Restraining violence on the seas: the Tokugawa, the Zheng maritime network, and the Dutch East India Company

Adam Clulow and Xing Hang

In 1665, the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* or VOC) called in its fleet. Intended to strike back against the sprawling Zheng maritime network, which had successfully evicted the Dutch from their colony on Taiwan, the fleet had been sent to restore the Company's damaged prestige in the region while netting valuable goods. Instead, the governor-general had been forced to declare that all Zheng shipping sailing to Japan, the richest market in the region, would be safe from attack. It was a sudden ending for a campaign that had begun in 1662 with oversized plans of carrying the war against Zheng Chenggong, or Koxinga as he was widely known, into the coastal waters of Japan itself, striking vessels where they were most vulnerable as they entered and exited key ports. The decision to halt the campaign stemmed from concerted pressure applied from Nagasaki. There, prohibitions against attacking Chinese vessels on their way to Japan, first articulated over a decade earlier, had been repeated with increasing frequency by Tokugawa officials determined to secure vulnerable shipping lanes. From the Company's perspective, such injunctions were an essentially illegal action taken by a regime that was determined to favour a group they described as the 'Koxinga Chinese' over all others, while preventing the organization from taking its 'lawful revenge' for the loss of Taiwan.¹ But, fearful that its ships would be arrested, its assets confiscated, or its merchants expelled from Japan, VOC officials were forced to step back.

The cessation of the campaign against Zheng shipping shows how a territorial regime with no navy to speak of could still exert influence over the waves, effectively restraining seaborne violence on key shipping lanes. Less than a decade later, however, Tokugawa officials faced a different threat that proved far more difficult

to manage. In late 1672, news reached Nagasaki that a tributary vessel from Ryukyu had been captured on its way from that island archipelago to China.² The Ryukyu kingdom (modern-day Okinawa) held an ambiguous political status. It was connected both to Tokugawa Japan, which held military dominion over the territory via Satsuma domain and to China (first Ming then Qing), to which it dispatched regular tributary embassies. But while its exact political status was kept deliberately vague, ships from Ryukyu sailed under the protection of the Tokugawa military government (*Bakufu*), which relied on the territory as a valuable source of information and an unofficial conduit to China. Now, however, Tokugawa officials received word that a Ryukyuan ship had been captured, its cargo confiscated, and most of its crew massacred, their bodies dumped overboard.

Tokugawa officials had been dealing with violence on the sea lanes criss-crossing East Asia for years, but there was something different about this episode. The ship from Ryukyu had not been attacked by a European overseas enterprise like the Dutch East India Company operating with a flexible dispensation for privateering. Instead, it had been seized by vessels attached to the Zheng state on Taiwan.³ By 1672, when news of the vessel's capture reached Nagasaki, Zheng Chenggong, who had evicted the Dutch from their former colony, had been dead for a decade, but his son and successor, Zheng Jing, was in the process of constructing a mercantile polity on Taiwan with a long reach that extended across the region and into Southeast Asia. Outraged by Zheng actions, Tokugawa officials in Nagasaki responded with a familiar set of tactics by arresting vessels and seizing compensation. This time, however, the aftermath played out very differently. Whereas the Dutch East India Company had always capitulated by staging a swift retreat in the face of Tokugawa action, Zheng Jing pushed back by sending ships to patrol the sea lanes leading into Nagasaki. The result was an impasse and a precipitous drop in Nagasaki trade as the Zheng blockade began to stifle maritime routes leading into the port.

As has been well documented, maritime violence was at the centre of the European push into Asia.⁴ To borrow Carlo Cipolla's words, guns, sails, and empire were bound tightly together.⁵ The overseas enterprises that began to move into Asian waters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were maritime organizations that were geared towards seaborne warfare, and they brought with them a formidable technological combination of heavy guns and robust ship design. Because of this, European overseas enterprises were, from the beginning, heavily dependent on the use of maritime force to attack competing merchant groups and pry open port cities. In such cases, seaborne violence formed a potent and much used bargaining chip to improve trading conditions.

At times, such tactics could yield immediate results, inflicting devastating defeats or forcing dramatic shifts in policy, but this was not always the case. Seeking to push back against oversized notions of European power in early modern Asia, revisionist scholars have shown that European advantage was just as often curtailed as it was deployed to maximum effect, and that sporadic successes

did not translate into a consistent broader picture of victory. They have examined the ways in which the capacity of European fleets to seize ships belonging to, or at least claiming ties with, Asian states was constrained by a fear of reprisals on the ground in a dynamic that Ashin das Gupta first labelled a 'balance of blackmail ... between land and sea'.⁶

While such analysis has offered a highly valuable corrective, it rests on a continuing focus on European overseas enterprises as the sole source of maritime violence. In recent years, historians such as Tonio Andrade have called for a shift to examine the activities of non-European maritime powers, such as the Zheng or the Ya'rubi dynasty of Oman, that were capable of challenging Europeans at their own game.⁷ This chapter seeks to build on that discussion but to push it in a different direction. If Andrade has called attention to the role of 'Asian counterparts to the Portuguese, Dutch and English Empires', then it raises a question as to how local states responded to the activities of these aggressive and well-armed indigenous maritime powers.⁸ The attack on the Ryukyu junk presents one case study, providing an example of an Asian state, Tokugawa Japan, that was compelled to respond to violence from an Asian maritime power, the Zheng network.

This chapter focuses on Tokugawa reactions to two maritime operations: the first carried out by a European overseas enterprise, the Dutch East India Company, and the second by its great Asian rival, the Zheng. By comparing the very different ways these responses played out, we seek to make two points. First, we argue that the rise of Asian maritime powers like the Zheng presented a new challenge for politics across Asia, even for those like Tokugawa Japan that had dealt successfully with European maritime violence. In this case, the regime was forced to confront a sudden escalation that threatened key trade routes. But second, we suggest as well that such crises could be more easily defused as long-standing ties provided opportunities to settle on improvised solutions capable of satisfying different parties. While the situation degenerated quickly after the Zheng enforced a blockade on incoming shipping, it also snapped back with surprising speed. In this way, the case of the Ryukyu junk shows something else: how a dangerous impasse could be unexpectedly resolved via an ambiguous compromise in which multiple sides could claim to have emerged victorious. The rapidity of the settlement depended, we suggest, on a common language of diplomacy that facilitated a rapid convergence on a convenient consensus.

