            | Kouw Himgko ? |
| Kiedje         | Que Ti Etko   |
| Soehoengoan    | Lim Timko     |
| Taij Assien    | Lim Oeijko    |
| Hapsoen        | Que Kanko     |

|                                          |     |                   |
|------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|
| 5 junks, each junk 100 last, a 2,200 rds | rds | 11,000            |
| 1 junk, 60 last, 1680 rds                | rds | 1,680             |
| 80 coyang export rice à 2 rds            | rds | 160               |
| 1,781 men                                | rds | 445: 12           |
| rotal                                    | rds | <b>13,285: 12</b> |

## 1 FROM NINGBO

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| Souw Haptjauw | Ang Pacqua |
|---------------|------------|

|                  |     |                  |
|------------------|-----|------------------|
| 1 junk, 100 last | rds | 3,600            |
| 147 men          | rds | 36: 36           |
| total            | rds | <b>3,636: 36</b> |

## 1 BRIGANTIN FROM 1754 TONKIN

|                   |                                            |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Brigantin De Hoop | Lieutenant Chinese Tan Wanseeng of Batavia |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|

|                                             |     |              |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|--------------|
| Bringing from Tonkin                        |     |              |
| 1,000 pieces lacquered boxes                |     |              |
| 3,000 bowls                                 |     |              |
| 300 piculs tin                              |     |              |
| 300 pots with salted eggs                   |     |              |
| 10 pieces of cloth                          |     |              |
| In total 22,500 rds taxed at 6/100 in total | rds | <b>1,350</b> |

**1755 6 junks and 1 chaloupe**

## 6 FROM XIAMEN

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Thee Kienhien | Ong Pacqua   |
| Thoa Hongoan  | Kan Hinko    |
| Taij Assan    | Lim Hoeijko  |
| Tjaij Thien   | Tan Tijellon |
| Kioe          | Giet Kanko   |
| Hoopho        | Kouw Hiongko |

|                              |     |               |
|------------------------------|-----|---------------|
| 6 junks, each junk, 100 last | rds | 13,200        |
| 3,916 men                    | rds | 979           |
| total                        | rds | <b>14,179</b> |

**Table 4** Continued**1755 6 junks and 1 chaloupe (continued)**

1 FROM TONKIN

| Chaloupe Catharina<br>(150 last)          | Lieutenant Chinese Tan Wanseeng<br>of Batavia |     |               |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----|---------------|
| Paid export duties on:                    |                                               |     |               |
| 150 piculs powder sugar à 12 st per picul |                                               | rds | 37: 24        |
| 80 piculs candy sugar à 24 st per picul   |                                               | rds | 40            |
| Pass and seal                             |                                               | rds | 20            |
| total                                     |                                               | rds | <b>97: 24</b> |

**1756 5 junks**

5 FROM XIAMEN

| Tan Tyeeko                  | Thoa Ongoan  |     |                   |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----|-------------------|
| Thoa Kienghien              | Lim Phouko   |     |                   |
| Khiedie                     | Que Kanko    |     |                   |
| Soen Hoengoan               | Lim Oeijko   |     |                   |
| Taij Assien                 | Que Kienhien |     |                   |
| 5 junks, each junk 100 last |              |     |                   |
|                             |              | rds | 11,000            |
| 2,399 men                   |              | rds | 599: 36           |
| total                       |              | rds | <b>11,599: 36</b> |

**1757 9 junks**

7 FROM XIAMEN

| Kiem Tjikseeng                       | Lim Pouko    |     |                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----|----------------|
| Tjoa Hoengam                         | Lim Koenko   |     |                |
| Teassen                              | Lim Panko    |     |                |
| Khiedie                              | Que Tynhoen  |     |                |
| Tan Tjapsoen                         | Que Lanijong |     |                |
| Sie Tjongsiem                        | Tsoa Teenko  |     |                |
| Siang Losien                         | Lim Oeijko   |     |                |
| 7 junks, each junk 100 last          |              |     |                |
|                                      |              | rds | 15,400         |
| 2,671 men                            |              | rds | 667: 36        |
| Total                                |              | rds | 16,067: 36     |
| 690 piculs of powdered sugar à 12 st |              | rds | <b>172: 24</b> |

