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Introduction

Little is known of the Austronesian Formosa before the seventeenth century. For a historian, its ‘relative obscurity’ is the result of few marketable products and exclusion from Asian trading routes of the time.¹ With the coming of Europeans (the Dutch and the Spaniards) and Chinese ‘maritime mercenaries’ like the Cheng lineage,² the island was gradually connected with the outside world as “an entrepôt for the supply of Chinese goods for Japan, Batavia and Indian markets, and even for Holland” and as “an important link in the intra-Asian trade networks”.³

The Dutch United East India Company (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, referred below as the VOC)⁴ first visited Formosa in 1622 after several unsuccessful attempts at opening the door of China.⁵ In 1624, the company servants came to settle on the southwest of the island and stayed for thirty eight years until they were

¹ Ts’ao, ‘Taiwan as an Entrepôt’, p. 94.

² ‘Maritime mercenaries’ is borrowed from Cheng, *War, Trade and Piracy*, p. 463.

³ Ts’ao, ‘Taiwan as an Entrepôt’, p. 110.

⁴ The VOC was founded on 20th March 1602 with a charter officially guaranteeing its monopoly of “the shipping trade from the Dutch Republic to the east of Cape of Good Hope and through the Strait of Magellan”. Since its establishment, the VOC expanded throughout Asia building trading posts via conquest and contract. After two centuries of exploiting its trade with Asia, the VOC started to feel blows from wars with England, poor bookkeeping management, internal corruption, expensive overseas administration, low returns and liquidity crisis. A combination of these factors brought the dissolution of the VOC in 1680. Gaastra, pp. 10, 70 and 173.

⁵ The VOC tried several times to locate a trading post along the Chinese coast. In 1601, Gaspar van Geroesbergen was sent to open up China by Jacob van Neck on behalf of the Oude Compagnie, one of the predecessors to the VOC, but his mission did not succeed. In 1603, Dutch merchants appeared near Macao and captured a Portuguese merchant ship when they were denied the right to trade. In 1604, a Dutchman went to Beijing with the Siamese embassy, but he could not make the Chinese say yes to his request for trade. In June of the same year, a fleet led by Wijbrand van Waerwijck anchored at the Pescadores. They stayed there for 131 days but were eventually driven away by the Chinese general Shen Yu-jung (沈有容) without obtaining any trade permit. A similar attempt by Cornelis Matelieff in 1607 again failed. In the following years, the VOC turned its attention to Japan where a trading post was secured in 1609 in Hirado Nagasaki, Spice Islands and Java. Not until 1621 when the VOC discovered Spain was considering conquering Formosa did the first Governor-General Jan Pieterszoon Coen decide to strike first and send Commander Cornelis Reyersen to attack Macao or take the Pescadores. In 1622, Commander Cornelis Reyersen arrived at the Pescadores after failing to take Macao, and reconnoitered the Formosan coast in the same year. Groeneveldt, *De Nederlanders in China*; Ts’ao, *Taiwan tsao chi li shih yen chiu hsu chi*, pp. 53-55; Wills, ‘De VOC en de Chinezen’, pp. 158-161; Yang, pp. 6-18; Borao, ‘Fleets, Relief Ships and Trade’, pp. 308-309.

defeated in ‘China’s first great victory over the west’⁶ orchestrated by Coxinga in February 1662 and gave up this trading post to the Chinese in a controversial manner.⁷ Nevertheless, knowing the importance of Formosa in its East Asian network, the VOC returned in 1664 to reoccupy a small islet known then as Quelang (modern Ho-ping Island) in the north, but was soon pushed to give up this foothold in 1668, admitting that “it has all been in vain”.⁸

While the VOC was busy building its trading post in the south of Formosa, the Spaniards based in Manila the Philippines were also working on a plan of conquering the north of the same island.⁹ The VOC had heard of this plan, but it dismissed it as a rumor. By February 1626, the company thought it was but an evil scheme spread to keep their people in the south and to increase trade between China and Manila.¹⁰ In May of the same year, however, the Spaniards reached the north of Formosa and claimed its ownership after waiting for “four days without receiving any affirmative answer [from Formosans] of rendering obeisance to His Majesty”.¹¹ It was then that the VOC confirmed the truth of invasion and asked its patria for help.¹² Luckily for the Dutch company, the Spaniards did not stay for long. After sixteen years of activities in North Formosa, they lost their Fort San Salvador to the Dutch Captain

⁶ This is the subtitle of Andrade’s latest book, *Lost Colony*.

⁷ Controversies of the loss of Formosa were mainly about responsibility. Blussé, ‘Ver sacrum’, pp. 147-148.

⁸ *FE IV*, p. 657.

⁹ This action was not at all sudden. Years before the VOC settled in Formosa, Spain was already toying with the idea of occupying Formosa. In 1586, a proposal of pacifying Formosa was made to the Spanish King Philip II and was approved in 1590. In 1596, Luis Pérez Dasmariña proposed the strategic importance of Formosa. Almost two decades later in 1619, Dominican Bartolomé Martínez again brought up the idea of taking Formosa. After a series of discussion, the final move was made by Spanish Governor Fernando de Silva in 1626. Borao, ‘Fleets, Relief Ships and Trade’, p. 309; ‘The “Justification”’, pp. 345-349 and 360; *The Spanish Experience*, pp. 57-58; Ts’ao, *Taiwan tsao chi li shih yen chiu hsu chi*, pp. 50-51.

¹⁰ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662 II*, p. 52.

¹¹ Borao, ‘The “Justification”’, p. 360.

¹² Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662 II*, p. 58.

Hendrick Harroussé and left North Formosa to their enemies until the Chinese warlord drove them away.¹³ In total, the Spaniards were active in Formosa for sixteen years (1626-1642) and the Dutch for forty-two years (1624-1662, 1664-1668).

As a result of these enterprises, Formosa had a dual European presence from 1626 until 1642, with the Spaniards in the north and the Dutch in the south. North Formosa, in particular, had consecutively housed two groups of Europeans that wrote about their experience in the region, first the Spaniards and later the Dutch. In other words, there exist now at least two sets of archives about the region (North Formosa) and its inhabitants (North Formosans). Both archives have been largely selected, collated, transcribed, translated and published. They form the basis for this thesis.¹⁴

About the Sources

Spanish sources on the Spaniards in North Formosa have been edited and published by José Borao in two volumes of *Spaniards in Taiwan (SIT)*. Most of the documents in his collection are reports by missionaries such as Dominicans and Franciscans. Some are letters from the Spanish personnel in Manila and Keelung written either to each other or to the Spanish King in Europe, and others are trade inventories, meeting minutes, deliberations and interrogation records. Some VOC

¹³ Chiu, p. 88.

¹⁴ According to Ts'ao, before the Europeans came to Formosa, Chinese people had established trade relations with Formosans. However, Chinese sources about Formosa are at best sporadic. *Book of Documents* (尚書), *Records of the Grand Historian* (史記), *The Book of Han* (前漢書), *Records of the Three Kingdoms* (三國志), *Book of Sui* (隋書) or *Dao Yi Zhi Lue* (島夷志略) by Wang Da-yuan (汪大淵) are Chinese classics that describe Formosa before the fourteenth century. *Small Sea Travel Diaries* (裨海紀遊), written by Yu Yong-he (郁永河) in 1697, is the first day-to-day Chinese travel account in west and north Formosa. Several Chinese accounts about Formosans have been translated by Thompson. Ts'ao, *Taiwan tsao chi li shih yen chiu hsu chi*, pp. 39-41 and 44; Keliher, p. xiv; and Thompson, 'The Earliest Chinese Eyewitness Accounts'.

documents are also included. Based on these sources, Borao writes about North Formosa and North Formosans, calling the Spanish settlements in North Formosa “the most stable” and North Formosans “not given to the vices of the flesh” or presumably lawful and virtuous.¹⁵

Dutch sources are rich in number and kind. For the period before the VOC arrived at Formosa, W. P. Groeneveldt’s *Nederlanders in China* remains the authoritative source of information. Covering the forty-two years when the VOC operated Formosa as its trading post, W. M. Campbell’s *Formosa under the Dutch (FD)* appears in the early twentieth century as the earliest, though limited, compilation and translation of Dutch missionary reports, VOC letters and part of the ‘Baroque account’ by the last Dutch Formosa Governor Frederik Coyett, *Neglected Formosa*.¹⁶ To complement Campbell’s work, more sources have been made available since mid-1980s by the efforts of Leonard Blussé, Natalie Everts and other colleagues. They include four volumes of *De Dagregisters van Het Kasteel Zeelandia (DZ)* and four volumes of *The Formosan Encounter (FE)*. *DZ* covers island-wide activities of the Dutch company, and *FE* is devoted to the company’s interactions with Formosans. In the four volumes of *FE*, a total of eight hundred forty-one pieces of documentation has been transcribed and translated. They are “decisions or *resoluties* taken during [meetings at Zeelandia Castle about administrative and trading matters]”, “*dagregister* or diary that was kept by the governor” and “letter[s] on the general political situation on the island and the trading activities of the company”.¹⁷ Furthermore, there are

¹⁵ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, pp. 99 and 115.

¹⁶ *FD*, pp. viii-x. By Baroque, Borao means a type of pessimism plagued with delusive feelings and deceptions. Governor Coyett’s *Neglected Formosa* exhibits a similar pessimism, which laments the loss of honorable times and worthy services. Borao, *The Spanish Experience*, pp. 5, 29, 201 and 204.

¹⁷ ‘Introduction’, *FE I*, pp. x-xi.

letters, accounts and journals by soldiers, missionaries, expedition captains and fort commanders. On the whole, they provide information about Formosans from many parts of the island, documenting their encounters with the VOC and its servants. In addition to *FD*, *DZ* and *FE*, there is also a collection of letters written by VOC Governor Generals in Batavia to the Dutch Republic. They are edited by Cheng Shao-gang as his PhD dissertation for Leiden University. This collection offers a view to Formosa considered in the larger picture of the company trade network across monsoon Asia. Finally, Pol Heyns and Cheng Wei-chung have published the placards, marriage registers and baptism records issued on the Dutch Formosa.

The amount of information about North Formosa in the Dutch sources increases after 1642 and reaches its peak from 1664 onwards as the VOC only had a small place in the north during its second return. Just as Borao uses Spanish sources to write about the place and its inhabitants, historians have also used Dutch documents to deal with the same topic. John Wills implies the people from Kimaurij (a Formosan village located “a cannon shot away”¹⁸ from the Dutch fortress) were difficult;¹⁹ the editors of *FE IV* mention the unreliable character of the Basay in their ‘Introduction’;²⁰ Peter Kang’s Theodore (the headman of Kimaurij) was both crooked and embroiled;²¹ and Tonio Andrade’s North Formosans were “ambivalent natives”²² living in an unhealthy and isolated world. Interestingly enough, while Spanish sources enable Borao to describe North Formosa and its inhabitants positively, Dutch documents seem to direct historians towards a negative image.

¹⁸ Borao, *SIT*, p. 286.

¹⁹ Wills, ‘The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung’, p. 276.

²⁰ ‘Introduction’, *FE IV*, p. xv.

²¹ Kang, ‘Crooked and Embroiled’, p. 42.

²² Andrade, *Lost Colony*, p. 317.

Was North Formosa ‘a stable settlement’ or ‘an unhealthy and isolated world’? Were North Formosans ‘not given to the flesh’ or ‘difficult, unreliable, crooked and ambivalent’? Why would one place and its inhabitants be interpreted as approaching two ends of the human nature spectrum from good to evil? Who or what is ultimately ambivalent, the subject or the historian? These are the questions that initially inspired the making of my thesis. On one hand, I want to discover the world of North Formosa and North Formosans as it was (or could have been) experienced by the Spaniards and the Dutch in the seventeenth century. On the other hand, I, based on my knowledge of that world, wish to answer questions raised above about the ambivalence of North Formosans

About Ambivalence

According to *Oxford Dictionary of English*, the word ‘ambivalence’ means “the state of having mixed feelings or contradictory ideas about something or someone”.²³ In sociology, it denotes ‘the dual consciousness’ a class holds against certain central institutions in society.²⁴ In psychology, it refers to two opposing emotions (especially love and hate) in one person that can be a sign for mental illnesses like schizophrenia.²⁵ In postcolonial studies, it speaks about “the difficult situation of the subaltern subject torn between the material benefits colonization sometimes

²³ "ambivalence noun" *Oxford Dictionary of English*. Edited by Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2010. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universiteit Leiden - LUMC. 19 July 2012 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t140.e0976630>>.

²⁴ "ambivalence" *A Dictionary of Sociology*. John Scott and Gordon Marshall. Oxford University Press 2009. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universiteit Leiden - LUMC. 19 July 2012 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t88.e63>>.

²⁵ "ambivalence n." *A Dictionary of Psychology*. Edited by Andrew M. Colman. Oxford University Press 2009. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universiteit Leiden - LUMC. 19 July 2012 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t87.e343>>.

brings...and the crushing weight of the loss of national sovereignty”; according to Homi Bhabha, the effect of such struggle is a form of resistance.²⁶ For the writing of early modern indigenous communities that are unexpectedly caught in cross-cultural contexts, ambivalence seems to fill the entire page. First, the historical actors of those reconstructed intercultural pasts appear ambivalent; second, the historiographies also show ambivalence towards the reconstructed pasts and those who reconstruct them.

In his study, Daniel Richter finds the Iroquois-English relation in colonial North America is “of alliance and defeat, spiced with a touch of English betrayal...[and] of local and supralocal leaders working at cross-purposes, struggles and alliances among competing interest groups”.²⁷ It goes from a ‘partnership’ in trade and military campaign to a fixed “obedience to his Majesty [of England]”.²⁸ Various brokerage systems gradually decay, and the careers of native cultural brokers fluctuate under ambivalent pressures. Also, reviewing European-Polynesian encounters in the eighteenth century, Ian Campbell indicates that “the behavior of the participants themselves has the appearance of ambivalence”.²⁹ Polynesians might have exercised three basic responses to Europeans (hostility, fear or caution and ceremonial reception) as William Pearson claims,³⁰ but the ‘unusual’ situation of encounter frequently drives them to ‘unusual’ behaviors such as theft out of curiosity. The culture of contact, as Campbell suggests, was “created by a process of trial and error as the contact participants experimented with behaviour...and abandoned...the principles or

²⁶ "ambivalence" *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*. by Ian Buchanan. Oxford University Press 2010. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Universiteit Leiden - LUMC. 19 July 2012 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t306.e22>>; Bhabha, pp. 157-158.

²⁷ Richter, ‘Cultural Brokers and Intercultural Politics’, p. 42.

²⁸ Richter, ‘Cultural Brokers and Intercultural Politics’, pp. 41 and 65.

²⁹ Campbell, p. 222.

³⁰ Quoted in Campbell, p. 223.

customs which governed their ordinary lives”.³¹ This process of trial and error eventually contributes to the ambivalence of participants in the history of contact. In these two cases, Native Americans and Polynesians showed ambivalent attitudes towards Europeans.³² While the ambivalence of historical actors is a result of unpredictable encounters, the ambivalence of historiography lies very much in the debates over who should write about this past and based on what.

In his experience with Native American historiography, Richter finds certain historians, Natives Studies specialists and tribal leaders still hold that “only Indians can truly understand Indian experiences, and native orally transmitted histories must take precedence over Euro-American documentation”.³³ An underlying assumption goes that writers of Native American History are at best native Indians and the sources they use are preferably indigenous oral tradition. A similar sentiment can be found in Pacific Historiography where the debate is tagged with ‘insider/outsider dichotomy’. Insiders are ‘indigenous peoples’ who are “inherently better placed to write their own history because they had an insider’s perspective”, whereas outsiders are ‘expatriates’ who despite their research and publication are after all unable to “enter the mental world of the Pacific Islander”.³⁴ In both Native American and Pacific historiographies, the value of reconstructing indigenous history in the making of ‘a shared past’ that belongs to a ‘shared ownership’ are obviously recognized.³⁵

³¹ Campbell, p. 231.

³² Likewise in South Asian historiography, the Prava community of the Maduari Coast of the seventeenth century used “two minds” to maintain their material and spiritual interests against European patrons. The dubashes of Madras of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also showed “latent ambivalences...in the colonial situation”. Basu, p. 2; Vink, p. 66. See also **Chapter III. ‘The Basay of North Formosa’**.

³³ Richter, ‘Whose Indian History?’, p. 383.

³⁴ Munro, pp. 232-233.

³⁵ Richter, ‘Whose Indian History?’, p. 389; Munro, p. 236.

However, in both historiographies, strong skepticism also makes certain practitioners eager to cleanse themselves of an ‘original sin’ of being non-native by stressing the crucial role of an outsider who can balance the view of an insider.

My reconstruction of North Formosa and its inhabitants in the seventeenth century will also deal with a similar ‘ambivalence’. As mentioned, North Formosans as the historical actors in their encounters with Europeans have previously been portrayed as ‘ambivalent’ in their attitudes. To write about them means to me that I should seek to identify the content and form of this ‘ambivalence’. I intend to use three experiments to reach that aim.