The early modern world was characterized by new and more lethal ways to wage war on land and by sea. The Dutch East India Company and the Zheng maritime network, which provide the focus for this chapter, were both formidable organizations with a reach that would not have been possible in earlier centuries. But local states found, at the same time, new ways to restrain violence by deploying a range of mechanisms. This basic tension necessitates a more expansive understanding of the 'balance of blackmail' that stretches beyond the standard binary of European violence and Asian response to encompass different permutations.

Containing the Company

By 1600, East Asia had long been a centre for global piracy, home to successive waves of large-scale predation that targeted first the Korean and then the Chinese coast.⁹ The arrival of the Dutch East India Company, however, signalled a new phase as the organization's gunned vessels allowed the initiation of prolonged campaigns on the open sea. When it was chartered in 1602, the VOC had been given the right to recruit and deploy its own military forces. By the time it arrived in Japan seven years later, the Company had become a potent maritime power in Asian waters, its ships augmented by an elastic legal framework that could be wrapped around even the most hastily improvised of campaigns. The result was to make the Company the 'world's largest and best-capitalized privateer enterprise'.¹⁰

In the Tokugawa *Bakufu*, which was the effective hegemon over Japan from 1600, the Company encountered a state with very limited maritime resources. Once in Japan, however, the VOC became entangled within a Tokugawa legal order in which its freedom to act against its three primary competitors, Japan-based merchants, the Portuguese, and Chinese traders, was significantly constrained. The *Bakufu* succeeded in containing VOC violence through a series of ad hoc edicts that served to create vaguely defined, but nonetheless highly effective, zones of maritime protection. In 1621, for example, and responding to a string of encounters or near-encounters close to its shores, the *Bakufu* decreed that all merchants in Japanese coastal waters were entitled to protection if they were attacked, regardless of whether or not they carried a maritime pass issued by Tokugawa officials.¹¹ In response, VOC officials, who had previously discussed sending their ships directly into Nagasaki harbour to attack Portuguese shipping there, were forced to abandon any attempt to patrol Japanese waters looking for prizes.

With the expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan in 1639, Chinese merchants sailing to Nagasaki from the China coast and Southeast Asia moved aggressively to fill the space left open in Japan's commercial networks. For the VOC, which had anticipated a lucrative surge in trade following the eviction of their primary European rivals, the increase in Chinese shipping, much of it connected to the Zheng mercantile network, represented a source of consistent frustration. The result was sporadic conflict along the sea lanes leading into Japan. Over time, a pattern began to emerge as VOC attacks on Chinese vessels spurred protests and petitions from the victims as well as Zheng representatives. In the aftermath of such encounters, Chinese mariners sought both protection and restitution from the Nagasaki governor (*bugyō*), a key Tokugawa official posted in the port city and tasked with overseeing foreign trade.¹² After investigating these cases, the *bugyō* issued repeated warnings to VOC officials not to harm Chinese shipping coming to Japan.

In the 1650s, such episodes became more frequent as competition between the Dutch East India Company and the Zheng ramped up, and Tokugawa warnings

became more insistent. Part of the conflict centred on the deerskin trade, which had emerged as a significant point of friction between these organizations. While deer has been hunted for millennia, seventeenth-century Asia witnessed an unprecedented boom that turned deerskins into one of the most heavily traded commodities across the region, with tens of thousands of skins regularly shipped out each year from Ayutthaya (Siam), Cambodia, and Taiwan, which emerged as the three most important points of supply. In Ayutthaya, successive kings had granted monopoly rights over the deerskin trade to the Dutch in 1634, 1645, and 1646.¹³ Although these agreements promised control over the deerskin trade, they proved extremely porous and were filled with holes that could be readily exploited by a combination of local officials and rival traders, usually acting in tandem. Chinese merchants became especially adept at buying up large numbers of deerskins and shipping them out to Japan in secret. In response, the VOC attempted to police maritime traffic leaving Siam by inspecting ships as they departed and confiscating any goods that violated its claimed monopoly.

Such conflicts reverberated out to Japanese ports. In July 1653, a VOC ship, the *Gecroonde Liefde*, lifted 26,366 deerskins from three Chinese junks that were stopped a few miles off the Siam (Chao Phraya) river.¹⁴ When the mariners that had sailed aboard one of these vessels arrived in Japan, they proceeded to complain to Nagasaki officials. According to the head of the VOC factory, 'the people of the [recently arrived] junks, making a great noise, went together with some Japanese ... [who were included] to make the crowd seem larger, to hand over a written complaint to the governors'.¹⁵ Eager to defend the legality of such actions, Company agents explained that they had been given these rights by a 'certain charter from the Siamese king'.¹⁶ They found little support from *Bakufu* officials, who insisted that any attack was unacceptable. By November 1653, Dutch representatives in Nagasaki were cautioned that VOC vessels should neither attack nor in any way damage Chinese vessels on their way to Japan'.¹⁷

In Batavia, the Company's headquarters in Asia, the VOC hierarchy concluded that Tokugawa officials were determined with 'either justice or injustice to protect the Chinese, though they are a rot and ruin to the Company's trade everywhere'.¹⁸ Fearful of the consequences that might flow if such prohibitions were violated, they explained that 'Japanese exactitude in this matter must be satisfied'. Because of this, they had no choice but to let 'the Chinese junks, who sail and trade in our enemies places, pass and repass (upon return) without damaging them'.¹⁹ In 1659, the *Bakufu* went a step further. In October of that year, Zacharias Wagenaer, the Company's senior merchant in Japan, was instructed that the Dutch 'shall not pirate [*bahan*] Chinese ships [*tōsen*] coming by sea to Japan'.²⁰ If such orders were challenged, the *Bakufu* was prepared to take action by seizing assets in Japan. Once this edict was in place, Tokugawa officials moved to enforce it retroactively. In October 1660, they informed the Dutch that they should hand over a large sum to the chief merchant of a Chinese vessel that had, in a separate incident, been

captured three years earlier near the coast of Vietnam. Although the Company resisted, Nagasaki officials eventually forced VOC agents to pay up.²¹

Such episodes established a clear template for how to deal with maritime violence. Confronted with attacks on shipping, the Tokugawa regime moved to place maritime spaces and ships under its protection. If this protection was violated, the Nagasaki *bugyō* was willing to confiscate goods from European assets stored in Japan and force compensation. The 1659 edict referred to the general category of Chinese vessels or *tōsen*, but the benefits of this protection were conferred disproportionately on vessels attached to the Zheng maritime network. The importance of Tokugawa protection to the Zheng has been a central theme in our own work, and it has been underscored in a sweeping study by Cheng Wei-Chung, who argues that 'by issuing a proclamation that no Chinese vessels should be harmed in the waters between China and Japan, ... Japanese authorities spread a protective umbrella over the trading junks of the Cheng regime, keeping them safe from Dutch attacks'.²² In this way, Tokugawa protection settled over Zheng shipping, ensuring that such vessels could not be attacked even when a state of open conflict existed with the VOC. The consequences played out most dramatically in the aftermath of the fall of Taiwan, when the Company's attempts to launch a multipronged assault on Zheng shipping ran up against a wall of Tokugawa resistance.