1 FROM GUANGZHOU

| Kim Kaijtijon             | Ong Katko |     |                  |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----|------------------|
| 1 junk of 100 last        |           | rds | 3,000            |
| 151 men                   |           | rds | 37: 36           |
| 100 piculs powdered sugar |           | rds | 25               |
| total                     |           | rds | <b>3,062: 36</b> |

**Table 4** Continued**1757 9 junks (continued)**

## 1 FROM NINGBO

| Samphan            | The Binko |     |                 |
|--------------------|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| 1 junk of 100 last |           | rds | 3,600           |
| 99 men             |           | rds | 24:36           |
| total              |           | rds | <b>3,624:36</b> |

**1758 10 junks**

## 5 FROM XIAMEN

| Kiem Tjikseeng                    | Tan Tyecko   |     |                   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----|-------------------|
| Teekseng Tjauw                    | Lie Trjongko |     |                   |
| Tay Assien                        | Liem Oeijko  |     |                   |
| Soen Hongoan                      | Ong Tijamko  |     |                   |
| Tjoa Kinhing                      | Lim Koenko   |     |                   |
| Khiedie                           | Que Ganglong |     |                   |
| 6 junks, each junk 100 last       |              | rds | 13,200            |
| 3764 men                          |              | rds | 941               |
| 1,350 piculs powder sugar a 12 st |              | rds | 337: 24           |
| total                             |              | rds | <b>14,478: 24</b> |

## 3 FROM GUANGZHOU

| Toa Soenie                                | The Ingko  |     |                  |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|-----|------------------|
| Ojoe Poen Tyauw                           | Tyong Koko |     |                  |
| Soey Hiena                                | Lim Houko  |     |                  |
| 3 junks, each junk 100 last, 3,000        |            | rds | 9,000            |
| 373 men                                   |            | rds | 93: 12           |
| 500 piculs powder sugar a 12 st per picul |            | rds | 125              |
| 20 coijang rice a 2 rds per picul         |            | rds | 40               |
| total                                     |            | rds | <b>9,278: 12</b> |

**Table 4** Continued**1759 8 junks****6 FROM XIAMEN**

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Toa Kienghiem | Tijan Tjoeko |
| Thoa Hongoan  | Lim Kamko    |
| Kinghiam      | Soa Tjetko   |
| Khidie        | Que Ganglong |
| The Singtyauw | Que Tayko    |
| Thaij Assien  | Lim Koenko   |

|                             |     |            |
|-----------------------------|-----|------------|
| 6 junks, each junk 100 last | rds | 13,200     |
| 1,145 men                   | rds | 286: 12    |
| total                       | rds | 13,486: 12 |

**2 FROM GUANGZHOU**

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Soenian     | Lie Thehoe |
| Souhin Jauw | Lim Hoanko |

|                             |     |           |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----------|
| 2 junks, each junk 100 last | rds | 6,000     |
| 421 men                     | rds | 105: 12   |
| total                       | rds | 6,105: 12 |

|              |            |                    |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| <b>SOMMA</b> | <b>rds</b> | <b>200,904: 12</b> |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|

Source: VOC 4387, Batavia, 15 August 1760.

visited eight times; *Khidie*, seven times; *Soen Hongoan*, six times; *Thoa Hongoan* and *Tjoa Kinhing*, three times; others only once. Fifty-one different *nachodas* sailed on these ships; one person, *Liem Oeijko*, sailed quite frequently (seven times), the rest at most twice, but generally only once. This is a striking observation. Some persons may have sailed along the Batavia corridor as private merchants before they served as a *nachoda*, but even then it is noticeable that they were not necessarily appointed to this responsible position based on their prior experience of Batavia.

The size of the junks was very similar. They were all middle-sized *wangkang*, measuring about 200 tons. The tonnage of the junks increased dramatically around the turn of the century, when the number of junks declined and the Batavia administration, instead of curtailing large numbers of immigrants as it had done in the past, actually encouraged the *Yanghang* to bring more people. This is borne out by the fact that junks were then built with two decks, making it possible to transport more people. In addition to a crew of 250 persons, these two-deckers were allowed to bring 500 passengers.<sup>36</sup>



Because the pre-emption fees due on arrival remained unchanged, it made sense to build bigger ships once a large number of passengers was allowed.