In Chapter I ‘The Place and Its Peoples’, I experiment with the writing of a micro-ethnography to reconstruct the environment and ways of living in North Formosa along four subsections: ecology, economy, politics and society. In Chapter II ‘Two Narratives of Encounter’, I experiment with the writing of biographical histories to reconstruct North Formosans’ various responses to Europeans. In Chapter III ‘The Basay of North Formosa’, I experiment with nomenclature analysis to reconsider the nature of Basay in response to previously reconstructed community histories of the Basay. Each chapter is divided into two major parts. First, I will specify the type of applied method while mentioning similar exercises by other historians. Second, I will present the proposed reconstructions in several subsections. A final analysis of these propositions will be found in the Conclusion where I also return to the discussion of ambivalence.

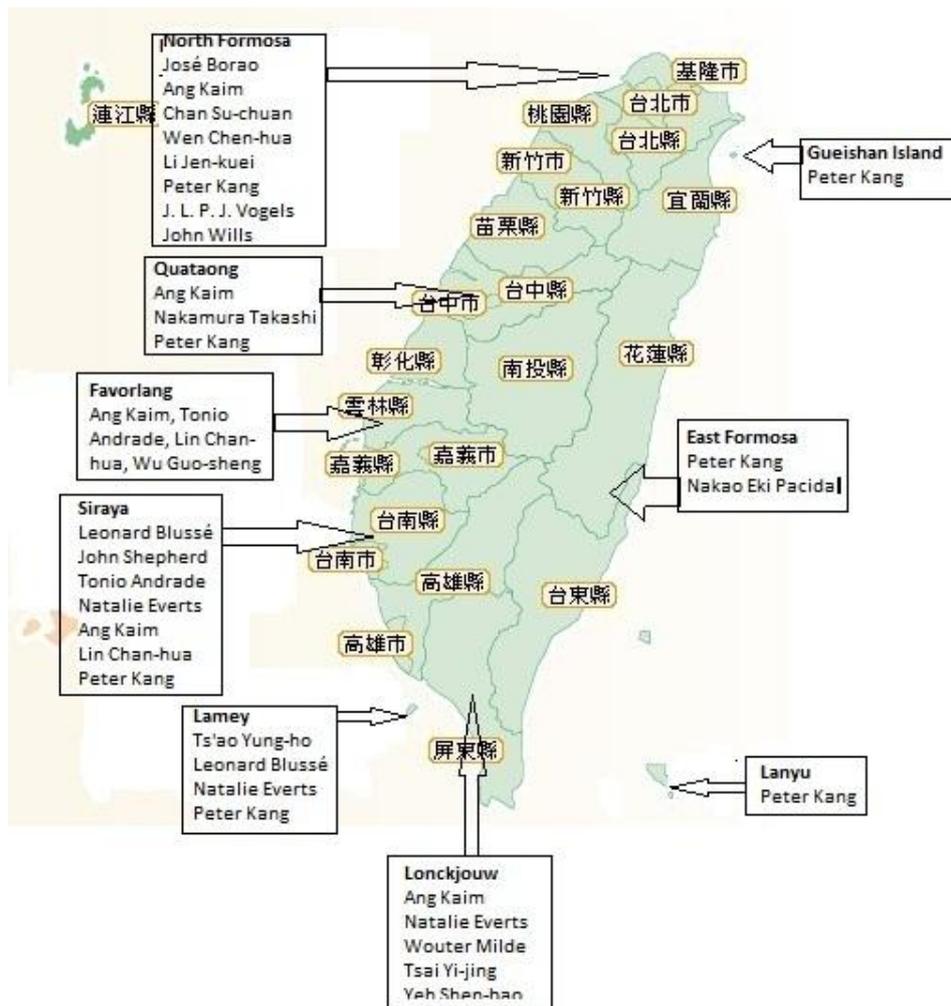
Early Modern Formosan Historiography

Why do I choose the case of North Formosa and North Formosans? In addition to the fact that this part of the island has been visited and written about by two European nationalities and therefore offers the possibilities for comparing archives, a discussion of Early Modern Formosan historiography will also provide another answer.

Reviews of this historiography are not scarce. They have been done based on nationality, period, theme or individual interest,³⁶ but they do not show the development of historical studies for indigenous regions. In my present review, seven indigenous regions have been studied and written about at different levels: Siraya, Favorlang, Quataong, North Formosa, East Formosa, Lonckjouw (South Formosa) and the Surrounding Islets (Lamey, Lanyu and Guei Shan). This field is almost “an open hunting ground”.³⁷ Moreover, the studies that have been produced to date can also be divided into four types of literature: contact, reconstruction, reflective and alternative-source.

³⁶ Cheng, *Helan ren zai fuermosha*, pp. xli-lviii; Wen, pp. 173-176; Lin Wei-sheng, pp. 12-38; Kang, ‘Jin shi nian (1993-2003)’, pp. 191-202.

³⁷ Blussé, ‘Taiwan and its Early Modern Past’, p. 14.



Early Modern Formosan Historiography by map (Palemeq, 2012)

Contact Literature

The moment of contact is the most studied subject in various regions. Using primary sources, historians describe different contacts, explain their causes and effects, and assess their impact upon both sides of the encounter, namely the Europeans and local inhabitants. To name a few examples, Andrade studies indigenous politics in Siraya³⁸ and the deer-hunt clashes in Favorlang;³⁹ Ts'ao Yung-ho and Blussé

³⁸ Andrade, 'The Mightiest Village'.

co-author an article about the depopulation of Lamey;⁴⁰ and Peter Kang looks at the VOC's gold adventures to East Formosa.⁴¹ The most recent and comprehensive study of the moment of contact is Chiu Hsin-hui's *The Colonial 'Civilizing Process* in which she analyzes how the Formosans from all over the island interacted with the Dutch by employing "a persistent Formosan situational logic, which dominated the practice of local politics and determined the conduct of the competitive indigenous power-holders".⁴²

As David Hanlon observes from Pacific historiography, there is a certain danger in the writing of contact literature, that is "the privileging of the Euro-American presence in the history of the islands of Oceania".⁴³ A similar danger is also present in Early Modern Formosan historiography, and here the privileging is either with the Dutch or with the Chinese. In order to show "the first and most important stage of Taiwan's Sinification"⁴⁴ or the island-wide Dutch colonial activities,⁴⁵ historians cut Formosan societies into pieces and regroup them in proper paragraphs to support their central theses that do not necessarily and entirely focus on Formosans. It is true that Formosans are always mentioned in the process of analysis, but the result of such study produces a more satisfying answer to a historian's major research concern (Sinification or Dutch colonial governance) than a specific history for any indigenous village or people. Formosans do not own the history of colonial institutions like

³⁹ Andrade, 'Pirates, Pelts, and Promises'.

⁴⁰ Ts'ao and Blussé, 'Hsiao Liu hui yüan chu min te Hsiao shih'.

⁴¹ Kang, 'Zhi min zhu yi'.

⁴² Chiu, p. 228.

⁴³ Hanlon, 'Beyond "the English method of Tattooing"', pp. 26-27.

⁴⁴ Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese*, p. xvi.

⁴⁵ Chiu, *The Colonial 'Civilizing Process'*.

landdag, hunting license, mission, gold expedition, the prince's flag or a rattan cane, but share it with the Dutch and Chinese settlers.

Reconstruction Literature

Historians also attempt to reconstruct certain aspects of a Formosan society from the sources available to them. John Shepherd reconstructs the mandatory abortion among the Siraya;⁴⁶ Everts talks about Siraya marriage customs;⁴⁷ and Kang discusses the trading network in North Formosa with the Basay people as its most efficient middlemen.⁴⁸ Some case studies stay within the Dutch period, while some continue to the post-Dutch Ch'ing period to show changes of a *longue durée* in Formosan societies.

These reconstruction studies exemplify the potential and the possibility of using non-indigenous sources. By conducting “conventional archival research”, attempting “a cross-cultural perspective” and exercising “informed imagination”,⁴⁹ the previously mentioned outsider-historians⁵⁰ are able to produce in-depth studies that remain to be reached by either Siraya- or Basay-insiders. In fact, it is very difficult to get any inside account of Siraya or Basay societies. These two indigenous groups are so-called Plains aborigines in modern Taiwan. From the north to the south of the island, Plains aborigines include Kavalan, Ketagalan (further divided into Basay, Ketagalan and Kulo), Taokas, Papora, Babuza, Hoanya, Pazeh and Siraya (further

⁴⁶ Shepherd, *Marriage and Mandatory Abortion among the seventeenth-century Siraya*.

⁴⁷ Everts, ‘Indigenous Concepts of Marriage’.

⁴⁸ Kang, ‘Shi qi shi ji’.

⁴⁹ Munro, p. 234.

⁵⁰ Wills is American. Everts is Dutch. Kang is Han Chinese.

divided into Siraya, Makatao and Taivoan).⁵¹ For hundreds of years, they experienced waves of Chinese immigration, under whose influence they were gradually assimilated to the virtual effect of extinction. Many languages are dead, and many cultures are lost. The tragedy was already well underway in the early twentieth century when Japanese anthropologist Ino Kanori visited Plains aborigines in the north. Seeing the speedy loss of Plains aboriginal cultures and languages, he called urgently upon serious studies and researches; otherwise, the future generation could only cry in the ruins of these Plains aborigines.⁵² The reconstruction of Formosan societies relies very much upon existing linguistic data and historical sources, and Taiwanese scholars frequently use a multi-disciplinary approach to the best of their abilities.

Reflective Literature

As the term suggests, reflective literature goes beyond historical sources and looks into the way history is used in different contemporary contexts. Kaim Ang, Kang and Blussé contribute to the creation of reflective literature. Inspired by different occasions—Ang by a ‘Dutch’ folksong that was collected from Paiwan people;⁵³ Kang by a ‘Dutch descendant’ the British consul Robert Swinhoe met in the nineteenth century;⁵⁴ and Blussé by the memorial tablet at the entrance to the Cave of

⁵¹ Li, *Taiwan Pingpuzu de li shi yu hu dong*, pp. 38-39.

⁵² Ino, p. 50.

⁵³ Ang, ‘Between Legend and Historical Fact’, pp. 8-12. There are now fourteen legally-recognized indigenous peoples in Taiwan: Amis, Paiwan, Atayal, Bunun, Tsou, Rukai, Puyuma, Saisiyat, Yami, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya and Seediq. Paiwan is the second largest group. See the official website of the Council of Indigenous Peoples, Executive Yuan, Taiwan (<http://www.apc.gov.tw/portal/index.html>).

⁵⁴ Kang, ‘Red-Haired Ancestors?’, p. 2.

the Black Spirits on Lamey⁵⁵—they reflect upon the nature of memory and the manipulation of history.

In Ang's case, the 'Dutch' song is actually a song written in Taiwanese language and circulated during the post-Dutch period. The fact that Paiwan people ascribed it to the Dutch indicates the incompleteness of indigenous memory. It is necessary to carefully examine such memory before applying it to the writing of history.⁵⁶ In Kang's case, the Dutch descendant Swinhoe met in Sinkan (a Siraya village) was a fake, but his personal claim shows how Sinkan, the closest Dutch ally in the seventeenth century, was trying to maintain imaginary ties with the Dutch to compensate the loss of their special status after their ally was ousted by the Chinese.⁵⁷ Finally in Blussé's case, the manipulation of history for political purposes is straightforward. Various elements from different sources are mixed "with no regard for historical accuracy" and the historian believes one must return to the archives for the "true chain of events".⁵⁸

Alternative-Source Literature

This particular literature results from historians' dissatisfaction with non-indigenous sources. Some historians worry that non-indigenous sources will not yield an indigenous perspective, so they attempt to find alternative sources. Lin Chang-hua studies Formosan languages kept by Dutch missionaries in a gospel

⁵⁵ Blussé, 'The Cave of the Black Spirits', pp. 142-143.

⁵⁶ "我認為，中外史料上的地名與社名，假使能先進行古今對照考訂，並究其變遷，則這些零散、片段的資料，即將成為建構歷史的重要材料". Ang, 'Between Legend and Historical Fact', p. 12. My paraphrase.

⁵⁷ "記憶本身並非空穴來風，亦有先人的歷史經驗為基礎". Kang, 'Red-Haired Ancestors?', pp. 19 and 24. My paraphrase.

⁵⁸ Blussé, 'The Cave of the Black Spirits', pp. 145-146.

translation, dictionary, phrase collection or catechism manual, thinking that these sources will offer a breakthrough in the midst of studies that depend very much upon non-indigenous sources.⁵⁹ Indigenous historians like Tsai Yi-jing and Yeh Shen-bao⁶⁰ return to indigenous villages and oral tradition.

In her case of the Paiwan chiefdom Tjaquvuquvulj, Tsai finds how curiously the Dutch and Paiwan people interpreted the 1661 punitive expedition to Tjaquvuquvulj in a different way. Indigenous sources say the Dutch were defeated, but Dutch sources do not mention any defeat.⁶¹ Considering that the VOC was at that moment plagued by Coxinga and also that Tjaquvuquvulj according to local tradition was a strong chiefdom, she therefore concludes in this case indigenous sources are likely more accurate than the Dutch ones. The invasion did occur, but the Dutch did not mention their failure.⁶² For Tsai, this correction matters not only because history is rewritten, but also because the pride of Paiwan people can be reasserted. It will help them to claim self-government in the future.⁶³

In his study of gold routes, Yeh compares VOC sources with Paiwan oral tradition. He finds that the company must have used the indigenous ‘east-west marriage circle’

⁵⁹ “對於 17 世紀的台灣歷史研究，常有陷入荷蘭人觀點的困境。因為幾乎所有的紀錄都是來自荷蘭人的手筆。由於當時原住民並沒有文字紀錄保存下來，來比對荷蘭人紀錄的可靠性；然而藉著研究《福爾摩沙語詞彙集》所收錄的詞彙，可以提供方法論上，顯示原住民觀點的可能性。因為除了借用外來字詞以外，西拉雅人也常以自己的文字來描述異國的事物，因此相當程度的展示了原住民自主的觀點”。Lin, ‘Siraya zu qun ren tong de zhui suo (xia)’, p. 143. My paraphrase.

⁶⁰ Tsai is Amis and Yeh is Paiwan.

⁶¹ Similarly, Belich argues that the British did not win the war against Maori in the nineteenth century, but they wrote as if they did. Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*.

⁶² Tjaquvuquvulj territory covers modern Shizi Township (獅子鄉) and Mudan Township (牡丹鄉) in Pintung County. It also reaches Daren Township (達仁鄉) in Taitung County.

⁶³ “本文藉著國內外文獻的再詮釋、再想像來呈現排灣族大龜文王國當時存在的樣貌……盡可能還原這段歷史的真實原貌……進而更清晰地瞭解曾經存在過的大龜文王國的實力及影響，重新塑造排灣族群的集體認同意識，讓後人分享祖靈的榮耀，強化原住民自治的信心與能力”。Tsai, pp. 176-193. My paraphrase.

to reach East Formosa. This circle is well-known among Paiwan villagers because their nobility have led them to hunt, farm, marry and migrate within this circle for generations.⁶⁴ In other words, there was already a fairly active west-east overland traffic before the VOC ventured to this part of the island. Europeans would not have reached East Formosa without any help from Paiwan villagers.

To summarize from these four types of literature, the study of Siraya is by far the most developed because the Dutch Fort Zeelandia was located in this region as the center of power and the servants of the VOC had the most intensive contact with the Siraya. It is followed respectively by the studies of Favorlang, East Formosan and the Surrounding Islets. The study of Lonckjouw in South Formosa has a slow development, so does the study of North Formosa. In other words, there is still much to be done about the last two regions.

In the case of North Formosa, a different picture of the VOC will be shown. The Dutch company had been the “the most powerful village”⁶⁵ in the southwestern plains. After it went to the North, however, the company servants became the “mice in a trap”.⁶⁶ This sharp contrast in the fate of the European company servants stationed there is challenging at the least. It propels one to ask how and why. My thesis is also an attempt to find the answer.

⁶⁴ “荷蘭公司東台灣探金排灣族境內之路線，並非荷蘭人自行開闢的路徑，而是沿著排灣族東、西方「貴族通婚圈」的路線，亦即排灣族貴族與其屬民狩獵、耕作、婚姻、遷徙等的路線”。Yeh, p. 280. My paraphrase.

⁶⁵ Andrade, ‘The Mightiest Village’, p. 311.

⁶⁶ *FE IV*, p. 130.

The Anxiety to be written

Little is known of the Austronesian Formosa before the seventeenth century. For historians, this obscurity has a historical explanation. For Austronesian descendants like Tsai and Yeh, however, there is more to be addressed. It ties in with an anxiety to be written about against a mainstream written culture.

In Taiwan the dominant historiography is Chinese. According to Q. Edward Wang, Taiwanese historiography has gone through three stages. The first stage of source criticism and empirical research (1949-1960s) was heavily influenced by Chinese scholars who came with the Nationalist Party or Kuomintang at the end of Second World War. The second stage of combining history with the social sciences (1960s-1990s) was largely inspired from the west. The third stage (1990s-present) is engaged in rewriting the island's history with an emphasis on its multi-cultural past. Each stage has its particular source of inspiration and reflects the atmosphere of the time.⁶⁷ The biggest problem this development brings to an indigenous historiography is how indigenous history succumbs to Chinese influences. Formosans have always been written about without being really recognized by the island's Chinese-centric historiography.