Restoring the Company's reputation

In April 1661, Koxinga landed at the head of an army on Taiwan, marking the beginning of a campaign that would end nine months later with the surrender of Fort Zeelandia.²³ Confronted with such a clear attack on its possessions, VOC officials in Batavia were adamant that prior restraints must now be lifted and Company warships should be free to attack Zheng vessels wherever they were encountered, including in Japanese waters. The VOC *opperhoofd* in Japan was instructed to inform Edo that the Dutch 'could not refrain from the right, that nature has given all people, to do all damage [to Koxinga's ships] that we are capable of, even in Japanese waters or elsewhere'.²⁴ Such arguments seemed to be buttressed by the destruction of the *Hector*, a VOC ship that had been carrying cargo intended for Japan, by Zheng ships.²⁵ If Koxinga's forces could attack ships carrying goods intended for the Japanese marketplace, then what right did the *Bakufu* have to protest when the Company did the same?

Although its economic importance had been gradually declining for years, the surrender of Fort Zeelandia in 1662 marked a significant setback for an organization that had steadily expanded the boundaries of its influence since its creation.²⁶ Lacking the military resources needed to retake the island, Batavia was determined to strike back at Zheng shipping, both to gain some compensation for its conquered colony but also, VOC officials believed, to prop up the organization's damaged reputation in the region.²⁷ To achieve these ends, the Company assembled a powerful

fleet made up of twelve ships and placed under the command of Balthasar Bort.²⁸ In his instructions, Bort was specifically authorized to take the fight into Japanese waters if prizes could be seized there. His superiors explained that 'we have established and resolved in the council of Indies to attack Koxinga's junks as enemies in Japanese waters regardless of Japanese wishes'.²⁹ In drafting such orders, the VOC hierarchy in Batavia was well aware that Tokugawa officials might react badly to such actions, but they instructed Bort to disregard the potential consequences:

As we are still uncertain how our business will develop in Japan and that it could happen (in the worst case) that the Japanese receive our actions against Koxinga so badly, especially when we attack them in Japanese waters, that they go as far as seizing the Company's ships, people and merchandize. You will nevertheless not reduce in the slightest the hostility against Koxinga, but continue pursuing them, without showing the least respect towards the said Japanese. All junks from Koxinga without distinction from which place they come from or where they are going must be treated as enemies with violence.³⁰

In this way, the need to strike back against Zheng shipping outweighed all other factors. Even if the Company's vessels, goods, or people were arrested, the campaign must continue.

Such ambitions faltered, however, in the face of Tokugawa resistance. On 29 August 1663, a VOC ship, the *Klaverskerk*, encountered and destroyed a Chinese junk on its way from Chaozhou in Guangdong province to Japan.³¹ Although the *Klaverskerk* was not under Bort's command, its actions formed part of the wider campaign against the Zheng. The sinking of a Chinese vessel on its way to Nagasaki generated a sharp reprimand from Tokugawa officials, who, although they refrained from taking direct retaliatory action, were clear that no further assault on Zheng shipping sailing to Japan would be tolerated.³² By 1665, VOC officials meeting in Batavia had resolved to suspend the campaign against Zheng shipping. Meeting on 25 April, they expressed their concern that, in the aftermath of the *Klaverskerk* episode, any attempt to continue the campaign against Zheng shipping might result in the Dutch being permanently expelled from Japan.³³ The result was that they saw little alternative but to follow Tokugawa injunctions by refraining from attacking Chinese junks.³⁴

In its deliberations, the governing council in Batavia had left open the possibility that operations might resume after a year's interval. On 15 May 1665, however, the decision was made to call off the campaign altogether.³⁵ Even as they agreed to halt operations, VOC officials were furious that they could not avenge the 'damage and disgrace' done to them by Koxinga's invasion of Taiwan. It was against the 'law of peoples' (*het volkeren recht*), they declared, to prevent the Company from taking its 'lawful revenge' (*rechtveerdige revengie*) against the Zheng. And yet they saw no other choice, with VOC officials in Japan explaining that the governor-general had now given express orders not to harm Chinese vessels on their way to Japan.³⁶ The

suspension of Bort's campaign demonstrated the ways in which Tokugawa officials were able to effectively restrict and restrain violence. Such mechanisms would be challenged, however, when Zheng ships turned their cannon on a ship from the Ryukyu kingdom.

The case of the Ryukyu junk

In June 1662, having successfully ejected the Dutch from Taiwan, Zheng Chenggong died at the age of thirty-eight. He was succeeded by his son, Zheng Jing, who was faced with multiple threats from domestic rivals determined to seize power – from Qing forces, who wanted to eliminate the last remaining challenge to the legitimacy of the Manchu court, and from the Company, which was still determined to strike back against its old foes. By 1670, he had succeeded in consolidating his power in Taiwan, while rebuilding and expanding an extensive commercial network that stretched increasingly into Southeast Asia. Even as his overall position on Taiwan was strengthened, however, Zheng Jing faced a worsening relationship with Japan and the Tokugawa regime, which had long acted to protect Zheng shipping.