### People on Board

The numbers of people on board noted in table 2, which are based on the data provided by Elsevier, are unreliable. This came to light in 1760, when it was discovered that traders were smuggling people. According to the official data, eight junks were supposed to have brought 1,527 people, but one ship that had reported 220 crew members was found to have carried 700 persons.<sup>37</sup> In the following year, four junks were supposed to have brought 1,509 persons, but the junk *Soe Ongoan*, a frequent visitor to Batavia, was rumored to have carried between 600 and 700 men instead of the 425 passengers it had reported. According to the regulations it was not supposed to carry more than 110 crew members.

When large fines were imposed, the Chinese supercargoes complained that they dared not face the shipowners in Xiamen. Their argument is interesting because it explains how the shipping network was run. These supercargoes pleaded that they were newcomers, which, given the above data, is quite probable. They also confessed that their superiors had forced them to transport a multitude of passengers under the express condition that all these people would return to China with the same junk. They asserted that the transportation of passengers was a very lucrative business, especially when trading transactions were less profitable owing to the arrival of too many junks in town.

The Chinese officers of the Council of Batavia, the Kong Koan, who were responsible for enumerating the newcomers and for the distribution of permits to those who wished to remain in Batavia, added that every Chinese merchant needed to be accompanied on his voyage by at least two assistants. If these traders were not allowed to bring the necessary personnel, they would back out of the voyage and refuse to load their wares, with disastrous results for the shipowners, who would be unable to load their vessels fully.

They also described another interesting feature of the junk trade. Sailing south along the Chinese coast, the junk was continually boarded by people from the port towns who sought either to deliver letters or to take them personally to Batavia. These letter carriers actually made a living from this long-distance commute. Anybody who has ridden long-distance buses in China will immediately recognize a system of delivery that is still practiced nowadays.

The outcome of the discussions with the *nachodas* and the Chinese officers was that henceforth the junks were allowed to carry more passengers in addition to their already enormous crews: 200 passengers instead of 140 passengers for smaller junks, and 250 instead of 160 for larger junks.

### Commodities

Apart from certain goods such as tin, cloves, and pepper, which the Chinese supercargoes had to purchase from the company itself, all the other commodities were products destined for the China market that could not possibly have found any customers in Europe. In other words, the Chinese junk trade generally tapped different sources than the VOC. Also notable is that each of the markets of Canton (Guangzhou), Amoy (Xiamen), Ningbo, and Tonkin sought its own particular products. The goods shipped to Canton were used partly as payment for cargoes of tea and porcelain or for packaging purposes (rattan). The primary demand in Amoy was for commodities used for local consumption. How the various commodities were consumed in China still awaits further analysis.

Not included in *shahbandar* Elsevier's lists are the doubtless sizeable sums of silver money that overseas sojourners sent as remittances to family and business relations at home. Thanks to the Batavian Chinese population's resistance to the colonial authorities' attempts to stem this outflow whenever the urban economy ran short of cash, we know that this money was sent in small bags and letters often amounting in total to no less than 50,000 rds.<sup>38</sup> The governor-general and council of the Indies agreed that the dispatching of remittances was "an old custom" on which many thousands of people in China depended. Nevertheless, in 1798, when the treasury really threatened to become totally depleted, the export of silver dollars to China was limited to 20,000 rds.

The figures in table 5 show the composition of the cargoes that the Chinese junks carried home. Almost everything had been brought to Batavia by VOC ships or native and Chinese shipping from all quarters of the Indonesian archipelago.