Tsai and Yeh have seen the problem and have attempted to deal with it in separate cases. For Tsai, her study of Tjaquvuquvulj intends to strengthen a collective identity among Paiwan people and boost their confidence.⁶⁸ Likewise, Yeh also shares a

⁶⁷ Q. Edward Wang, pp. 330-331.

⁶⁸ Tsai, p. 193.

pro-Paiwan attitude when he explains the VOC's failure on Formosa was rather due to its greed and blindness to local politics.⁶⁹ Both of them are doing more than writing history. They hope to create an impact outside academia. As Tan points out in his review of five Paiwan historians, this effort has its advantages and disadvantages.

For indigenous peoples, writing indicates a level higher in knowledge and power. It has functions. Most share a strong sense of responsibility, and they write primarily for empowerment.⁷⁰ Indigenous historians, for instance, often look inward at the cost of looking at the outside world, and they stress a given agency at the cost of a historical agency that could be generated in an encounter.⁷¹ To reverse the privileging of non-indigenous actors, they deliberately privilege indigenous actors in their writing. This resembles the replacement of Eurocentrism with Afrocentrism in African historiography.⁷² Such effort is both attractive and dangerous.

Is my thesis on North Formosa and North Formosans also 'attractive but dangerous' because I am writing about aborigines in the north while I come from a Paiwan village called Spungudan in the south? My study explores whether North Formosans were ambivalent; it tests the potential of non-indigenous sources as the basis of writing indigenous history; and it works against the grain of a dominant non-indigenous historiography. There is much anxiety to be written about here. It is an arduous examination of a past of four hundred years ago.

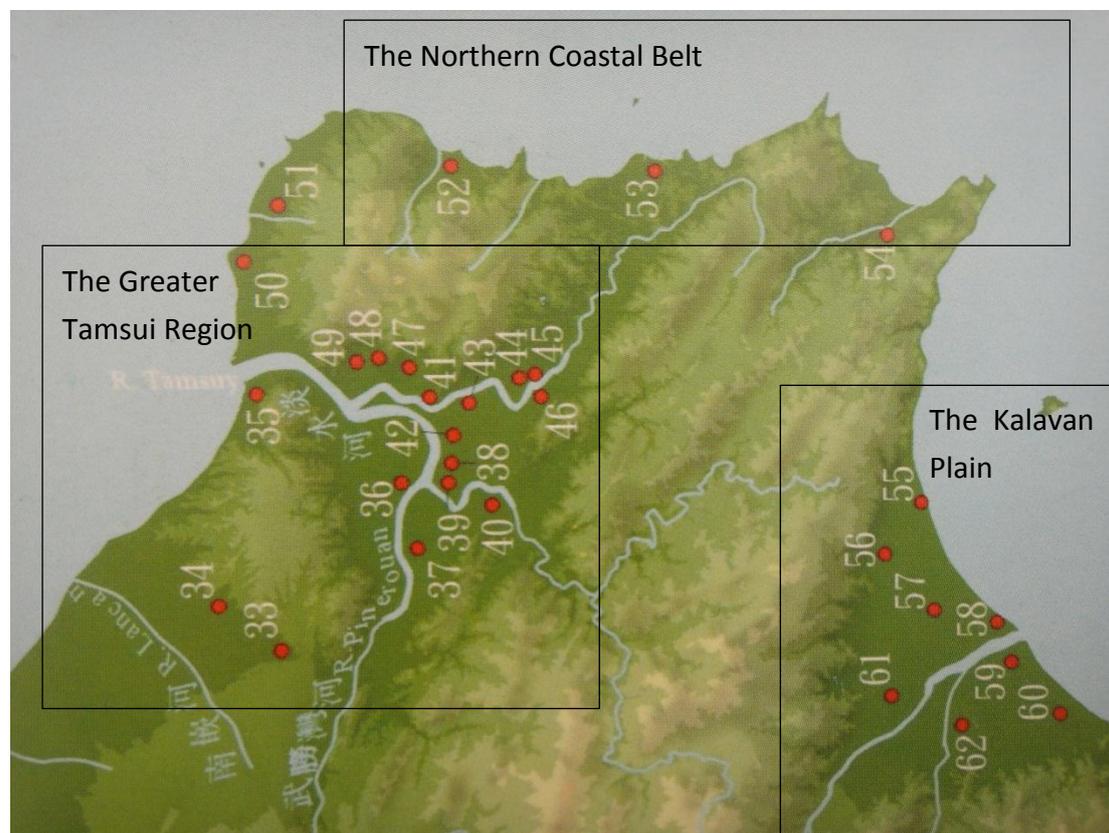
⁶⁹ “荷軍利誘薰心，只顧經濟利益，未重視排灣族政治及社會文化發展，故未遂其志”。Yeh, p. 268. My paraphrase.

⁷⁰ “透過歷史書寫來加強族群的力量(empowerment)，讓族人在當代臺灣社會中有更大的聲音來表述自己的過去和更多的權力決定自己未來的命運”。Tan, pp. 81-82. My paraphrase.

⁷¹ “歷史主體性不一定起源自一個社會文化群體自生的、純粹的傳統；主體性可能是曲折地建構出來的，來自於和他者互動的實踐過程”。Tan, p. 84. My paraphrase.

⁷² Rüsen, p. 264.

Chapter I: The Place and Its Peoples



North Formosa by map (Kang, 2010; Palemeq, 2012)⁷³

Micro-Ethnography

In the archives, historians have found valuable ethnographic details that enable them to reconstruct a place and a people of the past. In a way, it is like walking into the world of archives with the sensitivity of an anthropologist in the field and taking historical descriptions as statements from native informants.⁷⁴ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's reconstruction of Montailou where the Cathar heresy was "wiped

⁷³ For the villages, see **Appendix**.

⁷⁴ “結合人類學家在田野調查的態度來進入史料世界，將歷史記載當作田野報告人的陳述”。Wang Ming-ke, p. 115. My paraphrase.

out...between 1318 and 1324”⁷⁵ is one example. Though there are very little materials directly from the shepherds and the peasants of Montailou of the Middle Ages, the surviving documents of meticulous inquisition registers in the Vatican Library “have given an extraordinarily detailed and vivid picture of their daily life”.⁷⁶ They enable Le Roy Ladurie to reconstruct this small village of “200 to 250 inhabitants”⁷⁷ from its ecological, economic, social and spiritual aspects.

European sources about Formosa in the seventeenth century are also full of treasures that can be compared to glazed beads. They can be selected and strung into a beautiful Paiwan necklace. For example, there are enough ethnographic descriptions of North Formosa in the reports of Dominican Father Jacinto de Esquivel (referred below as Father Esquivel)⁷⁸ for Borao’s micro-ethnography of the place and its peoples. Some Dutch sources are also recognized as valuable ethnographic accounts. The 1623 travel account of two Dutch merchants about Soulang is of value because “they describe Formosan plains culture as it was before outside influence”,⁷⁹ and Missionary Georgius Candidius’s discourse as a result of his time spent among the Sirayan is considered “free from prejudice and ethnocentrism.”⁸⁰ Likewise, Captain Johan van Linga’s journal of the first joint Lonckjouw-Dutch expedition to Pimaba in early 1638 contains descriptions of Formosan villages situated in the southeast.⁸¹ Senior Merchant Cornelis Caesar’s diary written during a punitive expedition to East

⁷⁵ The Cathar heresy was “a Christian heresy...Its supporters considered and proclaimed themselves ‘true Christians’, ‘good Christians’, as distinct from the official Catholic Church which according to them had betrayed the genuine doctrine of the Apostles”. Le Roy Ladurie, pp. vii-viii.

⁷⁶ Le Roy Ladurie, p. vii.

⁷⁷ Le Roy Ladurie, p. 3.

⁷⁸ Nakamura, pp. 151-154; Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, pp. 100-101.

⁷⁹ Blussé, ‘A Visit to the Past’, p. 64.

⁸⁰ Blussé, ‘A Visit to the Past’, p. 64.

⁸¹ *FE II*, pp. 167-203.

Formosa from 1645 to 1646 provides information about East Formosans.⁸² Political Administrator Hendrick Noorden's record of their 'sore and supportable trails'⁸³ opens one's eyes to Formosan villages in Lonckjouw. Finally, Merchant Joan de Meijer's day-register of the Dutch reoccupation of North Formosa in 1666 shows how they were cornered by North Formosans.⁸⁴ Although these documents were originally not intended as Formosan ethnographies, their content provides clues for later historians to write an ethnographic account of Formosans.

The purpose of my experiment in this chapter is twofold. First, this chapter purports to offer the ethnography of North Formosa and North Formosans along four subsections: ecology, economy, politics and society. The subsection of ecology covers topography, climate and population, while the subsection of economy relates primarily to the means of living and trade products. Both subsections are about the region. The subsection of politics focuses on inter-village relations⁸⁵ and the subsection of society speaks about customs and crime. They are about the inhabitants. Second, this chapter also intends to show the progress of European knowledge of North Formosa and North Formosans by juxtaposing ethnological observations from the Spanish and Dutch sources.

⁸² *FE* III, pp. 1-41.

⁸³ This phrase comes from the title of Everts and Milde's article: 'We Thank God for Submitting Us to Such Sore but Supportable Trails: Hendrick Noorden and His Long Road to Freedom'.

⁸⁴ *FE* IV, pp. 556-636 and pp. 644-648.

⁸⁵ For relations between North Formosans and the Dutch, see **Chapter II: Two Narratives of Encounter**.

The Ecology of North Formosa

On the map of modern Taiwan, the northern part resembles the capital letter M. Its head is relatively even and its right side slightly curves in towards the left side. On the left side of the letter M sits the estuary of Tamsui River whose tributaries like Dahan River, Xindian River and Keelung River flow from the east to the west through the richest basin of Taipei and pour in the end into Formosa Strait. The even head of the letter M crowns the head of Taiwan with a beautiful coastal belt, which has a commercial harbor (modern Keelung Harbor) in the middle like its prettiest jewel. Another fertile plain called Yilan or Kavalan sits on the right side of the letter M. Its life is sustained by Lanyang River that streams forth from the west to the east into the Pacific.

When the Spaniards came to North Formosa in 1626, they chose an island next to the prettiest jewel (modern Ho-ping Island) to build their Fort San Salvador. In 1628, they expanded westwards to Tamsui and built San Domingo at the estuary. A few years later, however, they were forced to abandon San Domingo in 1638 and then gave up Fort San Salvador to the VOC in 1642.⁸⁶ When they were active in North Formosa, the Spaniards divided the place into three provinces: Tamsui, Turoboan and Cabaran. Tamsui Province covers the estuary of Tamsui River and its tributaries; Turoboan Province refers to the coastal belt; and Cabaran Province centers on the Kavalan Plain bounded by the bay.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Ts'ao, *Taiwan tsao chi li shih yen chiu hsu chi*, pp. 55-59.

⁸⁷ Borao, 'The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan', pp. 102-104.

Before the Dutch expelled the Spaniards from North Formosa, they had already heard about the region but they only had a vague idea about its geography. Initially VOC Governors General in Batavia thought Quelang and Tamsui were one place and wrote these two words as one in their letters: “Kelantangsui”, “Kelangtamsiu”, “Kelangh Tamsui” and “Kelangh Tamsiu”.⁸⁸ It was not until 1629 after they sent ships to reconnoiter the north of the island did they realize that Quelang and Tamsui were in fact two places “lying six miles [approximately 44 kilometers] from each other”.⁸⁹

After the Dutch took North Formosa over in 1642, their knowledge of North Formosa gradually improved. The descriptions of North Formosan villages taken in 1647, 1648, 1650, 1654 and 1655 illustrate this development.⁹⁰ On a large scale, North Formosa was divided into the Greater Tamsui River Region, the Northern Coastal Belt and the Kavalan Plain. On a smaller scale, the Greater Tamsui River Region was divided into the redoubt, the river itself, its tributaries and the southern quarter. The Northern Coastal Belt was divided into three coastal villages: Kimaurij, St. Jago and Tapparij. The Kavalan Plain was a single unit with over forty Formosan villages sitting on it. Baritsoen villages started to appear in the description of 1648 and Culon villages were included in 1650. Both Baritsoen and Culon⁹¹ were located between Tamsui River and the southern quarter. This shows that the Dutch, unlike the

⁸⁸ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662* II, pp. 60, 75, 80 and 83. This point was made by Cheng, see note 4, p. 571.

⁸⁹ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662* II, p. 91. 1 Dutch mile is 7.407 kilometers. *VOC-Glossarium*, p. 76.

⁹⁰ *FE* III, pp. 187-188, 235-236, 292-294 and 501-504; *FE* IV, pp. 12-13.

⁹¹ According to Wen, whether this Culon of the seventeenth century is the Culon (龜崙) commonly known to historians working on the nineteenth century is still a matter of debate. He proposes that researchers may compare the Dutch Culon with Saisyat, an indigenous group in modern Hsinchu and Miaoli, for a better understanding. The study of Baritsoen is not yet available to me. Wen, ‘Gui lun she yan jiu’, pp. 56 and 74.

Spaniards, attempted to open a safe overland road to connect Fort Zeelandia in the southwest with Fort Noord Holland in the north.

Travel at this time was by no means luxurious. In North Formosa, people travelled by road and by water. In the Spanish Tamsui Province, inland villages were linked with coastal villages by roads, but Formosans found it more convenient to drift downstream on small boats.⁹² Quelang and Tamsui were also connected by two roads. They were “flat, smooth and suitable for marching,”⁹³ although the journey was not really speedy. It took one day for a messenger to go from Redoubt Antonio in Tamsui to Fort Noord Holland on Quelang and vice versa. Blussé and Everts also find that it took at least twenty four hours for Dutch residents to complete a trip between Tamsui and Quelang via the tributaries of Tamsui River on the Basay proas.⁹⁴ A trip to the east took even longer because there were rivers, hills, boulders and wild bushes on the road. While one or two Formosans travelling light needed six hours to cross a hill, the same journey would be a trudge for an armed troop.⁹⁵ Unpredictable weather conditions also prevented travel all year round. The best seasons to visit Kavalan were spring and summer when the winds were favorable. To reach the legendary gold mine Tarraboan, one was advised to go only by sea “because no passage is granted over land by a certain rancorous people named Parockaron”.⁹⁶ Despite difficulties, however, traffic and trade among villages were constant and regular. People went from one region to another to exchange, visit, hunt and head-hunt.

⁹² Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 113.

⁹³ *FE I* pp. 195 and 198.

⁹⁴ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 4.

⁹⁵ *DZ II*, pp. 27-28.

⁹⁶ *FE II*, p. 320.

The northern monsoon blew from October until next April, bringing ships from Japan to Tayouan and Batavia. It was followed by the southern monsoon from May until September when ships were able to travel northwards.⁹⁷ As regular was the typhoon season during summer. In July 1648, a storm struck North Formosa, sweeping the entire region and leaving a sorry mess. The village of Kimaurij was gone and villages along the tributaries of Tamsui River suffered from floods.⁹⁸ Another typhoon struck in August 1651, again washing away all the bamboo houses in Kimaurij.⁹⁹ Unfortunately, water was not the only visitor in summer. Heat and drought also frequented North Formosa in July and August, making its summer a dry season in spite of the water that came with typhoons.¹⁰⁰ Occasionally there were locusts that swallowed all the paddies¹⁰¹ and earthquakes that “frightened the savages so much that they all left”.¹⁰² These natural disasters disturbed the ecological system in North Formosa but did not shatter it. In comparison, other months of the year were much friendlier. There were several harvests in one year: fall, winter, spring and late spring.¹⁰³ Rice was the most important product cultivated in Tamsui and Kavalan. According to one Dutch resident, Tamsui rice was better than Kavalan and Siam rice, but Kavalan and Siam rice were equally nice.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ Chiu, p. 114.

⁹⁸ *FE III*, p. 244.

⁹⁹ *FE III*, p. 399.

¹⁰⁰ *FE III*, p. 561.

¹⁰¹ *FE III*, p. 521; Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662 II*, p. 355.

¹⁰² “甲戌四月，地動不休，番人怖恐，相率徙去，俄陷為巨浸，距今不三年耳”. Yu, p. 79. Keliher’s translation. Chinese text from Aliang Digital Classics Project: http://www.aliang.net/literature/ebooks/a0011_phjyv10.pdf.

¹⁰³ Chiu, p. 114.

¹⁰⁴ *FE III*, p. 118.