This deterioration was driven by a range of factors. The first centred on a set of increasingly stringent restrictions placed by the *Bakufu* on the export of silver, which was a key commodity in East Asian trade.³⁷ The second hinged on the opening up of tributary relations between Ryukyu and the Qing regime in China. Ryukyu occupied an indeterminate political space in East Asia in this period. In 1609, Tokugawa Ieyasu had authorized an expedition to bring the Ryukyu kingdom, previously an independent maritime hub, into the Tokugawa diplomatic system as a vassal state. Forces attached to Satsuma, a powerful domain in Kyushu, captured the king and brought him to Edo to pledge his allegiance to the Tokugawa. In the aftermath of this campaign, Ryukyu was not, as might have been expected, incorporated directly into Japan. Rather it occupied what has been described as a position of 'dual subordination' to both China and Japan.³⁸ This meant that the territory remained officially within the Chinese tributary system and continued to dispatch embassies to China, while all parties combined to obscure the fact that it had been conquered by Japanese forces. It made for an ambiguous status in which the Ryukyu kingdom was at the same time an independent kingdom and a vassal of both China and Japan.³⁹

For decades, Ryukyu tributary missions had offered homage to the Ming emperors, but with the fall of the Ming, they adjusted to the prevailing political winds. From 1663, ships from the Ryukyu kingdom began (with Tokugawa permission) to make regular voyages, including tributary missions, to Qing ports.⁴⁰ The decision enraged Zheng officials, who viewed the Qing as illegal occupants of the Chinese throne. Less than a decade later, in 1670, Zheng vessels captured a junk from the Ryukyu kingdom, killing most of the crew and seizing its goods. The exact circumstances of the attack remain murky. According to a subsequent letter

sent from Taiwan to Japan, the 'Ryukyu vessel was paying tribute to the barbarians in barbarian territory. Our forces naturally attack barbarian ships. How could we have discerned whether or not it came from Ryukyu?'⁴¹ In this retelling, the attack was presented as the fault of the Ryukyans for, first, operating in a violent zone in which Zheng and Qing forces had repeatedly clashed and, second, failing to properly inform Taiwan. As Zheng officials explained, the 'Ryukyans did not dispatch any ship with a letter to explain the situation', hence making them responsible for any attack. What is not clear is whether the sinking of the vessel was an opportunistic action or part of a premeditated campaign designed to punish Ryukyu for opening relations with the Qing. Regardless, the episode was a direct product of the switch of tributary relations from the Ming to the Qing, which had turned vessels from Ryukyu into clear targets.

For months after the junk from Ryukyu disappeared, no one was sure what had happened to it: whether it had been captured or simply lost at sea. The lack of clear intelligence is not surprising. After their vessel was seized, Zheng sailors had massacred all its crew members aside from three or four youths, who were subsequently taken as prisoners to Taiwan. At some point, however, they managed to escape and make their way back to Ryukyu.⁴² Word of the attack travelled from there to Satsuma, where it triggered an immediate reaction. The sinking of the vessel threatened Ryukyu's role as a conduit between China and Japan and hence struck at Satsuma's profitable intermediary position. Outraged, the lord of Satsuma rushed to the political centre to complain before the shogun. Once in Edo, he insisted that the *Bakufu* must take action for the 'murder of his subjects' or he would be forced to do so himself.⁴³ Not only had Zheng actions resulted in the loss of lives, goods, and money, they were also a direct assault on Satsuma's prestige.⁴⁴

The *Bakufu* moved to respond quickly by borrowing a familiar page from the tactics it had used so effectively against the Dutch. In December 1672, Nagasaki officials seized three of the 'wealthiest Koxinga junks' belonging to Zheng-affiliated merchants, then anchored in Nagasaki harbour.⁴⁵ They were stripped of their masts and held in the harbour under guard as Nagasaki officials proceeded to explain that Zheng actions were 'a horrible and never before heard manner of procedure' that must be punished severely.⁴⁶ By 14 January, compensation had been set. Writing from Deshima, the VOC *opperhoofd* reported that the three vessels would only be permitted to depart once they had paid a total fine of 30,000 taels, split evenly between them. This sum would be forwarded to the Ryukyu kingdom via Satsuma 'in satisfaction for the damage that was done to the Ryukyus'.⁴⁷

With compensation exacted, the *Bakufu* moved to more clearly define the status of vessels from Ryukyu, hence making sure there would be no further repeats of what had happened. In April 1673, VOC agents were summoned to receive their usual orders from *Bakufu* officials in Edo. To the standard clauses about not attacking Chinese vessels and reporting dangerous activity by the Iberian powers were appended a new order specifically addressing the status of vessels from the Ryukyu

kingdom. If the Dutch should 'encounter the vessels of the Ryukyu islands lying east of Formosa towards Japan we should not damage or assault them as they were subjects of the realm'.⁴⁸ What exactly 'subjects of the realm' meant was, as so many aspects of Ryukyu's status, open to interpretation. In the Dutch account, the Ryukyuan were described as *onderdanen* or subjects, a phrase that could encompass domestic subjects, while in the Japanese version they were referred to more ambiguously as the inhabitants of an attached country (*fuzoku no kuni*, 附属之国).⁴⁹ But the overall significance was clear: Ryukyuan vessels were under Tokugawa protection and should not be attacked in any way.

The order not to attack ships from the Ryukyu kingdom was repeated annually for decades after 1673. In his famous account of his experience in Japan, Engelbert Kaempfer recorded instructions he received from *Bakufu* officials that the 'inhabitants of the Ryūkyūs are people that submit to Japan and you shall not capture them regardless of where you come across them'.⁵⁰ It was a blanket protection that was stronger than that afforded to Chinese merchants, who were not given a specific status. Whereas past edicts had ordered that no Chinese ships should be attacked, in the Ryukyuan case it was the crew themselves who, as 'people that submit to Japan', fell under Tokugawa authority. And whereas the security of Chinese vessels was only guaranteed on their way to Japan, ships from the Ryukyu kingdom were placed under *Bakufu* protection wherever they were encountered.

By mid 1673, everything seemed to have been resolved. Compensation had been seized, the Zheng had been warned, and a new edict had placed all vessels from Ryukyu firmly within a zone of Tokugawa protection. Subjected to similar punishments in earlier decades, VOC officials had contemplated staging a maritime blockade to force the *Bakufu* to the negotiating table, but they had always retreated from such tactics for fear that any attempt to make use of superior maritime firepower would generate an even harsher reaction in Edo. Such reservations were clearly expressed by one Company official who wrote in response to the arrest of VOC vessels in Nagasaki harbour that 'to maintain the company's rights through reprisal and to engage in attacks against the Japanese is not advisable now or in the future'.⁵¹

Zheng Jing, however, reacted very differently. Furious at the *Bakufu*'s policy, he placed an embargo on Chinese shipping travelling to Nagasaki. The blockade was expansive enough that it was picked up and recorded by a range of European observers. English merchants at their newly opened factory in Taiwan heard reports of Zheng fleets roaming the waters outside the south-eastern provinces of Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong, ready to intercept and seize ships.⁵² In Nagasaki, the effects were obvious. With the blockade in place, the number of Chinese ships travelling to Japan plummeted rapidly.⁵³ Those few Chinese mariners who made it to Japan recounted harrowing tales of violent encounters with Zheng vessels.⁵⁴ One captain reported in July 1673 that he had departed Canton with a handful of other vessels. Attacked, he had managed to escape, but at a cost of one dead and many injured.