### Decline

After the 1750s, the junk trade gradually declined. By the end of the 1770s, the Batavian authorities became thoroughly worried about the prospects of the junk trade "which in the past was very considerable [in size] but now has gone into steep decline to the detriment of the local inhabitants." They again

ordered the Chinese navigation to Melaka to be halted and wrote about this to the Yanghang in Amoy, requesting that junks should no longer be sent to the Melaka Straits, but directly to Batavia. The answer they received was telling. The Chinese shipping guilds wrote that, although it was a big blow for them to be shut out of Melaka, they were willing to accept that situation. But they made it clear that they could not afford to stay away from neighboring Johor on the Malay Peninsula. If forced to do so, they would have to give up their shipping enterprise itself for the simple reason that it was the only place where they could find all the timber necessary for repairing their junks and for making new rudders and masts. That was, of course, only part of the story. The navigation to Johor and other ports near the straits had fundamentally changed the flow of Chinese trade.<sup>39</sup>

Chinese tobacco and many other wares from China were now transported straight to Johor and from here distributed all over the archipelago, even to places as far away as the east coast of Java, thereby undermining the VOC tariff system. As Batavia lost its position as the terminus of Chinese trade to the free ports on the Malay Peninsula, the Batavia Chinese sought other lines of work and moved out of town into the hinterland. This trend was observed by Councillor of the Indies Isaac Titsingh in an address he handed over to the governor-general and his fellow councillors on 24 September 1793. He claimed that the decline in the economy due to the virtual disappearance of the junk trade afflicted all business in town and forced Chinese inhabitants, who had previously made a living from the trade with China, to close their doors and move out into the countryside to start a new life there.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusion

Having begun with an idyllic ride aboard the junk of a Vietnamese mandarin, let us now end with the last trip of the *Tek Sing*, which ended in a tragic disaster.

In the early morning of 14 January 1822, as the ebb tide started to flow out of the bay of Amoy, the nachoda Io Tau Ko ordered the heavy ironwood anchors of the gigantic two-deck junk *Tek Sing* (True Star) to be raised. A few hours later this majestic vessel of more than a thousand tons could be seen sailing past Da Dan island with all its sails set, heading for the sea.<sup>41</sup> In all respects, this promised to be another swift voyage along the western ocean route, a trip that this same ship had made five years in a row to Batavia, “calm and smooth like overland.” The junk was well ballasted with a load of tombstones, stone sugar millstones, and a large cargo of earthenware and porce-

**Table 5** Commodities Exported in 1750–1759, According to Christiaan Elsevier

| AMOY PICULS            | 1750  | 1751  | 1752  | 1753  | 1754  | 1755   | 1756  | 1757  | 1758  | 1759  |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| (Company) Bangka tin   | 3,100 | 950   | 800   |       | 120   |        | 30    | 400   | 500   | 1,200 |
| (Company) Black pepper | 1,000 |       |       |       | 200   |        |       |       |       |       |
| Trepang                | 3,340 | 1,150 | 1,350 | 2,610 | 2,820 | 3,250  | 4,200 | 3,400 | 2,500 | 8,500 |
| Agar-agar              | 4,400 | 1,900 | 1,440 | 2,400 | 4,320 | 4,200  | 1,200 | 2,500 | 2,450 | 4,400 |
| Sandalwood             | 1,000 | 250   | 203   | 1,100 | 120   | 300    | 500   | 750   |       | 900   |
| Sappanwood             |       |       |       | 700   | 3,400 | 4,500  |       | 1,800 | 400   |       |
| Aguilwood              | 300   |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Black ebony wood       | 550   |       | 430   | 750   | 70    |        |       |       |       |       |
| Birds' nests           | 440   |       | 6.5   | 13    | 16    | 11     | 233   |       | 41    | 90    |
| Dried apostles         | 50    |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Buffalo leather        | 400   |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Buffalo sinews         |       | 240   | 65    | 200   | 200   | 410    | 150   | 800   | 80    | 150   |
| Scraped buffalo hides  | 2,500 | 340   | 550   | 300   | 500   |        |       |       |       |       |
| Deer meat              | 350   |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Areca                  | 200   | 650   | 1,600 | 1,000 | 200   | 24,050 | 1,000 | 2,100 | 300   | 2,300 |
| Unrefined oil          | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,200 | 300   | 3,120 | 5,550  | 1,500 | 1,500 | 500   |       |
| Dried meat             | 635   | 640   | 100   |       | 150   |        | 100   |       | 300   |       |
| Wax                    |       | 40    |       |       |       | 150    |       | 20    |       |       |
| Deerskins              |       |       | 120   | 50    |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Dried shrimp           |       |       | 115   |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
| Lead                   |       |       |       | 100   | 900   | 400    | 50    | 480   |       |       |
| Mother-of-pearl shell  |       |       |       | 200   |       |        |       |       |       | 450   |
| Putchuk                |       |       |       | 30    |       |        |       |       |       |       |