If the air in North Formosa was right for growing rice, it was not as right for the Dutch and Chinese. Andrade calls the place “unhealthy”.¹⁰⁵ The sulfur air from Datun volcanos squatting in the middle of Taipei Basin and diseases such as fevers or dysenteries made the Dutch company suffer heavy casualties. In February 1665, sixteen Dutchmen perished, and by November of the same year, another thirty-three passed away. In total, death took away one tenth of the fortress force in that year, leaving the company no choice but to rearrange the working hours from five to nine in the morning and from three to six in the evening in order to avoid death’s merciless scythe.¹⁰⁶ This shortage of manpower had a negative impact upon the company’s relations with local villages. It simply did not have enough soldiers to pursue tributes from its allies or to protect them from their old foes.¹⁰⁷ The chief of a Baritsoen village Sausaulj, for example, was pushed to commit suicide after he did not get any assistance from the Dutch to fight against his belligerent neighbor Tarrissan.¹⁰⁸

The air of North Formosa was not agreeable to the Chinese either. As the Chinese litterateur Yu Yong-he who traveled to the north of the island in 1697 vividly described, North Formosa was a place of such horror that even the strongest among them would not risk his life:

“Haven’t you heard of the horrors of the water and rocks in Jilong and Danshui? People that arrive there get sick, and those that get sick die. All that hear they will be assigned to Jilong or Danshui for labor service scream in despair as if they have been sent to hell: the sailors that are sent to patrol the area every spring and fall consider

¹⁰⁵ Andrade, *Lost Colony*, p. 317.

¹⁰⁶ Vogels, pp. 50 and 53.

¹⁰⁷ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ *FE III*, p. 279.

themselves lucky if they come back alive. If the strongest act in such a way, how will you be able to stand it?”¹⁰⁹

Whereas the Dutch and Chinese saw North Formosa as a “murderous pit”,¹¹⁰ North Formosans made their livelihood in the pit. In the seventeenth century, indigenous villages were found in the Greater Tamsui River Region, the northern coastal belt and the Kavalan Plain. According to the 1647, 1648 and 1650 village descriptions, there were on the average no more than 18,000 native inhabitants in the north.¹¹¹ Inhabitants from the Greater Tamsui River Region were referred as the River peoples, except for Baritsoeners from Baritsoen villages and Culonders or the Culon from Culon villages. Those from a few coastal hamlets were Basay and those from Kavalan were Kavalan people, the Kavalan or the Bight fellows. Among them, the Kavalan was the largest group with a number of 8,023 in 1650. The River peoples whose number approached 6,644 in the same year came the second. The others were much smaller in number. In 1650, Culon had 1,682; Basay had 1,241; and Baritsoener had 340.¹¹²

The Dutch classification of North Formosans corresponds to that of northern Plains aborigines made by contemporary linguists. Despite their disagreements, linguists generally agree there are two major Plains aboriginal groups in North Formosa: Ketagalan and Kavalan. Ketagalan is subdivided into Basay, Ketagalan and Kulon. These peoples spoke different dialects but, when necessary, they could

¹⁰⁹ “君不聞雞籠、淡水水土之惡乎？人至即病，病輒死。凡隸役聞雞籠、淡水之遣，皆歔歔悲嘆，如使絕域；水師例春秋更戍，以得生還為幸。彼健兒役隸且然，君奚堪此？” Yu, p. 60. Chinese text from Aliang Digital Classics Project: http://www.aliang.net/literature/ebooks/a0011_phjyv10.pdf.

¹¹⁰ FE III, p. 374.

¹¹¹ FE III, pp. 187-188, 235-236 and 292-294.

¹¹² FE III, pp. 292-294.

communicate with one another in a lingua franca.¹¹³ When Thomas Pedel was assigned to take charge of Redoubt Antonio in Tamsui in 1642, he went around the region and found his Basay interpreters could not understand dialects from inland villages along the tributaries of Tamsui River.¹¹⁴ Also, when Dominican Friar Juan de Los Angeles¹¹⁵ reviewed his experience in North Formosa in 1649, he made a similar observation, saying “they have many languages: each province has its own; at times, even in villages of the same province, they don’t use the same language. One of them called basaya [i.e. Basay], is somehow common in the area where the Spaniards had their garrison”.¹¹⁶ Different dialects were mutually unintelligible, but Basay could be understood along the coast and in most parts of Tamsui.

The Spanish fathers found Basay easy to learn and picked it up as the language of mission among North Formosans.¹¹⁷ It is very likely that they were using Basay to communicate with North Formosans and to teach them the language of Spanish. Later, to the surprise of Father Esquivel and Friar De Los Angeles, they found local inhabitants (especially the Basay people from the coast) were “surprisingly fluent in Spanish” and they spoke “Spanish a lot better in comparison with other natives”.¹¹⁸ The fruits of the Spanish mission labor were harvested by the Dutch merchants who ousted the fathers from the place. Sources indicate that the company servants might have used Spanish to communicate with their Basay assistants and ask them to pass messages or orders to local inhabitants in Basay or local dialects. Once, a Dutch

¹¹³ Li, *Taiwan Pingpuzu de li shi yu hu dong*, pp. 38-41.

¹¹⁴ *DZ II*, p. 94.

¹¹⁵ For Friar Juan de Los Angeles, see Nakamura, note 62, p. 160; Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 101.

¹¹⁶ Borao, *SIT II*, pp. 568-569.

¹¹⁷ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, pp. 116-117.

¹¹⁸ Borao, *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, p. 117.

merchant speculated that the Basay would answer “Si Signor igo sta buno Christian del Casteliano”¹¹⁹ if they were asked of their religion. Another time, some Dutch guards shouted “Guarda”¹²⁰ to ten to twelve Basay people to stop them from approaching Quelang at night. Also, when Merchant Joan de Meijer had three Basay guests in his place, he forbade them from speaking their own tongue in case he could not follow.¹²¹ Presumably he preferred to carry on the conversation with his Basay guests in Spanish.

Summing up, when the Spaniards and the Dutch came to North Formosa, they did not find a murderous pit but a place full of life. North Formosans lived in isolated villages but were connected with one another via business and familial ties. As Blussé and Everts note from Dutch sources, the Basay “were closely affiliated with the other tribal people of the Tamsui and Chilung River basins by kinship ties”.¹²² Furthermore, they had different dialects but were able to communicate with one another in Basay or with Europeans in Spanish. In fact, some Japanese and Chinese people were already doing business with North Formosans before the Europeans showed up.¹²³

The Economy of North Formosa

In North Formosa as elsewhere in the world, natural conditions determine the means of living. As mentioned, the Greater Tamsui River Region and the Kavalan Plain were the rice bowls. They produced better rice than Southeast Asia. But rice was

¹¹⁹ “Yes Sir, I am a good Christian child of the Castilians”. *FE IV*, pp. 369 and 661.

¹²⁰ It means to stop or stay in Spanish. *FE IV*, pp. 612 and 665.

¹²¹ *FE IV*, p. 613.

¹²² Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 4.

¹²³ *FE II*, p. 323.

not cultivated everywhere. It was the custom of villages to the north of Tamsui River to grow rice, but it was not for those in Baritsoen and Pinorouwan. Villagers from Pinorouwan had to travel to the north of Tamsui River to buy rice,¹²⁴ and Baritsoen was a well-known deer-hunting ground.¹²⁵ In his study of Pinorouwan of the eighteenth century, Wen Chen-hua supposes that rather than growing rice, hunting deer was probably the most important economic activity in this village and it shared a common hunting ground with Culon and Pocaël. The people of Pinorouwan probably began to cultivate rice after mid-1750s when more and more Chinese immigrants moved into Pinorouwan.¹²⁶

In addition to rice and deer, the Greater Tamsui Region was also blessed with sulfur reserves and straight timber such as oak on Mount Marinats.¹²⁷ Villages at the estuary of Tamsui River like Senar had the advantageous access to the sea, so the villagers “built a simple port around which a marketplace grew; a community of sangleys also lived in its vicinity”.¹²⁸ They traded and bartered goods. North Formosans wanted iron tools, sea food, hemp clothes and accessories like copper bells or bracelets,¹²⁹ while the Dutch and Chinese were mostly after sulfur, game and gold. The VOC bought sulfur from Tamsui and shipped it to Batavia. The quantity pleased the company authorities in Batavia who ranked it as large as sulfur from Aceh and Makassar,¹³⁰ but the main buyers remained the Chinese.¹³¹

¹²⁴ *DZ II*, p. 95; *FE II*, p. 343.

¹²⁵ *FE III*, p. 327.

¹²⁶ Wen, ‘Qing dai wu lao wan she she shi’, pp. 144-145.

¹²⁷ *FE I*, p. 195; *FE II*, p. 324; *FE III*, p. 479; *FE IV*, pp. 20-21 and 74. Chiu notes the importance of family ties to access sulfur mounds, p. 154. Ang identifies Mount Marinats as modern Yuan-shan, *Da tai bei gu di tu kao shi*, p. 43-44.

¹²⁸ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 111. The sangleys were Chinese traders.

¹²⁹ *FE II*, p. 321.

¹³⁰ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662 II*, p. 201.

The rise and fall of villages in the Greater Tamsui River Region are closely related to sulfur. The village of Kimassouw, for instance, was situated next to a sulfur mound. Exploitation of sulfur was not prohibited in the seventeenth century, but in the nineteenth century, the same activity was banned by the Ch'ing court. Kimassouw was assigned to guard the sulfur mound against theft, and a general manager from the village was put in charge of the entire sulfur area. But theft could never be completely prevented. When the ban of exploitation was lifted, the privileges Kimassouw enjoyed disappeared and its villagers lost the exclusive rights to the sulfur mounds and the land.¹³²

The geography of Kavalan also “allowed the development of commerce based on game, fishing and agriculture, mainly rice”.¹³³ The beauty of this plain, as earlier Dutch visitors commented, was of “seemingly endless well cured rice paddies”.¹³⁴ Both North Formosans and the Dutch bought Kavalan rice. Sometimes the Kavalan sailed to Kimaruij in canoes to sell their rice to the Dutch, and sometimes the company sent Basay assistants to purchase rice in Kavalan.¹³⁵ Besides, Kavalan people also traveled to the Greater Tamsui River Region to exchange rice and trinkets for other products.¹³⁶ Generally speaking, Kavalan was self-sufficient but secluded from other Formosans and Europeans by mountains. Therefore, the Dutch only had

¹³¹ Chiu, p. 154.

¹³² Wen, ‘Mao shao weng she she shi’, pp. 32-39.

¹³³ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 103.

¹³⁴ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 7.

¹³⁵ *FE III*, pp. 118 and 139.

¹³⁶ *FE III*, p. 196.

“occasional visits and haphazard attempts to establish tribute-and later trade relations with the tribal people residing here”.¹³⁷

The Basay from coastal villages like Kimaurij especially needed rice from Tamsui and Kavalan. They did not have large plots of land grow rice and they were not farmers. As Father Esquivel observed, villagers of Kimaurij lived “like nomads or sangleys, going from one village to another, making for them houses, arrows, clothes, hatchets.”¹³⁸ When the harvest was bad in 1651, Dutch residents were approached by Kimaurij elders who asked them to feed their people with rice according to the principle of charity because they were fellow Christian brothers and sisters.¹³⁹

Rather than cultivating crops and exploiting natural resources, the Basay lived on their skills as brokers. Living by the seaside gave the Basay “an economic...advantage in exploiting the plains”.¹⁴⁰ They were the first to access overseas goods and cultures. As mentioned, most Basay spoke Basay and Spanish. Geographical and linguistic advantages presented them with the opportunity of becoming the middlemen in North Formosa and they were very good at their job. They almost “monopolized the river trade and the coastal trade of north Formosa”.¹⁴¹ Based on this strategic position, they offered many types of service to Formosans and foreigners. For Formosans, they delivered messages from the outside world and helped them negotiate with the Chinese and the Dutch who were not allowed in some villages. For instance, the Basay had to transmit gold from Tarraboan to its Chinese buyers “because the villagers...forbade their indigenous trading partners to bring any

¹³⁷ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 1.

¹³⁸ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 106. The sangleys were Chinese traders.

¹³⁹ *FE III*, p. 358.

¹⁴⁰ Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political economy*, p. 29.

¹⁴¹ ‘Introduction’, *FE IV*, p. xv.

outsiders into their territory”.¹⁴² For foreigners, they helped to deliver deer skin, coal, timber, sulfur and gold according to contracts.¹⁴³ They also offered transportation, interpretation and information.

Yet business relations were often tricky. Formosans and foreigners complained how untrustworthy the Basay were, although they depended heavily upon their service. In 1657, Merchant Pieter Boons discovered a ‘sinister scheme’ that had been practiced by the Basay for years in Kavalan. He found that their Basay middlemen (especially those from Kimaurij) went to Kavalan and used the name of the company to barter rice and skins with “a rag or a piece of trash”.¹⁴⁴ But they did not report honestly to the company. Instead, they hid the goods in their villages and came to Fort Noord Holland “with almost empty hands”,¹⁴⁵ claiming nonetheless gifts for their hard work and announcing the arrival of “as many as 100 or 120”¹⁴⁶ Kavalan people who wished to pay respect to the *Opperhoofd* in Quelang and to deliver their rice and skins. When this large group of Kavalan Formosans arrived, the company had to entertain them “with arrack and tobacco, according to the custom of this country”¹⁴⁷ out of its own pocket, but it only received part of the rice and skins “the Kimaurij had bartered from [the Kavalan] for themselves” in return.¹⁴⁸ Both the company and the Kavalan were hidden from the truth for many years because the Basay also acted as the interpreters who “told them as much as they wanted each of them to know”.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² Chiu, p. 27.

¹⁴³ *FE II*, p. 438; *FE III*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁴ *FE IV*, p. 360.

¹⁴⁵ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 6.

¹⁴⁶ *FE IV*, p. 360.

¹⁴⁷ *FE IV*, p. 360.

¹⁴⁸ *FE IV*, p. 359.

¹⁴⁹ *FE IV*, p. 360.

In this scheme, the Basay were the ultimate winners. By paying the Kavalan much less than the advance they received from the Dutch, they earned the price difference. By playing the diligent Formosan assistants before the Dutch, they were given gifts and trust. By inviting the Kavalan to Quelang at the expense of the company's budget, they won friendship from local business partners without spending a penny. Finally, by storing bartered goods in their villages, they “cornered the market”¹⁵⁰ and spared themselves from want when a famine struck. The company, however, became “barely anything but a name to the [Kavalan]”,¹⁵¹ and the Kavalan were simply fooled by their fellow Formosans. After the scheme was discovered, the VOC decided to take care of its business relations with Kavalan by sending their own people and by inviting the Kavalan to its annual *landdag*. The Kavalan also preferred to deal with the Dutch without the agency of the Basay and they demanded that future company representatives should “carry a sign that he was coming on behalf of the Company”.¹⁵²

What was an evil scheme to the Dutch company ironically illustrates the business acumen of the Basay. They took the best advantage of the situation for their own interests and at the expense of their partners. It can be concluded that North Formosans were conducting at least two types of economic activity. One type involves the exploitation of natural products (Tamsui and Kavalan) and the other type involves the provision of skillful agency (Basay). Whether as a farmer or a broker, they were aware of their interests and they acted to protect them.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Introduction’, *FE IV*, p. xv.

¹⁵¹ *FE IV*, p. 360.

¹⁵² *FE IV*, p. 361.

The Politics of North Formosans

In North Formosa in the seventeenth century, inter-village strife was chronic.¹⁵³ There were good times when the Basay had good relations with other North Formosans and the Kavalan traded with the River peoples. Such inter-village bartering was conducted annually.¹⁵⁴ But there were also ‘bad’ times when villages exchanged heads rather than goods.

The Spaniards were aware of this exchange of head. Father Esquivel noted that “after harvest, the natives [of Kavalan] would go head-hunting in Senar and Pantao in the region of Tamsui,”¹⁵⁵ although they would also go there on another occasion to trade. A businessman today might turn a butcher tomorrow. Head-hunting in one’s own village also occurred. Villages in the Greater Tamsui River Region “would attack each other [with] killing and beheading”.¹⁵⁶ If heading straight to a village to chop heads was too crude, there was another subtler strategy: Hongmen Feast (鴻門宴), a feast given in honor of a guest with the purpose of killing him.

The southern quarter of the Greater Tamsui River region bordered the village of Pocael. Pocael villagers were strong and stout. They were enemies of the Dutch company, and they disturbed its Formosan allies to the point that these allies did not even dare to pay their yearly tributes. In 1646, Parricoutsie and Goudt asked help from the company to fight Pocael, but they were turned down. Instead of assistance

¹⁵³ Chiu, p. 18.

¹⁵⁴ *FE* III, p. 75.

¹⁵⁵ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 103.

¹⁵⁶ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 111.

from his European ally, the chief of Goudt received an invitation from Pocaël. They said they were willing to restore friendship and peace. Seeing no help from the Dutch and no other better option, the chief of Goudt accepted the invitation. He went to Pocaël as its guest and was never heard of ever since.¹⁵⁷ The same trick was played in 1650 in the Baritsoen region. One of the Baritsoen villages, Tarrissan, invited its neighbors for a feast. When the guests arrived, they found bows and arrows. Those who ran fast got away, but those who had slow feet were robbed of their goods and threatened into making promises by the knife against their throat.¹⁵⁸ These cases indicate that strife in North Formosa was not always rash and thoughtless. Sometimes it was calculated and well-designed.

The Kavalan Plain, which had as many as forty-seven villages in 1647,¹⁵⁹ was especially not immune to chaotic inter-village fights. Different interests split them apart. This was familiar to the chief of Parrossinan from Kavalan. He was a friend of the Dutch. In July of 1647, he traveled to Tamsui to trade and he told Junior Merchant Jacob Nolpe that it was nothing unusual for his people to fight against one another; the smallest cause would incite them to anger and aggression. His words were paraphrased by Junior Merchant Nolpe as followed,

“This was nothing new, but had been going on for over a decade; also, that not merely were two parties involved, as we [the Dutch] thought...but many more. This war has nothing to do with a conflict between Company allies or enemies, but is conducted because of short-temperedness, pagan ambition and obstinacy between several villages...originate from the theft of only one single hunting dog”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ *FE III*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁸ *FE III*, p. 279.