The fate of the accompanying ships is unknown, but it seems likely they were taken by Zheng vessels.⁵⁵

What was clear to all observers was that the 'Tayouanese Chinese' had now 'declared war on the Chinese junks that trade with Japan'.⁵⁶ For the *Bakufu*, which had been largely successful in suppressing VOC violence, the response represented a significant and worrying escalation. A blockade, which the Dutch had occasionally threatened but never actually initiated, was now in place, with Zheng ships cutting off the flow of imports into Nagasaki.⁵⁷ *Bakufu* leaders had long worried about an attempt to target Japan's vulnerable trade routes.⁵⁸ Now, one was in place, and it was not clear how long it would remain in effect or what was needed to lift it.

When it had first arrested the three Taiwanese vessels, the *Bakufu* had suggested that an ambassador could be sent from the Zheng to Nagasaki to resolve the matter.⁵⁹ Even with declines in Japanese supply, much of Zheng Jing's trading network continued to hinge on silver from the archipelago. Because of this, an extended embargo threatened to hurt Taiwan's economic interests as much as it did Japan's.⁶⁰ Not surprisingly then, Zheng Jing was willing to send an ambassador, although he insisted that any settlement would have to be on his terms. He evidently hoped to effect a quick and painful punishment on the *Bakufu*, thereby forcing it to retreat from its past position. In late September 1673, an envoy, Wu Peng, arrived from Taiwan bringing with him a number of bargaining chips, including a small group of Japanese mariners who had been driven onto Taiwanese shores by strong winds and imprisoned there. As further leverage, the ambassador's ships carried within its hold an estimated 250,000 taels worth of cargo, consisting mainly of silk and silk-piece goods, which were in high demand in a market newly starved of access to precisely such goods.⁶¹

Wu Peng stayed in Japan for a number of months, before eventually departing in January 1674. While the limited sources do not enable us to trace the precise course of negotiations, the ambassador appears to have exceeded his instructions. He had been sent to force Tokugawa officials to pull back from their previous position, including the levelling of a 30,000 tael fine, by threatening further attacks on shipping coming to the archipelago.⁶² Instead, Wu appears to have adopted a far more conciliatory attitude. He released the Japanese mariners he had brought with him and accepted a return gift of 2,000 taels from Nagasaki officials.⁶³ Even more striking, the ambassador appears to have suggested that the fault lay on his master's side and that Zheng Jing would accept the shogun's forgiveness for any mistakes he had made.⁶⁴ The reasons for this strategy are not clear, but they likely stemmed from Wu's own role in the Zheng hierarchy. As an official merchant, he had his own stake in preserving the flow of goods between Taiwan and Japan. He had borrowed capital and ships from Zheng Jing and other key members of the Taiwan bureaucracy to trade on their behalf. In exchange, he was entitled to repay the loan at a lower level of interest and acquire a share of the profits. Because of this, Wu, like his fellow official merchants, stood to bear the brunt of any losses if

the blockade continued indefinitely.⁶⁵ As a result, he seems to have been a willing collaborator with Nagasaki officials who also wanted to resolve matters in the swiftest possible way.

When Wu Peng arrived back in Taiwan, however, he received a very different response. According to reports received by the Dutch, the former ambassador was imprisoned for having made promises at odds with his initial instructions.⁶⁶ With Wu's guarantees apparently voided, things settled into an impasse and the blockade stretched on. Zheng Jing seemed to have no interest in settling the conflict on Tokugawa terms, while the *Bakufu* lacked the means to challenge Zheng vessels on the open ocean. Early in 1674, however, this situation was suddenly upended by fast-moving developments in China itself.

The catalyst for this sudden change was the outbreak of a revolt by Qing regional strongmen across southern China against the Manchu court. This massive uprising, usually called the 'Three Feudatories' rebellion, created an opportunity that was rapidly seized for Zheng Jing to join forces with the rebels by moving troops back onto the continent. It also changed the political equation overnight. First, the immediate cause of the conflict was removed. It was no longer possible for Ryukyu to maintain tributary relations with the Qing, because its ships were cut off from access to the ports controlled by the rebel generals.⁶⁷ The result was that the basic problem that had given rise to the dispute was erased. And second, the eruption of the conflict created an urgent need for Zheng vessels that had been used in the blockade to be deployed elsewhere.

Faced with the chance to move back into China, the conflict with the *Bakufu* was shifted far down the list of Zheng priorities. Despite this, it was still necessary to patch up relations so Zheng trading vessels could continue to access Japanese commercial circuits, hence providing a source of income to prop up the war effort. It was a hurdle that many European overseas enterprises had struggled to clear after they attempted to re-establish relations after a period of conflict. In this case, however, the crisis was defused with remarkable speed.

In 1674, a new envoy was sent to Nagasaki with a missive from Taiwan. He carried an unusual but effective document that seemed calculated to give something to both sides, mixing friendly sentiments with an aggressive insistence that Zheng forces had been fully justified in their initial attack on the tributary vessel from Ryukyu.⁶⁸ Although the letter came from Taiwan, it did not originate with Zheng Jing himself. Instead, a revenue official called Yang Ying had penned it, because his superior 'was away at the moment, personally leading troops'. While such an absence was certainly possible, the letter surely reflected Zheng Jing's will but was, we can assume, presented as the work of a subordinate to minimize risks if it was rejected. The contents themselves were cryptic. On the one hand, the letter affirmed Zheng Jing's good relations with Japan in glowing terms. The two polities had been, the letter insisted, bound together by good relations for years as if they were one family. Since 'the subjects of Japan are just like our subjects', Zheng