|                                      |   |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| (Company) Cloves                     | 3 |        |        |        |        | 16     | 10     |
| (Company) Nutmeg                     | 1 |        |        |        |        | 9      | 2      |
| Dried fish                           |   |        | 100    |        |        |        | 19     |
| Camphor                              |   |        |        | 1      |        |        | 1,100  |
| Capok                                |   |        |        |        | 50     |        |        |
| (extra ballast) Powdered sugar       |   |        |        |        | 690    | 1,350  |        |
| Saltpeter                            |   |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Buffalo dinding (dried meat)         |   |        |        |        |        |        | 700    |
| Deer dinding (dried meat)            |   |        |        |        |        |        | 200    |
| Extra ballast rice ( <i>cojang</i> ) |   |        |        |        | 80     |        |        |
| Camphor ( <i>catties</i> )           |   | 50     |        |        |        |        |        |
| Piece goods                          |   |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Buffalo hides                        |   | 9,000  | 6,100  | 12,300 | 7,100  | 3,700  | 3,900  |
| Assorted woolen cloth                |   | 25     | 2      | 10     | 25     | 50     | 35     |
| Hand canes                           |   | 50,000 | 10,200 |        |        | 3,450  |        |
| Binding canes                        |   | 1,000  | 1,200  | 500    | 24,000 | 2,000  | 23,000 |
| Sole leather                         |   |        |        |        | 4,500  | 18,200 |        |
| Camlet                               |   |        |        |        | 2,060  |        |        |
| Deerskins                            |   |        |        |        |        | 20     | 20     |
|                                      |   |        |        |        |        | 330    |        |

**Table 5** Continued

| CANTON PICULS          | 1750  | 1751 | 1752  | 1753 | 1754 | 1755 | 1756 | 1757  | 1758  | 1759  |
|------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| (Company) Bangka tin   | 100   |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 596   | 500   |
| (Company) Black pepper | 300   |      |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Trepang                | 1,700 | 600  | 1,800 |      |      |      |      | 200   | 4,500 | 2,600 |
| Agar-agar              | 1,200 | 800  | 700   |      |      |      |      | 500   | 1,200 | 900   |
| Sandalwood             | 1,400 | 800  |       |      |      |      |      | 300   | 400   |       |
| Sappanwood             |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 300   |       |
| Ebony wood             | 300   |      | 250   |      |      |      |      |       | 500   |       |
| Birds' nests           | 55.5  | 8    | 1.5   |      |      |      |      |       | 78    | 30    |
| Apostles               |       | 150  |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Buffalo sinews         | 30    | 30   | 15    |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Deer meat              |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 300   |       |
| Areca                  | 1,900 | 850  | 1,400 |      |      |      |      | 1,500 | 1,000 | 500   |
| Unrefined oil          |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 500   | 1,500 |
| Dried meat             | 60    |      |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Wax                    |       | 50   |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Deerskins              |       |      | 120   |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| (Company) Cloves       | 4     |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 10    | 2     |
| (Company) Nutmeg       |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 2     | 5     |
| Capok                  |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       | 1,000 | 500   |
| Powdered sugar         |       |      |       |      |      |      |      | 100   |       |       |
| Blue dye               |       | 3    |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Dragon blood           |       | 7    |       |      |      |      |      |       | 500   |       |

|         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |     |
|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----|
| Incense |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 300 |
| Rice    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 20  |

|                            |  |       |        |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |        |
|----------------------------|--|-------|--------|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--------|
| Piece goods                |  |       |        |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |        |
| Buffalo hides              |  | 2,100 | 10,000 | 2,300 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |        |
| Assorted (woolen) fabrics  |  |       | 10     |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 35     |
| Hand canes                 |  |       |        |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 500    |
| (Bundles of) binding canes |  |       | 5,000  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 11,500 |
| Sole leather               |  |       |        |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 500    |