¹⁵⁹ *FE III*, p. 189.

¹⁶⁰ *FE III*, p. 196.

According to this chief, the Kavalan were not strangers to quarrels and the quarrels were not necessarily related to external influences. Oftentimes they themselves were the causes of serious disputes and fights. When the island was under the threat of Coxing'a invasion in 1661, the Kavalan Plain was especially full of unrest, falling "into its old ways of catching and snaring, even murdering, their fellow countrymen".¹⁶¹ The chief of Kimatoeck slit the throat of a fellow who moved to his village for protection; four other villages were trapped in inter-village violence; and one Kavalan man was found clove in his heart. This chaos left Assistant Nicolaas van der Meulen and his Formosan wife from Kimaurij stationed there so helpless that they dared not to go out but tried to "make do with dry rice if [their] own dogs had not caught an animal every now and then".¹⁶² The Kavalan created the unrest and the Dutch among them were not spared from the sense of insecurity.

In the seventeenth century as nowadays, there were Plains aborigines and Mountain aborigines. Spanish and Dutch sources are mainly about Plains aborigines because the fathers and the merchants had the most interaction with them. Mountain aborigines living in remote villages were far away from their reach. Nevertheless, the Dutch wished to learn more about them because they mattered to the general peace of the island. They wished to turn mountain villages into company allies. But the villagers from several mountain villages refused. They bluntly said, "No, because then we shall also have to pay tribute".¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ *FE IV*, p. 426.

¹⁶² *FE IV*, p. 427.

¹⁶³ *FE III*, p. 140.

A group of mountain peoples called Parrougearon especially drew the attention of the Dutch. According to the Dutch sources, Parrougearon were “extremely skilled in climbing up and down the mountains, and in no time at all. Their married women have four teeth pulled (two from each jaw) and adorn their faces by painting them black or by pricking their skin and putting dye... This makes them look like monkeys at first sight”.¹⁶⁴ They were excellent warriors living in the mountains between Kavalan and Tarraboan. Not only were they different from Formosans on the plains but they were also hostile to them.¹⁶⁵ Plains aborigines were so afraid of Parrougearon that they advised the Dutch strongly against traveling to East Formosa by road. They should travel by sea, so they would not have direct contact with Parrougearon.

This ‘monkey people’ may be Atayal, the third largest indigenous group in modern Taiwan. Atayal villages are found in the mountains in the north and most Atayal women used to wear tattoos on the face. When Ino visited northern Plains aborigines in the early twentieth century, he found a girl called Ai living among them in Litsop. She was from a nearby mountain village. She had tattoos on her face and spoke a language that was identified as Atayal.¹⁶⁶ The relations between Mountain aborigines and Plains aborigines or Chinese settlers were never easy. In the seventeenth century, the Kavalan tried to avoid them. In the twentieth century, the Chinese were also so afraid of ‘raw mountain savages’ that they would go to the

¹⁶⁴ *FE III*, p. 75.

¹⁶⁵ *FE III*, p. 167.

¹⁶⁶ Ino, pp. 92 and 101. Litsop is Rijtsoek or Lisiouck in the seventeenth century. Ang, *Da tai bei gu di tu kao shi*, pp. 35-38.

mountains in groups to protect themselves from these mountain savages who moved as fast as monkeys.¹⁶⁷

In summary, there are many causes behind head-hunting and mutual killing. As the cases show, the cause can be ritualistic after a harvest. It can be resistance or a challenge to a greater power like the VOC. It can be a desire to play master in the region. Or it can be retaliation and retribution. This practice of strife “made intervillage relations always suspicious and frequently hostile”,¹⁶⁸ but trade and marriage soon softened the mood and changed enemies into allies.

The Society of North Formosans

Inter-marriages were not uncommon. Sources indicate nuptial unions between a Formosans woman and a Chinese or Dutchman.¹⁶⁹ The Japanese interpreter Jasinto Quesaymon was married to a woman from Kimaurij.¹⁷⁰ The wife of a Spanish interpreter Domingo Aguilas was also Formosan; she was sometimes hired to help the VOC.¹⁷¹ Though there seems to be no marriage of a Formosan man with a European lady on the island, such matches do happen in other places. Everts follows a curious lead in the Amsterdam archives and discovers Jacob Lamay van Taywan who was perhaps the first Formosan that became a Dutch citizen in the seventeenth century via

¹⁶⁷ Ino, p. 193.

¹⁶⁸ Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political economy*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁹ For example. *FE* III, pp. 214, 230 and 525.

¹⁷⁰ *DZ* II, p. 56.

¹⁷¹ *FE* III, pp. 364, 380 and 394.

“marriage to a daughter of a [Amsterdam] citizen”.¹⁷² Some relationships know no boundary.

The marriage custom of North Formosans was lax for Father Esquivel because according to him, Formosan wives could be purchased and disposed of.¹⁷³ A married man could also have somebody on the side. When Merchant Boons sent Assistant Jacob Balbiaen in 1657 to Kavalan, he was visited by a group of headmen who were eager to befriend him. One of these Kavalan headmen was Boele Somapar of the village Madipotán. He invited Assistant Balbiaen to his place but the villagers took Assistant Balbiaen away from his house at night. Instead of feeling upset, Boele Somapar went out and was heard by most villagers. He was “walking past singing loudly, in search of another woman”¹⁷⁴ because his wife was already sent away and he was available for a temporary sweetheart. This, according to the Dutch sources, “is the custom of the country”.¹⁷⁵

Equally lax was the festive manner of North Formosans. Father Esquivel said North Formosans drank sprees at sowing, harvesting or after successful head-hunting. Feasts in North Formosa usually lasted for days. During this time, all participants would “sing and dance, and...drink all the time”.¹⁷⁶ If they collapsed, they fell asleep and woke up to go on with the revelry. It was wild and untidy. They even ate “deer innards...without washing away the dung”.¹⁷⁷ A similar scene repeated itself before

¹⁷² Everts, ‘Jacob Lamay van Taywan’, p. 157. Also according to Blussé, another Formosan man from Lamay was also found sickly in love with a Japanese lady in the diaries of Deshima. Personal communication on August 1st, 2012.

¹⁷³ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 114.

¹⁷⁴ *FE IV*, p. 292.

¹⁷⁵ *FE IV*, p. 292.

¹⁷⁶ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 119.

¹⁷⁷ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 119.

the eyes of Merchant Boons in 1657. He observed the Basay Christians from Kimaurij and Tapparij and found them “[making] pigs of themselves day in day out, and [spending] their lives...in drunkenness and brining...living as filthy drunkards, lying in front of their doors or in the middle of the road, sleeping off their hangovers”.¹⁷⁸ As the sources show, North Formosans shared a *carpe diem* spirit. They worked and they enjoyed celebrating the fruits of their labor.

A similar festival custom still existed among northern Plains aborigines whom Ino visited in the early twentieth century. He called it ‘Community Drink’ (會飲). It took place twice a year in February and August, and it was an occasion to pay respect to ancestors as well as to ask permission for marriage or for therapeutic cure. Everyone was invited, including an outsider like Ino. In a ‘Community Drink’, people stopped working, gathered in one room, drank, ate and shared stories gaily.¹⁷⁹ It was a time for the community and their ancestors. It was a religious event. On the outside, a Formosan festival may appear like a simple time for fun, or even for too much fun as the Spanish father and the Dutch merchant seemed to judge; on the inside, the story can be read differently.

In fact, North Formosans were not at all lawless. They were governed by the law of nature. They would not visit or leave their village during the time of *marnas* that was celebrated twice annually in sowing and harvest seasons because it would bring bad luck.¹⁸⁰ Also, they would immediately turn back home if they hear ominous bird

¹⁷⁸ *FE IV*, p. 369.

¹⁷⁹ Ino, pp. 99-100 and 131.

¹⁸⁰ “In northern Taiwan, *Marnas* was the festival of the rice harvest when people refrained from doing any work”. ‘Glossary’, *FE IV*, p. 668; *FE II*, p. 474.

songs on the way.¹⁸¹ Bird divination is a shared custom among Formosans. The ruler of Lonckjouw Tartar allowed his brother Lamlok to befriend the Dutch because his brother claimed he had heard the right bird song in his dreams for several days. To disregard the auspicious song is against the indigenous law of nature.¹⁸²

When the Spaniards were in North Formosa, they found the inhabitants had ways to manage themselves. Disputes were usually settled publicly without the mediation of judges or arbiters. One would express his accusations in public, and the defendant would defend his honor by crying out loud, walking around and slapping his buttocks.¹⁸³ But their ways gradually changed after the arrival of the Dutch.

In their study of placards issued in Formosa, Heyns and Cheng point out two parallel justice systems on the island. The VOC subjects were ruled by the company regulations and indigenous villages were managed according to their own customs and the *landdag* meeting established since 1644.¹⁸⁴ But the line between these two parallels is not clear-cut. Indigenous headmen appointed by the company were protected by standards that applied to the VOC subjects, so “any mischief committed against them could be brought directly before the Formosan Council and treated as treason”.¹⁸⁵ Also, certain placards involve both Formosans and the Dutch. Placard of 28th March 1640 forbade anyone to teach aborigines to use, practice, or sell firearms

¹⁸¹ *FE* III, p. 240.

¹⁸² *FE* II, p. 71.

¹⁸³ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 116.

¹⁸⁴ “VOC authorities [on Formosa] categorized their subjects according to different estates. Aboriginal vassals made up one estate while Zeelandia’s citizenry, consisting of VOC employees, free-burghers and Chinese settlers, made up a second estate. This division had legal repercussions: the Formosan placards regulated Zeelandia’s citizenry but not the aboriginal vassals...Placards were not commonly used in the aboriginal villages and that the aboriginal village headmen dealt with judicial matters according to their customs...In the aboriginal villages, the governor gave the village headmen a great deal of autonomy in dealing with legal matters.” Heyns and Cheng, pp. 14, 18 and 20.

¹⁸⁵ Heyns and Cheng, p. 17.

under the death penalty; Placard of 3rd April 1641 forbade any Chinese to stay in Pimaba or any other village in southeast Formosa without the permission from the Dutch; and Placard of 8th December 1642 forbade all Chinese to reside to the north of Mattouw and Tirozen under penalties of death or confiscation of goods.¹⁸⁶ Although Formosans were supposed to govern themselves according to their customs, these placards brought them under the power of the Dutch as any other company subject. Gradually, North Formosans also learned to appropriate the Dutch ways in settling their matters. Two cases from the Greater Tamsui River Region illustrate this point.

The first occurred in February 1643. The nephew of Chief Penap of Rietsoeck got into a fight over a woman with another villager, and he fled to Redoubt Antonio for protection. The next day, Chief Penap sailed down the river pretending to buy deerskins, but his real intention was to look for his nephew. When he learned that his nephew was hiding in the redoubt, he asked the Dutch to detain him until he returned. Two days later, Chief Penap came back with three villagers on two canoes. They conversed and lunched with the Dutch, talking about local affairs and situations. After lunch, his nephew was brought to him. Holding the rattan cane in his hand, Chief Penap whipped his nephew heavily, saying he must receive three hundred whips for his offence. When the whipping was done, he went over to his nephew and talked to him with utmost sorrow. His manner was so sincere that the sinner repented and cried with his face covered in his hands. This surprised the Dutch. Instead of acting harsh to the sinner as if he were unforgivable, Chief Penap showed sorrow and kindness. As the sources say, this was the custom of Rietsoeck.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Heyns and Cheng, pp. 107, 119 and 121.

¹⁸⁷ *DZ II*, pp. 116-117.

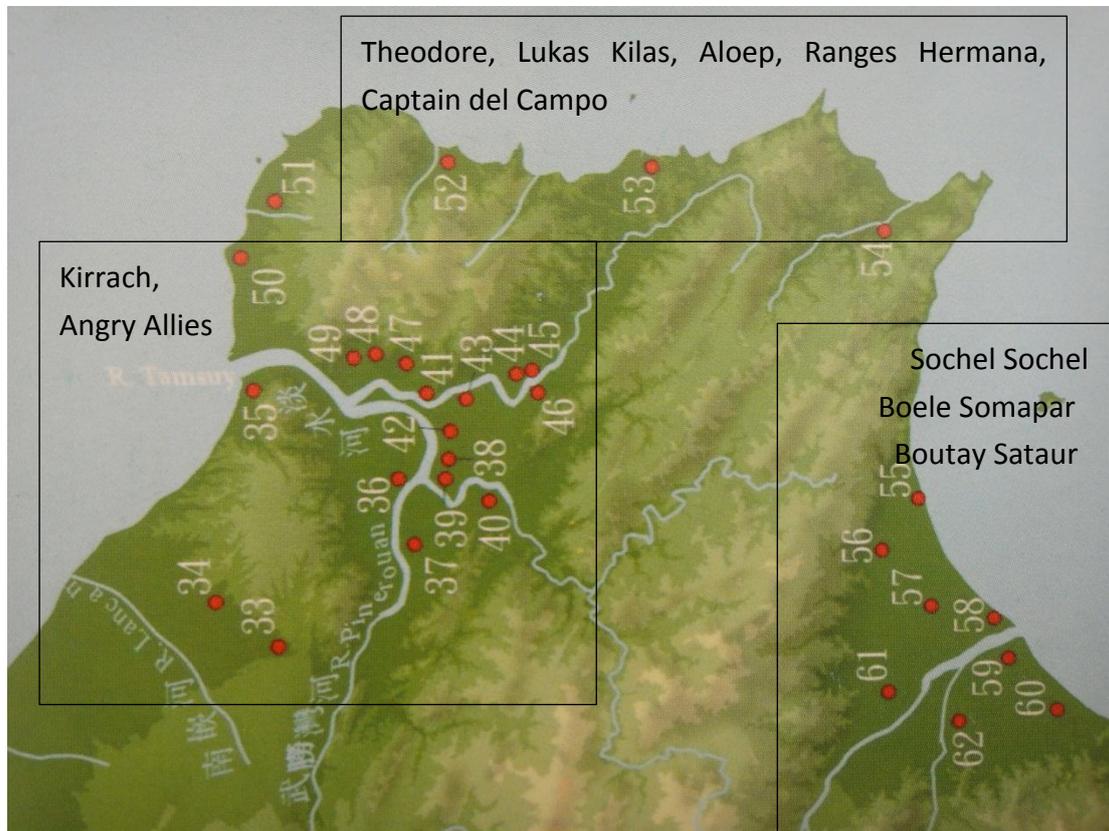
The second case occurred in the village of Rijbats along the Pinorouwan River. In early 1650, a crime of incest was discovered. A father impregnated his daughter and both were assiduously pursued by their villagers. The Dutch authorities wished to arrest them and punish them severely as a deterrent for all because incest was intolerable to Christians like them. Finally, the two fell into the hands of the Dutch by October of the same year and were sent to Fort Zeelandia for trial. Before they went on their way, some relatives came to visit the father and “spat him in the face”.¹⁸⁸ No record of the trial and the final sentence is found in the sources. Although it is difficult to determine from the anecdote whether the concept of incest was culturally unacceptable or artificially imposed by a Christian outsider, this case shows the River peoples were ready to cooperate with the Dutch company to combat crime,.

According to Jolan Hsieh, indigenous justice is restorative justice. For indigenous societies, the purpose of punishing crimes focuses more on restoring balance than on claiming right or wrong. Based on the Maori Utu,¹⁸⁹ a mis-educated youth is the shame of the elder and the community. Therefore, it takes every segment of the indigenous society to feel responsible for the conflicts and to solve them for the sake of returning balance to the whole. The cases of Chief Penap and villagers of Rijbats show that Formosans societies were run by their own laws and they knew how to exploit others to help them restore balance in the villages.

¹⁸⁸ *FE III*, pp. 273, 278, 326 and 330.

¹⁸⁹ Utu is the root of the Maori word for restorative justice. Hsieh, ‘Yi niu xi lan wei li’.

Chapter II: Two Narratives of Encounter



North Formosa by map (Kang, 2010; Palemeq, 2012)

Biographical History

Characters are essential to a story, but as Blussé notes “historians writing about incidents often ignore the people who were closely involved”.¹⁹⁰ Later, his opinion finds echoes in Andrade who also thinks “we’ve tended to neglect the human dramas that make history come alive”.¹⁹¹ Intending to reach a balance between events and actors, he writes about a Chinese farmer and two African boys in the Dutch loss of Formosa in 1662. Another practitioner of historical biography is Kang. His

¹⁹⁰ Blussé, ‘Bull in a China Shop’, p. 96.