Jing had decided to return the 2,000 taels paid out to his ambassador. There was no reason, the writer insisted, to accept compensation simply for returning the shipwrecked sailors belonging to such a close ally. At the same time, however, Yang was clear that no blame could be attached to the Zheng for the initial attack on the vessel from the Ryukyu kingdom. Taiwan maintained good relations with Japan but not with the Ryukyu kingdom, which must be considered an enemy because it had betrayed the Ming by going over to the Qing. If there was any culprit for what had happened, it was surely the Ryukyu kingdom, which was directly responsible for 'harming our neighborly ties' when it failed to communicate its plans to Taiwan.⁶⁹

Wu Peng, the overly conciliatory ambassador, received an intriguing mention. Yang explained that he had originally been slated to lead the current mission but had 'contracted an illness and could not board the ship'.⁷⁰ His replacement was Cai Zhuyi, another official merchant, who would hand over the disputed 2,000 taels of silver and place the letter in the hands of the Nagasaki magistrates for forwarding onto the shogun in Edo. The reference to the ambassador raises a number of questions, but it seems most likely that Wu Peng's convenient illness was designed to conceal his ongoing imprisonment. This impression is strengthened by the fact that Zheng Jing was indeed returning the 2,000 taels that Wu Peng had originally accepted on his behalf.

The arrival of the letter signalled the sudden end of the dispute. Although neither side issued any clear statements, what seems most likely is that an improvised compromise that satisfied all parties had been reached. Ryukyu had received compensation for the loss of its vessel and its shipping could now travel securely under Tokugawa protection. The *Bakufu* had punished the offenders and arranged restitution, thereby bolstering its role as Ryukyu's overlord and leaving its prestige intact while restoring a key trade route as Chinese junks started to pour back into Nagasaki.⁷¹ For Zheng Jing as well, it could be interpreted as a victory of sorts. The anti-Manchu rebellion meant that Ryukyu could no longer send tributary vessels to the Qing, hence removing the original problem. At the same time, Zheng Jing's envoy had returned the troublesome 2,000 taels, thereby loudly signalling his refusal to accept *Bakufu* authority, while reaffirming a key alliance with an important commercial and geopolitical partner. And he had done this while opening up the space to devote his full attention and resources to the campaign against the Qing.⁷² The result is that the brewing conflict was erased overnight.

The 'balance of blackmail' in Asia

The case of the Ryukyu junk, which escalated and then de-escalated so quickly, defies easy interpretation. In comparison to similar episodes involving the Dutch, where the *Bakufu* had emerged as the clear victor, the sudden resolution of the

conflict with the Zheng yielded a far more mixed result. On the one hand, it shows the power of well-armed Asian maritime powers like the Zheng. While the Tokugawa regime possessed some tools to force compliance, the power and reach of the Zheng maritime network made it a difficult foe to deal with. Unlike the Dutch East India Company, which deliberately refrained from such steps, Zheng Jing opted to blockade the coast in an attempt to force Tokugawa officials to give in. Whether such a tactic would have proven successful in the long term is difficult to know since Japan remained Zheng Jing's premier trading partner, but it certainly worried Tokugawa officials, who confronted a sudden escalation of the conflict. Whereas the *Bakufu* had largely contained VOC maritime violence, the regime struggled to do the same with the Zheng.

And yet, just as it had escalated rapidly, the conflict ended suddenly as a letter written by one of Zheng Jing's subordinates succeeded in papering over the dispute with a hastily contrived settlement. The turnaround is striking, but in fact such resolutions were not as uncommon as they might seem at first. As has been well documented, diplomatic impasses in seventeenth-century East Asia were frequently remedied through a combination of pre-existing structures mixed with active interventions by local mediators and conveniently self-serving interpretations. Ronald Toby, Etsuko Hae-jin Kang, Gregory Smits, and Jiang Wu have all demonstrated how Tokugawa authorities resorted to ambiguity and even outright deceit in their dealings with Korea, Ryukyu, and the Ming and Qing regimes of China.⁷³ Compared to the aftermath of Hideyoshi's hugely destructive invasion of Korea, which was smoothed over by brokers from Tsushima domain shuttling between the two sides, the dispute between the Zheng and the Tokugawa was far less substantial, but its final resolution shared some similar features. Most importantly, compromises that enabled the re-establishment or continuation of relations invariably looked very different depending on perspective. Just as Chosŏn Korea and Tokugawa Japan had accepted a mutually beneficial resolution that seemed to address their very different, and fundamentally contradictory, concerns, so had the Zheng, the Tokugawa, and Ryukyu managed to engineer a compromise in which they all seemed to emerge as victors.

Across several decades, the Zheng maritime organization proved a formidable challenger to European powers. Before his disastrous adventure on the continent, Zheng Jing succeeded in creating a maritime state that could compete with Europeans at their own game. But we should be careful of assuming that any maritime power, however formidable, could act freely in a region crowded with powerful territorial states. Instead, there was a 'balance of blackmail ... between land and sea' that restrained maritime violence from both European and Asian sources. The result is that any assessment of early modern violence must look not only towards those maritime powers active on the waves, but also to the territorial polities that clustered on the shores and which, even in the absence of their own navies, retained a significant degree of influence.