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**NINGBO PICULS**

|              |  |       |     |       |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------|--|-------|-----|-------|----|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Tin (Bangka) |  | 1,000 |     | 800   |    | 50    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Black pepper |  | 500   |     | 1,000 |    | 1,250 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trepang      |  | 700   | 400 | 1,000 |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Agar-agar    |  | 800   | 200 | 500   |    | 800   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sandalwood   |  |       | 100 | 500   |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sappanwood   |  |       | 100 |       |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aguilwood    |  |       |     |       |    | 300   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Black ebony  |  |       | 100 |       |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Birds' nests |  |       |     |       |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Deer meat    |  | 20    |     |       |    |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Deer sinews  |  |       |     |       | 25 | 100   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Table 5** Continued

|                         | 1750  | 1751 | 1752  | 1753  | 1754 | 1755 | 1756 | 1757 | 1758 | 1759 |
|-------------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| NINGBO PICULS           |       |      |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Areca                   | 300   | 100  | 300   |       |      |      | 100  |      |      |      |
| Putchuk                 |       |      | 30    |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Cloves                  |       |      |       | 14    |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Nutmeg                  |       |      |       | 2     |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Blue dye                | 1     | 5    |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Dragon blood            |       | 30   |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Piece goods             |       |      |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Buffalo hides           |       |      |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Assorted woolen fabrics | 10    | 10   |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Hand canes              | 5,000 | 200  | 1,000 | 1,000 |      |      | 100  |      |      |      |
| (Bundles) binding canes |       |      |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Straw mats              |       | 100  | 200   |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| (Laxa) Jennangs canes   |       | 10   |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |



| TONKIN Export Piculs           | 1750 | 1751 | 1752 | 1753   | 1754 | 1755 | 1756  | 1757 | 1758 | 1759 |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|--------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| (Company) Bangka tin           |      |      | 200  | 300    |      |      | 50    |      |      |      |
| Black pepper                   |      |      | 200  | 600    |      |      | 200   |      |      |      |
| Trepang                        |      |      | 20   |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Sandalwood                     |      |      | 150  | 60     |      |      | 50    |      |      |      |
| Sappanwood                     |      |      |      | 100    |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Birds' nests                   |      |      | 1    |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Candy sugar                    |      |      | 40   | 50     |      |      | 80    |      |      |      |
| (Company) Lead (Siam)          |      |      | 400  | 200    |      |      | 200   |      |      |      |
| Putchuk                        |      |      | 5    |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| (Company) Cloves               |      |      | 2    | 5      |      |      | 2     |      |      |      |
| (extra ballast) Powdered sugar |      |      | 50   |        |      |      | 150   |      |      |      |
| (Company) Saltpeter            |      |      | 150  |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Blue dye                       |      |      | 1    |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Dragon blood                   |      |      | 5    |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Gantie                         |      |      | 50   |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Piece goods                    |      |      |      |        |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Porcelain bowls                |      |      |      | 10,000 |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Buffalo hides                  |      |      |      | 1,500  |      |      | 2,000 |      |      |      |
| Oil in barrels                 |      |      |      |        |      |      | 40    |      |      |      |
| Caret                          |      |      |      | 1      |      |      |       |      |      |      |
| Medicine                       |      |      |      | 70     |      |      |       |      |      |      |

**Table 5** Continued

| TONKIN Imports             | 1750 | 1751 | 1752 | 1753   | 1754  | 1755 | 1756 | 1757 | 1758 | 1759 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|--------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Salted eggs                |      |      |      | 50,000 |       |      |      |      |      |      |
| Bangka tin piculs          |      |      |      |        | 3     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Pieces porcelain bowls     |      |      |      | 20,000 |       |      |      |      |      |      |
| Nests of lacquerware boxes |      |      |      | 1,000  | 4,000 |      |      |      |      |      |
| Pieces iron pans           |      |      |      | 100    |       |      |      |      |      |      |
| Pieces crude bowls         |      |      |      |        | 3,000 |      |      |      |      |      |
| Urns with salted eggs      |      |      |      |        | 300   |      |      |      |      |      |
| Chinese armosins           |      |      |      |        | 2     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Pieces cloth               |      |      |      |        | 10    |      |      |      |      |      |