¹⁹¹ Andrade, ‘A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord’, p. 574.

biographical account of a North Formosan headman Theodore offers a snapshot to the maritime history of North Taiwan through an indigenous figure. His reconstruction also means to overturn the image of a passive colonized aboriginal.¹⁹²

Writing about indigenous historical actors is a challenge because they are often seen through the lenses of others. North Formosans, for example, were written about by the Spaniards, the Dutch and the Chinese. A historian who wishes to see them needs to get around these layers of lenses. Such challenge is also familiar for historians who write about Native Americans. Being a veteran of the field, Calvin Martin suggests a combination of anthropology with history should be a better approach. He reminds that “historians who are inclined to write about Indian character and personality traits...should reevaluate the credibility of their sources according to the principles and insights of...anthropology”.¹⁹³ This approach will enable them to produce indigenous actors “in the round”.¹⁹⁴ This culturally informed ‘roundness’ of an indigenous actor is the key element in a biographical history. As opposed to flat generalization, ‘roundness’ shows many sides of the actor, including his success and failure. In a way, roundness is presented in the actor’s ambivalence.

My experiment in this chapter follows the call from previously mentioned historians. It intends to ‘populate’ Early Modern Formosan Historiography with North Formosans reconstructed in their ‘roundness’. These Formosans appeared on the stage of intercultural encounter with the Dutch and disappeared leaving a few records on the paper. It is my purpose to foreground them in the following two narratives of the

¹⁹² Kang, ‘Crooked and Embroided’, p. 33.

¹⁹³ Martin, p. 56.

¹⁹⁴ Martin, p. 56.

Dutch period without compromising the role of non-Formosans. Nevertheless, restricted by the amount of information available in the sources, I must also admit these 'biographical histories' run the risk of becoming an elaborated annotated index for each indigenous actor. Some are longer and some are shorter. But all are put in the chain of events for the purpose of bringing up their roundness by contextualization.

The first narrative is titled: "een muys in de val" (a mouse in a trap).¹⁹⁵ It was a cry for help from Junior Merchant Pieter van Mildert stationed in North Formosa in 1655. The situation in the north was so precarious that he felt like a mouse trapped in the fort, whereas North Formosans were playing the master outside. It epitomizes the various types of struggles during the first Dutch occupation of North Formosa (1642-1662). Either as individuals or villages, local inhabitants responded to intercultural encounters with different levels of resistance and constantly put the company servants on eggshells.

The second narrative is titled: "Guarda!" (to stop or stay). It was a direct quote from the Dutch guards who tried to prevent ten to twelve Basay from approaching the fortress on Quelang in 1666. It was a critical moment during the second Dutch occupation of North Formosa (1664-1668). This reoccupation history has been studied by J. L. P. J. Vogels and John E. Wills. For Vogels, the VOC intended to create a new Tayouan out of Quelang to reclaim its trade, but this attempt failed.¹⁹⁶ For Wills, this reoccupation is a black comedy that shows "a rare detailed picture of Cheng military tactics...and an excellent picture of the beginnings of Chinese

¹⁹⁵ *FE IV*, p. 121.

¹⁹⁶ Vogels, pp. 97-99.

encroachment on some aboriginal villages”.¹⁹⁷ While Vogels reads this history from the Dutch side and Wills reads it from the Chinese side, my narrative intends to revisit these four years from the side of North Formosans.

“een muys in de val”

The Spaniards who came in 1626 firing harquebus shots and scared North Formosans into the mountains were finally driven away by the Dutch in 1642. Their final battle was witnessed by the Basay and the River peoples who did not seem to care less.¹⁹⁸ After the fathers, came the merchants. Although the Spanish fathers were no longer there in North Formosa, the Dutch merchants and North Formosans approached each other with the knowledge and memory of the Spaniards.

In 1642, before the force to expel the Spaniards set out, Governor Paulus Traudenius instructed Captain Hendrick Harroussé and the others to “treat [North Formosans] in a friendly way”¹⁹⁹ because they had been with the Spaniards before. When Senior Merchant Joannes van den Eijnden was appointed the *Opperhoofd* of Tamsui and Quelang in 1656, one of his instructions from Governor Cornelis Caesar was to “treat [North Formosans] courteously and not call them dos, scoundrels and the like”.²⁰⁰ Also, in the account of the journey of Admiral Balthasar Bort’s fleet to the China Coast and Quelang in 1665, the villagers of Kimaurij and St. Jago were described as “fairly civilized and instructed in the Christian religion when the

¹⁹⁷ Wills, ‘The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung’, p. 274.

¹⁹⁸ Borao, *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, p. 206.

¹⁹⁹ *FE* II, p. 299.

²⁰⁰ *FE* IV p. 170.

Spaniards were present”.²⁰¹ Throughout their first and the second occupations of the region, the VOC servants were very aware of the connections between North Formosans and the Spaniards and they saw those connections as positive for the civilizing process of the local inhabitants. A few years ago in 1637, Governor Hans Putmans already made a report to the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC about the civilized Formosans of Lonckjouw in South Formosa. He said the people of Lonckjouw were “far more civilized than the inhabitants of any of the other villages...The women as well as the men all go round dressed. They are ruled by one chief...who rules like a sovereign prince”.²⁰² In the eyes of the Dutch merchants, North Formosans were civilized because they learned Christianity, while South Formosans of Lonckjouw were civilized because they were dressed and had a ruler.

The majority of Formosan Christians in North Formosa were the Basay. In 1655, there were 256 Christians in Kimaurij, 82 Christians in St. Jago and 61 Christians in Tapparij.²⁰³ To compare these figures with the village description of the same year, one finds that slightly more than half of the Kimaurij villagers were Christians.²⁰⁴ They were converted by the Spanish fathers and given Christian names like Bartholomeus, Franciscus or Martijn.²⁰⁵ Formosan Christians knew how to exploit their Christian status, although they probably did not know or care if they were dealing with Spanish Catholics or Dutch Calvinists. Their concerns were practical. In 1644, they brought their children to the fortress on Quelang for baptism.²⁰⁶ In 1648, they teased if the “Dutch people [were] really Christians” because they had not yet

²⁰¹ *FE IV*, p. 496.

²⁰² *FE II*, p. 38.

²⁰³ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 4.

²⁰⁴ *FE IV*, p. 14. There were no population figures for St. Jago and Tapparij in that year.

²⁰⁵ *FE II*, pp. 382 and 442.

²⁰⁶ *FD*, p. 204

sent any clergyman or even a catechist to teach the inhabitants in the north.²⁰⁷ And in 1651, they asked the company to provide for the needs of the poor according to the principal of charity according to “the way they were treated by the priests in the days of the Spaniards”.²⁰⁸

While the Dutch merchants were reminded of these Spanish connections in order to take the best advantage of their relationship with North Formosans, local inhabitants in the north were ready to repeat these connections in order to get what they desired from the Dutch. However, it must be noted that North Formosans also used their Spanish connections against one another. The Basay interpreter Lukas Kilas was spoken scornfully in 1655 by Chief Poenap from Chenaer of the Greater Tamsui River Region because he sided “with the Dutch, and he had assisted [them] in usurping the Spanish”.²⁰⁹ Chief Poenap was fined for insulting thi Formosan assistant of the Dutch company, but he represented an anti-Basay sentiment that was shared by other North Formosans.

The River peoples from Tamsui and the Basay from Kimaurij, St. Jago and Tapparij were the first ones to approach Commander Johannes Lamotius and his Council in Quelang in 1642. In his journal, Commander Lamotius said these North Formosans came to seek friendship and alliance and to “transfer their land to the Company”.²¹⁰ From his point of view, these North Formosans “have entered into a contract with the Company”.²¹¹ Providing supplies and returning runaway slaves were two major principles in that contract. It was under the idea of a contract that he

²⁰⁷ *FD*, pp. 230-231.

²⁰⁸ *FE III*, p. 358.

²⁰⁹ *FE IV*, p. 109.

²¹⁰ *FE II*, p. 304; *DZ II*, p. 21.

²¹¹ *FE II*, p. 308.

dealt on behalf of the VOC the relationship with North Formosans. Consequently, when the villagers of St. Jago did not provide rice, fish and other food to his expedition army on its march to the gold site and when the Basay from coastal hamlets hid Captain Harroussé's runaway slave, Jan Pilet ("a Tagalog boy"²¹²), it was immediately concluded that these inhabitants of North Formosa had violated the contract and deserved an exemplary punishment. Twelve men from St. Jago and six from Kimaurij were taken into custody. Six among them were hanged in public "as a deterrent".²¹³ On the day of the execution, the interpreter Theodore was appointed the chief of Kimaurij and Tapparij.

Theodore of Kimaurij

Theodore from Kimaurij spoke fluent Basay and Spanish and initially helped the company servants with interpretation.²¹⁴ He was appointed chief of Kimaurij and Tappari on the day when six Basay villagers were executed in public. One year after his appointment, however, Theodore curiously repeated the 'mistake' that took the lives of his fellow villagers. He hid some Cagayans slaves and moved to St. Jago with his villagers (including women and children) under the pretext of buying rice in Kavalan. They stayed at St. Jago for months during northern monsoon and decided to return when they saw Capitan Pieter Boons' expedition to Kavalan in 1644. After

²¹² Borao, *SIT* II, p. 417.

²¹³ *FE* II, p. 309.

²¹⁴ *FE* II, p. 484 and 489; Kang, 'Crooked and Embroided', p. 15; Chiu, pp. 90 and 203.

returning to Kimaurij, Theodore was detained by the company for his offense. His people and other chiefs came to plead for his release.²¹⁵

It is not clear why Theodore chose to move his village and sacrifice his career just to protect some Filipino slaves. As a company assistant, he would have known the gravity of his offence. After all, he was appointed chief right after six fellow Formosans were executed for a similar reason. Besides, Placard of 15th October 1642 was also specific: “Troops shall be dispatched to track down all runaway slaves...Those slaves shall be considered defectors and enemies of the Company and may be shot to death at will”.²¹⁶ The message of ‘Absolutely No Runaway Slaves’ could hardly be missed.

It might be that Theodore sympathized with the slaves, or it might be that he and his villagers had a different idea about a contract. North Formosans (here especially the Basay from Kimaurij) and the VOC had approached each other on the basis of an agreement, but “what was it that they believed to be valid and ‘legally’ binding”²¹⁷ might be totally different. Leonard Andaya deals with the same question in his study of the Treaty of Bungaya in 1667. He claims that treaty practices in South Sulawesi were very indeed different from those of the Dutch:

“Contrary to the Western European conception of treaties, the local states viewed the treaty not in its individual parts but as a total document...When circumstances demanded it, the ruler felt free to re-examine his alternatives and to make the necessary realignments to reflect the new power situation and his state’s position within in”.

²¹⁵ *FE II*, pp. 383, 392 and 417-418; Kang, ‘Crooked and Embroided’, p. 7.

²¹⁶ Heyns and Cheng, p. 125.

²¹⁷ Andaya, p. 276.

“He [A ruler of the native state of South Sulawesi] entered into a treaty believing that once the diplomatic relationship between the two contracting parties had been established, all things would find their proper place...It was considered unnecessary to pore painstakingly over the commercial items in the treaty since it was expected that both parties would seek economic measures which would be of mutual benefits and which would not compromise each other’s sovereign rights”.²¹⁸

According to native treaty practices in South Sulawesi, a treaty was considered as a whole regardless of individual clauses or items. A ruler might change his position as circumstances bid, and most importantly, it was concluded for mutual benefits. This is markedly different from the Dutch treaties that were “almost always basically commercial with the foremost aim being the acquisition and protection of trading advantages for the Company”.²¹⁹ In other words, whereas a treaty in South Sulawesi protected equally the interests of all signing parties, a Dutch treaty was made primarily to protect the interests of one party. This disagreement in the nature of a treaty inevitably creates room for conflicts. A clash in the interpretation of a contract might have been the reason behind Theodore’s curious mistake. He was probably aware of the danger of his decision, seeing what had happened before his appointment, but he might not completely agree with the principle of returning runaway slaves whom he and his villagers might already know before the Dutch came to North Formosa. He made the decision to hide them and to run away from punishment in another village. His village was on his side.

Theodore was in the end acquitted, released and restored to his position as a company assistant and a chief. In 1644, he journeyed to Fort Zeelandia in Tayouan. He was instructed “about the Company’s policy and intentions” and given “a cane as

²¹⁸ Andaya, pp. 288.

²¹⁹ Andaya, pp. 288.

a symbol of his authority and a cloth of red damask”.²²⁰ After he returned to North Formosa, Theodore was heavily involved in opening up East Formosa for the VOC. He was assigned to collect tributes in the Kavalan Plain in 1645.²²¹ Before Merchant Gabriël Happart went to inspect Tamui and Quelang in 1646, Governor François Caron instructed him to visit the Kavalan Plain and the gold site in Tarraboan (which lay farther afield) with the help of Kimaurij men like Theodore.²²² Theodore not only agreed to “prepare a good vessel”²²³ which they could use to sail to Tarraboan, but he also visited the village personally with two Dutch soldiers and other interpreters, bringing back the unfortunate news that the people of Tarraboan did not tolerate any Dutchmen to reside among them because they said clearly, “If the Dutch wanted to come and go as friends, to trade, they would appreciate it, but nothing else”.²²⁴

But there were also risks involved in Theodore’s job. When he and other interpreters went to Kavalan to collect tributes in 1647, they were not welcome by the villagers of Sochel Sochel who “shot arrows at them for as many as five times”²²⁵ in order to prevent these company assistants from entering the village. In 1648, a large number of the Kavalan attacked Theodore and other Kimaurij villagers at their sleep, killing two, injuring nine and stripping them of all their merchandise.²²⁶ Also in 1651, he was “robbed of his hat...as well as his clothes”²²⁷ by at least 380 Kavalan men who had chopped an interpreter Jan Pleumen into pieces on the same day. On the outside, the Kavalan were resisting tributes; on the inside, as Theodore’s colleague

²²⁰ *FE* II, p. 439.

²²¹ *FE* II, p. 544.

²²² *FE* III, p. 60.

²²³ *FE* III, p. 76.

²²⁴ *FE* III, p. 104.

²²⁵ *FE* III, p. 182.

²²⁶ *FE* III, p. 230.

²²⁷ *FE* III, pp. 389-390; Kang, ‘Crooked and Embroided’, pp. 19-22..

Lukas Kilas²²⁸ explained, the Kavalan were also resisting Kimaurij middlemen like Theodore because “they prefer to make use of force rather than friendship”²²⁹ in business. There were two layers of conflict. The Kavalan were fighting against the company and the company’s Basay assistants.

The inhabitants of North Formosa such as the Kavalan often felt more ambivalent towards the Basay than towards the company. Being far away from Fort Noord Holland and speaking different languages, they were prevented from dealing with the company themselves. This created room for middlemen like the Basay. However, the Basay were not always honest in their business. In the sinister scheme discovered by Merchant Boons in 1657, the Kavalan were fooled by the Basay who used the company’s name to trade with them. They did not realize the truth until Assistant Balbiaen went to Kavalan and negotiated with the inhabitants about the possibility of stationing two or three Dutchmen in the village of Talabiawan. In the face of the assistant, the Kavalan expressed that “they would rather trade with [the Dutch] than with the Kimaurij”.²³⁰ Theodore was identified as one of those Basay assistants who fooled the Kavalan for years. Furthermore, the unfortunate news that

²²⁸ Lukas Kilas started as an informal assistant in early 1646. He was often on the same assignment with Theodore, but he did not have a company cane until 1647. Lukas Kilas was faithful and diligent. He did his job so well that when he asked for a raise in 1648, Junior Merchant Antonij Plockhoy stationed in North Formosa were very supportive and negotiated with Governor Pieter Overtwater in Fort Zeelandia for him. But things soon took a downturn. Lukas Kilas began to have financial problems. He could not return the advance money to the company, claiming that it was already spent on merchandise. He accumulated debts and could not solve them for over a year. The diligent and loyal assistant became a ‘sly old fox’ and ‘shrewd rouge’ in 1650. When he was denied another raise in 1651, he decided to quit his job. His cane was taken back and his position was given to Elder Gravello. He only worked for the VOC for six years. Four years after his resignation, he was brought into a trial in which Theodore served as the interpreter. In that trial, villagers from the Greater Tamsui River Region accused him of extortion and embezzlement. One even accused him of being a traitor to the Spaniards. In the end, Lukas Kilas was found guilty as charged and sent to Tayouan. What happens afterwards is not known. *FE III*, pp. 118, 214, 229, 273, 331, 360 and 366; *FE IV*, pp. 104-111 and 129.

²²⁹ *FE III*, p. 230.

²³⁰ *FE III*, p. 360.

Tarraboan did not welcome any Dutchmen to their village brought back by Theodore and other interpreters in 1646 was found to be totally untrue by Assistant Balbiaen found in 1657. This Dutchman was approached by an elder of Tarraboan, Terribackelouw, who complained to him why company servants had stopped visiting their village. This Tarraboan elder expressed that they were attached to the company and would not hesitate to visit Quelang annually. In fact, as Assistant Balbiaen found, “Kimaurij Basay were held in low esteem over there”,²³¹ and the people of Tarraboan “would appreciate it if one, or even two, Dutchmen were stationed there”.²³² Clearly, the Kavalan and the people of Tarraboan were willing to trade with the company, but the Basay told different stories to protect their brokerage.