Notes

- 1 15 May 1665, (NL) Archief van de gouverneur-generaal en raden van Indië (Hoge Regering) van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie en taakopvolgers, 1612–1812, <https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id> (accessed 10 April 2020). Full scans of these resolutions can now be accessed via the pioneering Sejarah Nusantara online platform developed by the National Archives of the Republik of Indonesia and the Corts Foundation.
- 2 Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, access number 1.04.02, Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) [hereafter NL-HaNA, VOC], inventory 1294, Japans daghregister van den jare 1673 gehouden bij den Ed. Martinus Caesar int rijk van Japan, 2 Dec. 1672. Despite the name of the record, the diary begins on 13 November 1672. The capture of this vessel has been referenced in a number of studies. G. Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (Honolulu, 1999), p. 22; U. Kenzen, *Sakoku to han bōeki: Satsuma-han no Ryūkyū mitsuboeiki* (Tokyo, 1981), pp. 80–2; N. Kimura, *Bakuhansei kokka to Higashi Ajia sekai* (Tokyo, 2009), pp. 104–5.
- 3 For the rise of the Zheng, see X. Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c.1620–1720* (Cambridge, 2016). Patrizia Carioti has contributed a number of foundational studies in multiple languages on the Zheng organization. For one example, see P. Carioti, ‘The Zhengs’ Maritime Power in the International Context of the 17th Century Far Eastern Seas’, *Ming-Qing Yanjiu*, 5:1 (1996). See also Cheng Wei-Chung’s important book, which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter: W. C. Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy in the China Seas, 1622–1683* (Brill, 2013).
- 4 A range of activities, from ship-to-ship engagements to blockades to naval bombardments, can be subsumed within the wider category of maritime violence.
- 5 C. Cipolla, *Guns, Sails and Empires: Technological Innovation and the Early Phases of European Expansion, 1400–1700* (New York, 1965).
- 6 A. D. Gupta, ‘Indian Merchants and the Western Indian Ocean: The Early Seventeenth Century’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 19:3 (1985), p. 494. Other scholars have described the same dynamic as a ‘balance of terror’ (Farhat Hasan), a ‘fragile equilibrium’ (Sanjay Subrahmanyam), a ‘stalemate’ (Michael Pearson), and a ‘finely tuned balance’ (Om Prakash). F. Hasan, ‘Conflict and Co-operation in Anglo-Mughal trade relations during the reign of Aurangzeb’, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 34:4 (1991), p. 352; S. Subrahmanyam, ‘Forcing the Doors of Heathendom: Ethnography, Violence, and the Dutch East India Company’, in C. Parker and J. Bentley (eds), *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World* (Maryland, 2007), p. 137; O. Prakash, ‘The Mughal Empire and the Dutch East India Company in the Seventeenth Century’, in E. Locher-Scholten and P. Rietbergen (eds), *Hof en Handel: Aziatische Vorsten en de VOC, 1620–1720* (Leiden, 2004), p. 192.
- 7 T. Andrade, ‘Beyond Guns, Germs and Steel: European Expansion and Maritime Asia, 1400–1750’, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 14:1–2 (2010).
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- 9 For the wakō, see J. Elisonas, ‘The Inseparable Trinity: Japan’s Relations with China and Korea’, in J. W. Hall and J. McClain (eds), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 4, *Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, 1991). For an important recent study of domestic pirates,

see P. Shapinsky, *Lords of the Sea: Pirates, Violence and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2014).

- 10 T. Andrade, 'The Company's Chinese Pirates: How the Dutch East India Company Tried to Lead a Coalition of Pirates to War against China, 1621–1662', *Journal of World History*, 15:4 (2004).
- 11 NL-HaNA, VOC, 1075: 89–92, esp. 92v: Copie remonstrantie van Jacques Specx overgegeven op 't comptoir Firando, 20 Sept. 1621. The complete Japanese edict can be found in Nagazumi Yōko, 'Hirado ni dentatsu saretā Nihonjin baibai buki yushutsu kinshirei', *Nihon rekishi*, 611 (1999). See also A. Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York, 2014), chap. 4.
- 12 Lane Earns' study of the *bugyō* remains one of the best resources available in English. L. Earns, 'The Development of Bureaucratic Rule in Early Modern Japan: The Nagasaki Bugyō in the Seventeenth Century' (PhD Dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1987). From 1633 on, two *bugyō* were appointed each year, one based in Nagasaki, one in Edo. For a more recent examination, see Suzuki Y., *Nagasaki bugyō no kenkyū* (Kyoto, 2007).
- 13 D. Na Pombejra, 'The Dutch–Siamese Conflict of 1663–1664: A Reassessment', in L. Blussé (ed.), *Around and About Formosa: Essays in honor of Professor Ts'ao Yung-ho* (Taipei, 2003), p. 292.
- 14 Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlandse Factorij in Japan, access number 1.04.21 [hereafter NL-HaNA, NFJ], Dagregister Frederik Coyett, inventory number 66: 20 Aug. 1653; 28 Sept. 1653. See also C. Viallé and L. Blussé (eds), *The Deshima Dagregisters*, vol. 12, 1650–1660 (Leiden, 2005), pp. 108, 114–15. The ship appears here as the *Gekroonde Liefde*.
- 15 NL-HaNA, NFJ 66: Dagregister Frederik Coyett, 27 July 1653.
- 16 *Ibid.*, Dagregister Frederik Coyett, 28 Sept. 1653.
- 17 *Ibid.*, Dagregister Frederik Coyett, 10 Nov. 1653. Viallé and Blussé, *Deshima Dagregisters*, p. 121.
- 18 W. P. Coolhaas (ed.), *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-generaal en Raden aan heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (9 vols, The Hague, 1960–present), II, p. 710. We have translated 'patrocineren' as protect, although a more literal translation would be to patronize.
- 19 The warning against attacking Chinese ships was also presented to the VOC in 1657.
- 20 A. Hayashi (ed.), *Tsūkō Ichiran* (8 vols, Tokyo, 1912–13), VI, p. 223.
- 21 NL-HaNA, NFJ 75:56–7: Indijck Dagregister, 30 Oct. 1662.
- 22 Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun*; X. Hang, 'The Shogun's Chinese Partners: The Alliance between Tokugawa Japan and the Zheng Family in Seventeenth-Century Maritime East Asia', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 75:1 (2015); Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*, p. 223. In this way, he suggests that the 'warning from the Japanese shogunal court' provided a highly 'effective source of security' for Zheng vessels.
- 23 As described in T. Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* (Princeton, 2011).
- 24 Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, III, p. 373.
- 25 *Ibid.* In fact, as Andrade explains, the *Hector* 'had been destroyed not by the enemy, but by carelessness'. Andrade, *Lost Colony*, p. 135.
- 26 L. Blussé, '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).