Source: VOC 4387, Batavia, 15 August 1760.

lain down the holds. Porcelain was an ideal cargo in the age of sail because, stowed below, not only did its weight serve as ballast, but it was also a commodity that did not smell. Therefore, it was safe to stow a load of tea on top of it, and on top of that the usual array of trinkets needed for Batavia's local community: writing paper, ink, umbrellas, axe heads, iron pans, and other miscellaneous items.

The *Tek Sing* was extraordinarily large, a sea castle towering high above the waves. No doubt the crew and passengers on board felt safe on such a ship. Its high bulwarks provided a fine defense against pirates. In addition to the normal crew of about 400 sailors and merchants traveling with their wares, no less than 1,600 passengers were aboard this vessel, which must have looked like a floating stadium, as most of the passengers slept on deck, save those who had secured a bunk in the reed-matted cabins high on the poop of the ship. One reason why there were so many people aboard was that it was by now the only junk sailing from Xiamen for Batavia.

After passing the Riau archipelago, instead of heading straight for the Bangka Straits, Io Tau Ko decided to pass through the less well-known and still uncharted thoroughfare between Bangka and the island of Billiton, the so-called Selat Gelasa or Gaspar Straits. There disaster struck: on the evening of 5 February, the *Tek Sing* hit a shoal and sank almost immediately. An English merchantman, the *Indiana*, which happened to be sailing nearby, managed to save about a hundred survivors drifting on wooden rafts and other floatable materials. More people perished in this disaster in tropical waters than died after the *Titanic* hit an iceberg, in 1912.

In April 1999, Captain Mike Hatcher, the diver who made a fortune from his discovery of the porcelain-filled VOC East Indiaman *Geldermalsen*, discovered the wreckage of the *Tek Sing* near the Belvidere Reef north of Selat Gelasa, while looking for another Dutch ship. In the following months, he was able to salvage some 350,000 pieces of porcelain and earthenware from the sea bottom.<sup>42</sup>

The wreck of the *Tek Sing* closed the book on a long era of sea transport in which Batavia was served by the large Yanghang junks. Smaller junks continued to sail in the years that followed, but they were completely replaced by square-riggers after the opium war, when the southeastern Chinese ports that traditionally traded with the Nanyang were forced open to Western shipping.

## Notes

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8. Jaap R. Bruijn, Femme S. Gaastra, and Ivo Schöffner, *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, vol. 1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987).
9. J. A. van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek 1602–1811*, 17 vols. (Batavia 1885–1900), 29 June 1750, 6:68.
10. *Ibid.*, 26 June 1751, 6:68.
11. These special tariffs for the junk trade may have persisted until as late as 1865 when the first general tariff act was introduced, according to P. H. van der Kemp in *Oost-Indië's Geldmiddelen: Japansche en Chineesche Handel van 1817 en 1818* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1919), 14.
12. P. H. van der Kemp, *Oost-Indië's Inwendig Bestuur van 1817 op 1818, Falck als Minister, Weduwefonds, Onderwijs, Wetenschap, Kunst, Kerk en Zending Slavernij, Verblijfrecht, Handel, Scheepvaart* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1918), 282.
13. F. Stapel, ed., *Beschrijvinge van de Oost-Indische Compagnie* ('s-Gravenhage: Rijks-geschiedkundige Publicatien, 1931), 2–1:698.
14. "No Boats to China: The Dutch East India Company and the Changing Pattern of the China Sea Trade, 1635–1690," *Modern Asian Studies* 30.1 (1996): 51–76. See also Chang Pin-tsun, "Shiji shijimo Helan DongYindu Gongsi weishemma bu zhai bao quan dao Zhongguo?," *Zhongguo haiyang fazhanshi lunwenji* [Essays in maritime history], ed. Liu Shih-feng (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2005), 9:139–68.
15. Blussé, *Strange Company*, 127.
16. Fu Loshu, *A Documentary of Sino-Western Relations 1644–1820* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1966), 122.