In addition to his strained relationship with other North Formosans, Theodore’s relationship with the company also fluctuated. Although he was often relied upon for various assignments, the company servants did not always trust him. Governor Pieter Overtwater suspected that he paid his laborers “in rags and bits and pieces, so that he himself could pocket most of his money”.²³³ His dishonest intent on money had a negative impact upon the company’s impression of him, so the company servants thought that “it will be wise, whenever the Company has to collect anything, to do so in the presence of a reliable man of [sic] own our nation”²³⁴ in order to prevent embezzlement. In fact, like other North Formosans, the company servants also often felt ambivalent about Basay assistants like Theodore. They relied upon their services but were also suspicious of their loyalty, calling them “the builders of the Tower of

²³¹ *FE IV*, p. 362.

²³² *FE IV*, p. 364.

²³³ *FE III*, p. 192.

²³⁴ *FE III*, p. 192.

Babel”²³⁵ for these local assistants diverged in their stories. When opportunities presented themselves, the company would not hesitate to replace one with another. In Theodore’s case, he continued his job until he was found poisoned on November 15th 1655 and died at the age of thirty-nine. In total, he served the VOC for thirteen years. His position was taken up by his son-in-law Barnabe.²³⁶

Despite of their ambivalence towards Basay assistants, the company servants still needed their help especially in visiting the Kavalan Plain because they wished to learn as much about the gold in East Formosa as possible. The Kavalan had their first intensive encounter with the Dutch in 1644 when Merchant Boons was still a captain leading the first expedition to Kavalan to recruit allies. In that year, around thirty villages agreed to become allies, but Sochel Sochel was not at all attracted to the idea.

*Sochel Sochel of Kavalan*²³⁷

Sochel Sochel was a strong village. When the inhabitants saw Captain Boons and his soldiers coming to turn them into an ally, they refused their invitation and expressed their refusal “in a mocking and despicable way, knocking on their heels saying that they were not the ones to ask for the Dutch. But if the Dutch wanted to meet with them they could come freely, as they were strong enough to withstand”.²³⁸ Although instructed to employ gentle rather than tough measures, Capitan Boon decided to meet this haughty Formosan village with fire. He set fire to Sochel Sochel

²³⁵ FE III, p. 398.

²³⁶ FE III, pp. 229-230; FE IV, pp. 244-245, 258 and 259.

²³⁷ FE II, p. 475; FE III, pp. 171, 182, 189 and 240.

²³⁸ FE II, p. 475.

and its paddies. Later when it was time for tributes, the villagers of Sochel Sochel continued to refuse to pay and shot arrows at the Theodore who came to collect their tributes. The villagers said they never wanted to become an ally after they rebuilt their village from ruins.

The spirit of resistance was not exclusive to Sochel Sochel. Although thirty Kavalan villages agreed with the alliance with the VOC, not many of them were ready to pay tributes as what the European company would expect of its allies. Instead, the Kavalan made their opinion very clear that “they did not intend to pay tribute every year. If, however, the Dutch were to send a military force that was too strong for them, and if the Dutch were to dare capture a few heads from them, they would pay, and that is how it was!”²³⁹ It was perhaps puzzling to these Kavalan villages why they had to pay annually for an alliance. As they refused to pay, the company did not earn as much as it hoped in the beginning.

What was worse in the opinion of the Dutch company was the internal conflict incited by malicious individuals. The chief of Parrossinan from Kavalan had told Junior Merchant Nolpe that this was not unusual at all. Fights or quarrels were frequent among them. In 1647, an elder of Baboeloan called Touack threatened the company agents “by putting his *parang* to their throats to cut off their heads”.²⁴⁰ In 1651, a company interpreter Jan Pleumen was chopped into pieces “first the lower part of his body, then his arms close to his shoulders and after that...the head of the

²³⁹ *FE III*, p. 71.

²⁴⁰ *FE III*, p. 173.

dead body”²⁴¹ in a drunken brawl. When Assistant Balbiaen was in Kavalan in 1657, he met two chiefs that were rumored to be involved in ‘stealing and robbery’.

Boele Somapar of Kavalan

Assistant Balbiaen was visited by Boele Somapar, the chief of Madipotan, in Kavalan. This chief was “rumoured to be a notorious thief and earns a living by robbing many of his countrymen”.²⁴² He was not even appointed by the company residents. He made himself a chief by getting his first cane from a chief who had died in his village and traveled to St. Jago to secure his second cane from the son of a deceased chief because he had lost the first one in a fire. He knew the cane represented authority, so he did not want to live without it. With the cane, he traveled to Quelang and enjoyed himself in the midst of other company chiefs.

One day during Assistant Balbiaen’s stay, the Kavalan and the Basay were exchanging goods. Boele Somapar appeared with his crew. Almost at once, people stopped trading. They were afraid that Boele Somapar would rob them of their goods since it happened before that he “has murdered almost thirty people in this way”.²⁴³ Seeing Assistant Balbiaen on the site, Boele Somapar asked him if he was allowed to touch some people who deserved their punishment. Assistant Balbiaen denied and told him to let the company deal with the matter. Boele Somapar agreed and left the matters be.

²⁴¹ FE III, pp. 389-390.

²⁴² FE IV, p. 292.

²⁴³ FE IV, p. 294.

Boutay Sataur of Kavalan

Unlike Boele Somapar, Boutay Sataur was appointed a chief of Tagadouang by the company and he had the company cane with a silver knob. When Assistant Balbiaen visited in 1657, Boutay Sataur went to the assistant to return the cane. His reason was that his villagers were not happy about this alliance with the company especially after Theodore went to collect tributes in their village. They wondered why they had to pay annually for friendship. They thought they were independent and free from any tribute to anyone. Hearing this complaint from Boutay Sataur, Assistant Balbiaen explained that the company no longer collected tributes and persuaded him to keep the cane and the alliance. But Boutay Sataur refused. He said he was not afraid to leave the company because “he could chase away at least 300 Dutchmen with his villagers”.²⁴⁴ But later Assistant Balbiaen found that Tagadouang only had thirty fighting men and Boutay Sataur actually lived on stealing and robbing.

Both Boele Somapar and Boutay Sataur knew what a company cane meant. In fact, “they understood it all too well”.²⁴⁵ For the Dutch company, a company cane was only powerful “as it symbolised the authority of those chosen by the governor as leaders. The message was that the office of elders was to be given by the governor alone”.²⁴⁶ For the Kavalan, on the contrary, the cane with a silver knob was itself an authority that could be vested, re-vested or de-vested by the fact of having or not having it and they were the ones to decide. The Dutch who initially offered it did not

²⁴⁴ *FE IV*, p. 296.

²⁴⁵ Andrade, ‘Political Spectacle and Colonial Rule’, p. 77.

²⁴⁶ Andrade, ‘Political Spectacle and Colonial Rule’, p. 77.

matter because they would probably not know and they could not really control. It was forbidden to pass the cane to someone else in any situation, but Boele Somapar stood or sat among appointed chiefs on Quelang with his stolen cane and Boutay Sataur did not hesitate to lose the official one when he and his villagers discovered something undesirable like a tribute was attached to it. Individually speaking, Boele Somapar and Boutay Sataur were making decisions that best suited their personal interests. But for an outsider like the VOC that was dealing with an entire region like Kavalan, it found the inhabitants ambivalent for acting contradictorily and was forced to do “a balancing act”.²⁴⁷

The political climate in Kavalan was shifting. In 1657 Merchant Boons established a direct trade relation with Kavalan and chose Talabiawan as the best marketplace according to Assistant Balbiaen’s suggestion, but in 1661 Assistant Van der Meulen and his Formosan wife stationed in Talabiawan were again suffering because their neighbors’ love towards them “is perceptibly waning”.²⁴⁸ Generally speaking, the VOC’s Kavalan experience is a page of struggles. On one hand, as the 1657 Basay business scheme shows, the company had been used as a name by its Basay assistants, earning little but paying much. On the other hand, as the various types of reaction from the Kavalan show, it was plagued by constant changes in the region. Without sufficient resources to pursue its goals and protect its allies, the Dutch company could do little. In the end, Governor Coyett had to consider in 1661

²⁴⁷ Blussé and Eeverts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 3.

²⁴⁸ *FE IV*, p. 427.

withdrawing their men and returning only when the company “sees that greater peace reigns”.²⁴⁹

Like in Kavalan, the Dutch needed assistance from local Basay helpers to enter Tamsui. But unlike their purpose with Kavalan, they went to Tamsui primarily to obtain provisions and allies. While they had to cajole and threaten the Kavalan into alliance, the River peoples of the Greater Tamsui River Region actually made the initiatives. They “requested to become allies of the Dutch”.²⁵⁰

When a company soldier and the interpreter Alonce went to Tamsui to obtain provisions in October 1642, they were warmly welcomed by the inhabitants who had never seen any European before. Later when Captain Thomas Pedel was assigned to take charge of Redoubt Antonio in Tamsui in November 1642, he was also approached by several village heads who came with saplings as (in the opinion of Captain Pedel) a symbolic act of transferring their land and swearing allegiance to the company.²⁵¹ Except for several times in which the company’s Basay interpreters could not understand the language from inland villages, peace was soon concluded with the inhabitants of Tamsui. Nevertheless, if the River peoples were quick to conclude peace, they were not as quick to respond as a treaty partner. For example, the company had to conclude an alliance with Chief Gommon for three times before he willingly followed the obligations attached to the peace treaty. Fortunately for the

²⁴⁹ *FE IV*, p. 437.

²⁵⁰ *FE II*, p. 304.

²⁵¹ *DZ II*, pp. 95-96.

company, since “all inhabitants throughout the Tamsuy area listen to him”,²⁵² he was able to make all the villages promise to pay tributes. Their hard work on him paid off.

Inside the Greater Tamsui River Region, there were two newly recruited regions after 1648: Baritsoen and Culon. Both were situated to the north of the southern quarter and along the land route that connected Fort Zeelandia and Fort Noord Holland. There were three villages in the Baritsoen region and they were involved in chronic fights among themselves. The leaders of the eleven villages of the Culon region were all presented with the company canes.

In the region of Baritsoen, the villagers of Tarrissan were especially belligerent and resistant. In 1650, they organized a Hongmen Feast and invited its neighbors, including the chief of another Baritsoen village Sausaulij, to enjoy the feast. When the guests arrived, they did not find entertainment. Instead, they met weapons and were robbed and threatened. The chief of Sausaulij who survived the Hongmen Feast asked help from the Dutch but he was not given any positive response. He then “left without speaking, seized by fear, [and] committed suicide in his own rice-fields”.²⁵³ Some Culon allies were also so scared of Tarrissan and so unsure of the protection from the company that they went into hiding and would not come out to pay respect or tributes. It was a loss to the company, so Governor Nicolaes Verburch authorized Junior Merchant Anthonij Plockhoy and a troop comprised of twenty soldiers and two hundred Formosan allies to punish Tarrissan. Junior Merchant Plockhoy originally planned to set the village on fire, but it was raining. Instead, he ordered his men to chop a few houses down and robbed the village of its rice. The big part of the village

²⁵² *FE* II, p. 449.

²⁵³ *FE* III, p. 279.

of Tarrissan was saved by the weather. A few days later, villagers of Tarrissan expressed through the chief of Sausaulij that they were willing to conclude peace with the company by “swearing an oath according to their custom”.²⁵⁴ It was good news for the company, although it was also aware that the matter was not really settled. A villager like KIRRACH, for instance, remained outside their control.

KIRRACH of TARRISSAN

In the eyes of the Dutchmen, KIRRACH of Tarrissan was a nuisance who incited resistance against the company. Although he was not an elder or a chief, he was popular among the villagers. What bothered the company was not his popularity, but his cunningness. KIRRACH had deliberately made his villagers divide their village into ten parts. When Junior Merchant Simon Keerdecoe went to Tarrissan in 1651 with a group of twenty Dutchmen to inspect the division, they found that “houses were not only separated one from the other, one here the other there, but the whole village was broken up”.²⁵⁵ It was absolutely out of the question for the company to manage a village like this. Since Tarrissan was considered the trouble maker in the Baritsoen region, the village had to be pacified in order that general peace could be maintained and the south-north land route could be safely open. A villager like KIRRACH had to be put under control.

When KIRRACH saw Junior Merchant Keerdecoe and his small company, he laughed. He made fun of the company servants, saying that even Junior Merchant

²⁵⁴ FE III, p. 280.

²⁵⁵ FE III, p. 374.

Plockhoy's large group had done nothing to him last year, what could this small group do? He was perhaps too proud. Junior Merchant Keerdekoek swallowed this insult and played a careful trick on Kirrach the next morning. He asked this Tarrissan man to accompany them for a short walk and bestowed the honor of holding the bird that was meant as a present to the *opperhoofd* in Quelang. Kirrach agreed and went. In the middle of the walk, however, he was arrested by a Dutch soldier who cast a noose around his neck. This sudden move surprised both Kirrach and other villagers who witnessed the arrest. To calm their mind, Junior Merchant Keerdekoek explained the company only wanted Kirrach because he acted against the company's interpreter and assaulted its allies. Afterwards, they returned to Tamsui with "this splendid treasure".²⁵⁶

The appointed chief of Tarrissan, Sitsikigh, and many important men of the region came to negotiate for Kirrach's release. Though seeing him was a villain, Junior Merchant Keerdekoek knew the people of Tarrissan and others all held this rash old bird in awe. These inhabitants claimed if the company refused to let Kirrach go, they would come to rescue him with their arrows and cause troubles in the region. This was not what the company wanted at all. They summoned Kirrach to appear before the council to explain his case, where this Formosan said nothing but demanded to be released and appointed an official chief of Tarrissan. He had support from his villagers and others. After considering the case for some time until they felt no danger, the Dutch finally decided to free Kirrach with a captain's title alongside Chief Sitsikigh and provide him with a cane with a silver knob. Many villagers were

²⁵⁶ FE III, p. 376.

pleased and they promised to “appear in Tamsui in order to receive Kirrach out of the hands of the Hounourable Company”.²⁵⁷

The River peoples from Tamsui like Kirrach knew the company. They knew how to play by the rules of the Dutch. Kirrach might have proposed his appointment as a way out of detention or it might have been a long-term strategy to elevate his status in the village of Tarrissan, which might otherwise be impossible for a common villager regardless of his/her ability or popularity. What happened to the partition of Tarrissan after Kirrach returned as the village’s new captain is not found in the sources. Nevertheless, based on what happened until the moment of Kirrach’s appointment, a reader can already sense the type of Catch-22 situation the River peoples of Tamsui were able to pull the Dutch in. They could manipulate Europeans for their own end. At one moment, they were allies, and at another moment, they became rebels. Whether as ally or enemy, they always had reasons and they always

Angry Allies of Tamsui

In the Greater Tamsui River Region, there were villages like Tarrissan that influenced regional balance and there were villages like Pocaël that brought menace from outside the region. Pocaël bordered on the southern quarter of Tamsui and its villagers constantly harassed the company’s allies like Parricoutsie. Around mid-1655, Pocaël went to the said village, robbing, stealing, extorting villagers’ belongings and threatening their lives. Pocaël people were not afraid of the Dutch. They said, “The Dutch may have powder and lead, [but] we have bows and arrows to defend

²⁵⁷ FE III, p. 389.

ourselves”.²⁵⁸ Parricoutsie asked for help, but the company could do nothing because at that moment, the majority of the company servants stationed in North Formosa have fallen ill.

Disappointed at the helplessness of their European ally to protect them as promised, Parricoutsie started to act rebellious and incite other villages against the company. An interpreter and three Dutch soldiers were thus killed by Tamsui River in September of 1655. Villages that were sympathetic to Parricoutsie also stopped bringing provisions to Redoubt Antonio. For example, Perragon, refused to bring animals to the redoubt and the villagers boldly claimed, “First for us, then for the company”.²⁵⁹ Junior Merchant Pieter van Mildert stationed at that moment in North Formosa deliberated about the situation. He found that although Parricoutsie and Perragon said they were forced to rebel by the harshness of the company, the real reason behind their anger was probably that “they no longer wanted to put up with the poaching, extortions, violence, or the threats that they will be taken into custody in the fort because of some trifling misdemeanours and then have to face serious charges”.²⁶⁰ In other words, it was the loss of freedom that drove them to rebellion. The company’s Basay assistants such as Lukas Kilas were accused in the fall of 1655 of abusing the River peoples and extorting them by forging false accusations.²⁶¹ Evil interpreters became even more powerful when Yu visited North Formosa in 1697. He saw how they mistreated the innocent inhabitants of North Formosa. If the interpreters said one, the inhabitants would not shout two. Gradually they grew so afraid of the

²⁵⁸ *FE IV*, p. 86.

²⁵⁹ *FE IV*, p. 127.

²⁶⁰ *FE IV*, p. 127.

²⁶¹ *FE IV*, pp. 104-111.

interpreters that they ended up “treating them like kings”.²⁶² But at this moment in 1655, the River peoples were already at the end of their tolerance. They reacted so strongly that Junior Merchant Van Mildert in the north felt he and his men were trapped “as mice in a trap”²⁶³ and they needed help from Fort Zeelandia.