- 27 J. E. Wills Jr, 'Ch'ing Relations with the Dutch, 1662–1690', in J. K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 228.
- 28 P. van Dam, *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, ed. F. W. Stapel (4 vols in 7 parts, The Hague, 1927–54), II. I, p. 721. The authoritative account of the Bort campaign remains: J. E. Wills Jr, *Pepper, Guns and Parleys: The Dutch East India Company and China, 1622–1681* (Cambridge, 1974).
- 29 NL-HaNA, VOC 886:151: Instructie voor den commandeur Balthasar Bort ende den Raedt.
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 Tokyo daigaku shiryō hensanjo (ed.), *Dai nihon kinsei shiryō: Tōtsūji kaisho nichiroku* (Official diaries of the office of Chinese interpreters) (Tokyo, 1984), I, pp. 175–6. The details of the actual encounter are sketched out in VOC sources as well as in documents produced by the Chinese interpreters' office in Nagasaki.
- 32 The episode is discussed in more detail in Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun*, chap. 5.
- 33 25 April 1665, (NL) Archief van de gouverneur-generaal en raden van Indië (Hoge Regering) van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie en taakopvolgers, 1612–1812, <https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id> (accessed 10 April 2020).
- 34 *Ibid.* This was not the only factor. The suspension of the campaign was motivated in part by a belief that it was simply impossible to seal off all the shipping lanes leading into Japan.
- 35 15 May 1665, (NL) Archief van de gouverneur-generaal en raden van Indië (Hoge Regering) van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie en taakopvolgers, 1612–1812, <https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id> (accessed 10 April 2020).
- 36 C. Viallé and L. Blussé (eds), *The Deshima Dagregisters*, vol. 13, 1661–1670 (Leiden, 2010), p. 162.
- 37 For a discussion, see Hang, 'The Shogun's Chinese Partners'.
- 38 N. Mizuno, 'China in Tokugawa Foreign Relations: The Tokugawa *Bakufu*'s Perception of and Attitudes toward Ming-Qing China', *Sino-Japanese Studies*, 15 (2003), p. 119.
- 39 For a more detailed discussion, see D. Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-century Japan* (Berkeley, CA, 2005). See also Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu*. As Smits explains, there was a conscious attempt to present Ryukyu as a separate country.
- 40 Hang, *Conflict and Commerce*, p. 190. Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu*, p. 21. For Ryukyuan tribute to China, see Wang Q., 'Changes in the Composition of Ryūkyū's Tribute to Qing Period China – Historical and Economic Aspects', in A. Schottenhammer (ed.), *The East Asian 'Mediterranean': Crossroads of Culture, Commerce and Human Migration* (Wiesbaden, 2008), pp. 222–3. For Qing relations with the Ryukyu kingdom, see A. Schottenhammer, 'Empire and Periphery? The Qing Empire's Relations with Japan and the Ryūkyūs (1644–c.1800), a Comparison', *The Medieval History Journal*, 16:1 (2013).
- 41 S. Hayashi, *Ka'i hentai* (The metamorphosis from Chinese to barbarian), ed. U. Ren'ichi (2 vols, Tokyo, 1958–59), pp. 72–3.
- 42 This was reported in: 2 December 1672, Japans daghregister van den jare 1673 gehouden bij den Ed. Martinus Caesar int rijk van Japan, NL-HaNA, VOC 1294.
- 43 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 2 Dec. 1672.
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 *Ibid.*

- 46 *Ibid.*, 14 Jan. 1673.
- 47 *Ibid.*, Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*, p. 237.
- 48 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 26 Apr. 1673; Kimura, *Bakuhansei kokka to Higashi Ajia sekai*, p. 105.
- 49 Hayashi F. (ed.), *Tsūkō ichiran* (A catalogue of seaborne traffic) (Osaka, 1967), VI, p. 225; Kimura, *Bakuhansei kokka to Higashi Ajia sekai*, p. 105.
- 50 E. Kaempfer, *Kaempfer's Japan: Tokugawa Culture Observed*, ed. and trans. B. Bodart-Bailey (Honolulu, 1999), p. 231.
- 51 W. P. Coolhaas, 'Een Indisch verslag uit 1631, van de hand van Antonio van Diemen', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap*, 65 (1947), p. 90.
- 52 Chang H. J., A. Farrington, Huang F. S., Ts'ao Y. H., Wu M. T., Cheng H. F., and Ang K. I. (eds), *The English Factory in Taiwan: 1670–1685* (Taipei, 1995), p. 172.
- 53 Tanabe, M., *Nagasaki bunken sōsho*, vol. 1.2: *Nagasaki jitsuroku taisei* (Nagasaki, 1973), pp. 56–7; Iwao S., 'Kinsei nisshi boeki ni kansuru suryoteki kosatsu', *Shigaku-Zasshi*, 62:11 (1953), p. 12.
- 54 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 6 July 1673. Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*, p. 238.
- 55 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 6 July 1673.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 9 July 1673.
- 57 It was a double blow as no ships from Taiwan – a key trading link in its own right – were allowed to sail to Japan. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1673.
- 58 It was something that had preoccupied officials in Edo after the Portuguese had been expelled from Japan in 1639. This concern was expressed to VOC officials, who were asked what would happen if the Portuguese decided to target shipping coming to Japan.
- 59 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 12 Dec. 1672.
- 60 Chang et al., *The English Factory in Taiwan*, p. 172.
- 61 NL-HaNA, VOC 1294: Caesar Dagregister, 20 Sept. 1673.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 18 Aug. 1673.
- 63 It was not a happy homecoming for these shipwrecked sailors, who were taken off in chains. The Dutch suspected that they would be tortured to find out why they had sailed to Taiwan and whether they had willingly violated the *Bakufu*'s restrictions on private trade and travel abroad. *Ibid.*, 20 Sept. 1673.
- 64 This is according to ambiguous reports received by the Dutch, but later events suggest that it was accurate. NL-HaNA, NFJ 87: Dachregister gehouden bij 't opperhooff Joannes Camphuijs in Japan beginnende den 29 October 1673 en eindigende 19 October 1674 [hereafter Camphuijs Dagregister], 24 Nov. 1673.
- 65 For more on official merchants, see Han Z. H., 'Zheng Chenggong shidai de haiwai maoyi he haiwai maoyi shang de xingzhi: 1650–1662', in Xiamen University History Department (ed.), *Zheng Chenggong yanjiu lunwen xuan* (Fuzhou, 1982), pp. 172–3.
- 66 NL-HaNA, NFJ 87: Camphuijs Dagregister, 20 July 1674. This comes from a Dutch source but it appears to be confirmed by the fact that Zheng Jing later decided to return the 2,000 taels received by his ambassador.
- 67 Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*, p. 238.
- 68 Hayashi, *Ka'i hentai*, pp. 72–3.
- 69 Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu*, p. 22.

- 70 Hayashi, *Ka'i hentai*, pp. 72–3.
- 71 NL-HaNA, NFJ 87: Camphuijs Dagregister, 31 July 1674.
- 72 Ultimately, however, the move into China proved disastrous. Within a decade, Zheng Jing was dead and by 1683 Taiwan was in Qing hands.
- 73 R. Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Stanford, 1991); E. H.-J. Kang, *Diplomacy and Ideology in Japanese–Korean Relations: From the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1997); J. Wu, *Leaving for the Rising Sun: Zen Master Yinyuan and the Authenticity Crisis in Early Modern East Asia* (Oxford, 2014); Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu*.