17. J. de Hullu, "Over den Chineschen Handel der Oost-Indische Compagnie in de Eerste Dertig Jaar van de 18e Eeuw," *Bijdragen Koninklijk Instituut Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië* (BKI), ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1917): 32–154, p. 73.
18. For Blom's objections to the policies, see Blussé, *Strange Company*, 135–37.
19. *Ibid.*, 73–96.
20. Nationaal Archief, 's-Gravenhage. VOC 172, 28 November 1752.
21. VOC 172, written answer of the Gentlemen XVII to Jacob Mossel, 28 March 1754.
22. See J. de Hullu, "De Instelling van de Commissie voor den Handel der Oost-Indische Compagnie op China in 1756," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1923), 79: 529–33, and Liu Yong, *The Dutch East India Company's Tea Trade with China, 1757–1781* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
23. Li Jinming, *Xiamen hai wai jiao tong*, 42.
24. See Zhou Kai, *Xiamen zhi* (Xiamen: n.p., 1832), chap. 7, on taxes, 关赋略·关税科则.
25. Qing Gaozhong shilu (The Veritable Records of the Gaozhong era of the Qing dynasty) juan 714, Qianlong 29, 7th month.
26. T'ien Ju-k'ang, "Shiqi shiji zhi shijiu shiji zhongye Zhongguo fanquan zai Dongnan Yazhou hangyun he shangye shandi diwei" [The position of Chinese sailing vessels in the shipping and trade of Southeast Asia from the seventeenth until the mid-nineteenth century], *Lishi yanjiu* 8 (1956): 19.
27. Van der Kemp, *Oost-Indië's Geldmiddelen, Japansche en Chineesche Handel*, 295. For the description of Commissioner Boeckholtz's visit, see van der Kemp, "Het Afbreken van onze Betrekkingen met Bandjermasin onder Daendels en de Herstelling van het Nederlandsh Gezag Aldaar op den 1en Januari 1817," *BKI* 49 (1898): 1–168.
28. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek V*, 323, 426.
29. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek VI*, 689.
30. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek VIII*, 28, 90, 519.
31. Gerrit Knaap & Heather Sutherland, *Monsoon Traders, Ships, skippers and commodities in eighteenth-century Makassar* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004). The authors do not mention, however, that this trade was largely financed by the Chinese of Batavia. James F. Warren, *The Sulu Zone, The World Capitalist Economy and the Historical Imagination*, Comparative Asian Studies No. 20 (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1998).
32. Gerrit Knaap, *Shallow Waters, Rising Tide: Shipping and Trade in Java Around 1775* (Netherlands: KITLV Press, 1996), 3–16.
33. See, for instance, the gloomy views expressed in April 1778, *Plakaatboek X*, 232.
34. VOC 790, resolutiën Gouverneur Generaal en Raden 1760, 509: Batavia, dinsdag 10 juni 1760, [In margin:] Bezoigne over de Patriase missive van den 10: oct. 1759 rakende de directe vaart en handel op China.
35. VOC 4387, Batavia, 15 August 1760.
36. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek XIV*, 27 April 1804, 35.
37. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek VII*, 23 May 1760, 409.
38. Van der Chijs, *N.I. Plakaatboek X*, 18 July 1785, 791.
39. "Voorschriften op de Vaart en Handel der Chinese Jonken," *Plakaatboek X*, 9 April 1778, 227.

40. Adres Isaac Titsingh in 24 September 1793, *Plakaatboek XI*, 618.
41. Nigel Pickford and Michael Hatcher, *The Legacy of the Tek Sing, China's Titanic: Its Tragedy and Its Treasure* (Cambridge: Granta, 2000).
42. The recent legal tug-of-war about the cargo partly reclaimed from the wreck of this ill-fated junk by Michael Hatcher has contributed to the revived interest in the junk trade to the Nanyang. So enormous was the quantity of the salvaged cargo that it was decided to auction the booty on the Internet.