Before any help arrived, unfortunately for the company servants, villages next to Redoubt Antonio in Tamsui like Chenaer decided to join the angry Parricoutsie and Perragon in 1656. This village had a different reason. Around ten or twelve years ago, the captain of Chenaer was accused of poisoning the drinking water of the redoubt and sent away from Formosa. His son, also appointed as a captain later, had been seeking opportunities for revenge. He remained a friend of the company but used the time to spy on the redoubt and assess the strengths as well as weaknesses of the Dutch. The anger of Parricoutsie which broke out the year before presented the best momentum for him to make his revenge. He and other allies started to act hostilely and threatened the Dutch “with their bows stretched and while slapping on their arses”, saying “What is the Company and what kind of people are you, who are under its obedience? If we want to, we should shoot you down right away, and tell the [opperhoofd]...that we are going to destroy his house and his cattle by the rising of the next moon...after which we shall leave for the mountains, where the Company cannot chase us away, to plant our rice paddies”.²⁶⁴

The threat from Chenaer was not as empty as the VOC’s promise to protect. At the end of the same year on 8th December 1655, Chenaer and several other villages

²⁶² Yu, p. 117.

²⁶³ *FE IV*, p. 130.

²⁶⁴ *FE IV*, p. 157.

attacked Redoubt Antonio with a force of about a hundred men. They set the Chinese quarter and the company properties on fire. They also managed to avoid musket shots and killed three Dutchmen by climbing the steps of the redoubt and shooting arrows through the cannon ports. Although they soon withdrew when some of them were wounded and killed, the Dutchmen inside the redoubt were already terrified by this attack. They locked themselves in the redoubt and depended on the supply from their Basay assistants to survive.

This Tamsui attack was a manifesto of the River peoples' claim for evenness. They saw themselves as equal as the Dutch. Although some among them like the chief of Chenaer remained clung to the Dutch and called those involved in the attack criminals or rebels, this inner divide did not reduce the power of resistance. Initially since the company only had a small number of soldiers in the north, it sought diplomacy as the first solution. Messages were spread via Basay assistants that the company wished to make peace with the River peoples. This was acceptable to the inhabitants in Tamsui, but they insisted "a Dutchman [should] come over to them who was qualified to make a contract with them, if that did not happen, they would maintain their rebellious stance".²⁶⁵ Most villages found this agreeable. They knew the Dutch way of making peace. They knew the importance of a contract and they proposed the idea, intending to negotiate for their rights in the European way.

Unfortunately, the intended peace talk did not happen. When Fort Zeelandia was replenished with enough manpower, Governor Coyett decided in September of 1657 to send a punitive expedition of 290 military men and 60 sailors led by *Landdrost*²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ *FE IV*, p. 259.

²⁶⁶ A *landdrost* is a bailiff. 'Glossary', *FE IV*, p. 668.

Frederick Schedel, Captain Thomas Pedel and Merchant Thomas van Iperen to Tamsui. Chenaer and other villages were also ready with their bows and arrows and a guerrilla strategy. Their warriors first went hiding in the forest. When Dutch soldiers started to climb the mountains to find them, these warriors suddenly appeared and shot as many arrows as possible at the climbing Dutchmen. In two hours, three men from the Dutch side were killed and ten of them were wounded. But when the Dutch were in the open space with their muskets, these Formosan warriors did not confront them but disappeared in the deep of the forest. Without anyone to fight against, the Dutch soldiers went to the villages and destroyed the houses and crops by fire, intending to starve the peoples. One man from Chenaer who was said to be one of the principal villains was caught. He was beheaded and his head was stuck on a pole in front of the redoubt. Perragon was reduced to ashes, but Parricoutsie avoided the fate by pleading mercy and promising to be a good ally.

For the company, the anger of the River peoples led to a rebellion, but for villagers of Parricoutsie and Chenaer, they had reasons to act with anger. They complained; they fought; they proposed a way to peace that should serve both parties right but were again denied. They were forced to play ambivalent to the Dutch, appearing good as friends and bad as rebels at the same time, and they used that ambivalence to make their statement.

When the Chinese warlord Coxinga invaded Formosa in 1661, the north corner of the island was not immune to the influence of an imminent change in politics. The company's Basay assistants were especially sensitive. They reacted dramatically, "crying out and insisting that they would no longer be slaves of the Honourable Company, meanwhile complaining about the low, stingy payment which was handed

over for their services”.²⁶⁷ Instead of providing for their Dutch partners as before, they now walked on the beach near Fort Noord Holland, cursing the Dutch and shouting that they’ve also turned the Kavalan and the River peoples against the company. They even set the Chinese quarters on fire.

The Kavalan and the River peoples were turning into enemies, although they were not as close to the Dutch as the Basay and their relations with the company were often affected by local situations. In Kavalan, villages grew impatient with the company’s inability to protect them from their enemies as promised, and in Tamsui, villages were conspiring with the Basay in killing the company cattle and wounding people. Interpreters such as Barnabe and Graello Loemas whom the Dutch trusted the most became now the instigators and cursed the Dutch the most.

In late fall of 1661, the last company servant in charge of Quelang, Merchant Nicolaes Loenius, wrote to Governor Coyett from Japan. He explained the dire situation in North Formosa before he departed for Japan. He said, “they were surrounded by hostile inhabitants, and consequently cut off from water, firewood, rice and other necessities...Besides there was not enough powder and other war materials...Chinese war junks had been seen exploring Quelang Bay and the Tamsuy River”.²⁶⁸ He was consequently forced to abandon Quelang in June 1661 and moved the company subjects from there to Japan. Three Dutchmen rushing from Tarraboan did not catch the ship to Japan and were murdered by the Basay of Kimaurij. Their heads were chopped off and stuck on poles. One month later, two other Dutchmen

²⁶⁷ *FE IV*, p. 460.

²⁶⁸ *FE IV*, p. 465.

who were left in Quelang were also killed by the Basay.²⁶⁹ Perhaps the Basay thought they would not see any Dutchman again.

“Guarda!”

The loss of Formosa in 1662 to Coxinga was also a loss of face for the VOC. In order to restore its power, trade and reputation, the High Government of the VOC in Batavia sent several fleets under the command of Admiral Balthasar Bort to China.²⁷⁰ The first fleet of twelve ships left on 24th July 1662; the second fleet of sixteen ships left on 1st July 1663, and the third fleet of thirteen ships left on 7th July 1664. This series of attempts was meant to “take revenge on the Cheng regime, ally with the Ch’ing against it, and secure a new channel for trade”.²⁷¹ It was in Admiral Bort’s third journey that he was instructed by the High Government to “take possession of the island Quelang off the Formosan Coast” because the High Government also feared that “the Spaniards might happen to be inclined to take the possession of Quelang again”.²⁷² Whether North Formosans were aware of all these hustles and bustles on the Formosa Strait remains a mystery. What they did know was that Admiral Bort’s fleet had arrived at the island of Quelang in the summer of 1664.

When the Dutch ships arrived, the inhabitants of Tamsui, Kimaurij, St. Jago, Kavalan and Tarraboan came to meet them and renew their friendship. The murder of three Dutchmen several years ago was brought up, but they explained that it was done

²⁶⁹ *FE IV*, pp. 499 and 664 (note 160 and note 168).

²⁷⁰ Vogels, pp. 8, 9 and 13.

²⁷¹ Wills, ‘The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung’, p. 273.

²⁷² *FE IV*, p. 487.

by those who had sided with the Chinese. Now that the Dutch had returned, they wanted trade again either on the island of Quelang or on the Dutch ships. They hoped to come every day to sell their fresh fish, chicken and other provisions, so they could buy clothes, iron, Chinese tobacco and salt in return. But they were not inclined to run errands such as fetch firewood or drinking water at the price of eight stuivers per day as before because they were very too with their fields. Afterwards, it might be possible. Knowing that he could not afford hostility from local inhabitants, Admiral Bort agreed with all these demands despite the fact that two heads of the previously murdered Dutchmen were still to be seen stuck on poles. He ordered his deputy Commander Hermanus de Bitter to do his best and keep this friendship with Formosans.²⁷³

However, things did not go as well as expected. This friendship between North Formosans and the Dutch turned awry under De Bitter who was not the most amicable of company servants. He was stern and often scolded people in public. He had the impression that Formosans favored the Chinese, so he was very apprehensive of them. As a villager of Kimaurij said to Senior Merchant Constantijn Nobel who was sent to redress the situation, it was a terrible year.

Aloep of Kimaurij²⁷⁴

Aloep was one important leader in Kimaurij. He said his people were bullied by De Bitter. They were ordered to leave their village at the time of harvest, which was seriously against their *marnas* customary law, and they were not paid at all for

²⁷³ FE IV, pp. 492-497 and 499.

²⁷⁴ FE IV, p. 524.

constructing a roof or building a fish pond. Besides, he himself was asked by De Bitter to pay him gold of a weight of six reals. He could not afford it, but De Bitter constantly sent men to remind him of his debt. So he had no choice but to flee with his family to somewhere else.

His fellow villager Elder Domingo suffered a similar fate. He complained he was detained for releasing his own slave and was extorted three reals in gold. Lamma, originally of the same village but now living on Quelang, also said he was not paid for his services. On the whole, the inhabitants were forbidden from coming on board of the ship to trade with the Dutch and they could not trade with other villages. They were not given cash in business and were not paid for their services. Three Dutch soldiers were even stationed in their village under the pretext of investigating why no provisions were brought to Quelang any longer. Instead, their real function was to keep an eye on the villagers. All these unfair treatments kept North Formosans away from the Dutch. Trade went from bad to worse. At one point, it was so bad that “no provisions whatsoever are being brought to [the Dutch] by [Formosans]”.²⁷⁵

Hearing all these complaints, Senior Merchant Nobel quickly responded by restoring their freedom. North Formosans were again allowed to come and sell products (except for *massekauw* or a type of Formosan liquor), and they were promised to be paid for their services. Soon, “seventeen vessels...sailed across from the village of Kimaurij to the fort, delivering all kinds of supplies...so that it seems that everything has come back to life again”.²⁷⁶ Aleop returned to Kimaurij with his family and De Bitter had to return Elder Domingo’s slave and three reals of gold.

²⁷⁵ FE IV, pp.506-507.

²⁷⁶ FE IV, pp. 520-521.

There were at this point about 100 houses and 300 souls in Kimaurij.²⁷⁷ North Formosans, particularly the Basay of Kimaurij, were bringing merchandise to Quelang every day in exchange for goods like iron bars. They refused iron ingots because these were “too thin and corroded”²⁷⁸ and were not very profitable for reselling them “at a high price to their neighbours in the mountains who used them for fashioning arrow heads and so on”.²⁷⁹

In the midst of this renewed liveliness was the growing threat of the Cheng Chinese. There were always rumors that the Chinese were coming to drive away the Dutch. The Formosans of the Greater Tamsui River Region especially felt the pressures. On the one hand, they felt a split of loyalty. They had the canes with silver mountings and prince flags from the Dutch, but the Chinese were also demanding acknowledgement from them. On the other hand, as the number of Chinese settlers grew, they were made to cultivate and deliver as much rice as possible to feed them even to the point that their own people were starving and they had to buy rice from elsewhere. The split of allegiance was a heavy burden to the River peoples. It drove them to react differently and created an ambivalent picture for the outsiders, which for the insiders was a necessary means of self-protection.

Rietsoeck of the Greater Tamsui River Region²⁸⁰

Rietsoeck situated along a tributary of Tamsui River was a strong village with hundreds of households. The Spanish fathers believed if Rietsoeck was converted, the

²⁷⁷ FE IV, p. 523.

²⁷⁸ FE IV, p. 523.

²⁷⁹ Blussé and Everts, ‘The Kavalan People’, p. 4.

²⁸⁰ FE IV, pp. 526-527.

entire area would not be heathen anymore.²⁸¹ Chief Penap who was an influential ruler in charge of twelve villages came from Rietsoeck.²⁸² But even Rietsoeck at this moment was torn with pressures. Sergeant Wouter Cock was sent to reconnoiter the rivers and assess the strength of the Chinese, but he could not travel farther than Rietsoeck because the villagers did not allow him. For one thing, the villagers did not want clashes between the Chinese and the Dutch in their village; for another thing, they worried the Chinese would harass their relatives living in Tamsui if they found out Rietsoeck was helping the Dutch. It was a difficult decision.

In this region, some villages were caught in between; some claimed they were loyal to the Dutch only; and some lied about the Chinese active among them. Each responded to the burden differently. Not long afterwards a Chinese man came to Rietsoeck. He was the ambassador of Sepoan or Kimsia²⁸³ and he was on a diplomatic mission. Circumstances compelled him to stay in Rietsoeck, so Senior Merchant Nobel sent Lieutenant Hendrick Noorden to meet him and to take him to Quelang for a talk. Obviously, their talk took place did not succeed. When Senior Merchant Nobel left Quelang in the charge of Merchant Joan de Meijer in March 1666, it was only two months away from another Sino-Dutch battle, which was to last for ten days from the dawn of May 11th until the dawn of May 20th. Before the battle started, the Formosans of Tamsui were forced to provide the Cheng troops with woods while Kimaurij villagers were spying on these Chinese soldiers for the Dutch.

²⁸¹ Ang, *Da tai bei gu di tu kao shi*, p. 36.

²⁸² *DZII*, p. 117.

²⁸³ Sepoan or Kimsia is Cheng Ching, Coxinga's eldest son and successor. Coxinga died on June 23rd 1662 at the age of thirty-eight. Tang, p. 186.

According to Merchant De Meijer's journal, the battle commenced on May 11th with "about forty Chinese junks...2,000 or 3,000 troops...[landing] on the dangerous outer rocks on the north-east coast [of Quelang]".²⁸⁴ It was a complete surprise because this part of the island was full of shelving rocks.²⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Sepoan's troops were driven back by the fires of the fortress and they retreated to the opposite of Quelang where Kimaurij stood. They set the village alight and camped next to its ruins. The next day on May 12th, the Cheng Chinese started to storm Redoubt Victoria which was situated on the highest point of Quelang. While the battle was going on, the communication between the Dutch on Quelang and Formosans on the mainland of Formosa still continued. The next day on May 13th, some Basay who acted as the Dutch spies told Merchant De Meijer that the Chinese were also "constructing scaling ladders...[saying] that they would beat each Dutchman they could lay hands on o death".²⁸⁶ However, to the disadvantage of the company, some among the Basay has defected to the Chinese side. On May 14th, Sepoan's forces tried three times to storm Redoubt Victoria, which surprisingly survived with only "one Dutch soldier...killed and five badly burned in a powder explosion",²⁸⁷ and on the same day, Barnabe as the headman of the incinerated Kimaruij went to Quelang to ask the company to provide Kimaurij villagers with some rice because "the passage to Cavalang had been cut off because of this siege"²⁸⁸ and his people would pay in return. On May 15th, the Chinese attacked Redoubt Victoria once again but retreated soon with heavy casualties, while the inhabitants of Kimaurij and St. Jago announced they would "assemble an army and give an ostentatious display of courage with their poras" while

²⁸⁴ *FE IV*, p. 601.

²⁸⁵ Wills, 'The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung', p. 285.

²⁸⁶ *FE IV*, p. 602.

²⁸⁷ Wills, 'The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung', p. 285.

²⁸⁸ *FE IV*, p. 602.

the Dutch send six to eight soldiers to assist them.²⁸⁹ There was a military alliance between the Formosans and the Dutch.

On May 16th, a Formosan of Quelang, Lamma, joined the Dutch army, but he was taken into custody because he “has gone across to the Basay on the other side several times...and has returned this evening”.²⁹⁰ Knowing that some Basay had already changed their side, Merchant De Meijer became very suspicious of Formosans, especially when they seemed friendly. Lamma suffered for Merchant De Meijer’s distrust. It was not until after the battle that he was proved to be the most loyal ally the Dutch could ever have during their second occupation. There was no attack from Sepoan’s forces on May 17th, but Merchant De Meijer’s suspicion of local inhabitants reached exploded at midnight when his guards informed him of thirteen Basay and some Formosans walking on the beach with their dogs that barked and gave away their position. Hearing this report, the Dutchman in charge of Quelang during this battle could not help but think, “This is a certain proof that the Basay are with our enemies every day and are traitors to the Honourable Company”.²⁹¹ He could hardly trust these Basay friends anymore. The next day (May 18th) also saw no major attacks from the Chinese but a few shots. Merchant De Meijer was informed in the afternoon that around 160 Formosan warriors of St. Jago and Kimaurij were engaged “in a fierce battle against 150 Chinese”,²⁹² but he did not buy the story being still very into his judgment of the unreliability of North Formosans. Though the Dutch expected more attacks, on the dawn of May 20th “all the Cheng Chinese embarked, abandoned

²⁸⁹ *FE IV*, p. 603.

²⁹⁰ *FE IV*, pp. 603-604.

²⁹¹ *FE IV*, p. 604.

²⁹² *FE IV*, p. 604.

their camp and departed from this island with fifty-eight or sixty junks”.²⁹³ This was advantageous for Merchant De Meijer and his men because they would run out of fuse if the siege lasted any longer. It is curious why the Cheng Chinese withdrew so suddenly. Wills supposes perhaps “the Cheng soldiers had brought rations for just ten days”.²⁹⁴ This Sino-Dutch battle was not a battle between Sepoan’s Chinese troops and Merchant De Meijer’s Dutch soldiers alone. As far as the journal of the commander of Quelang shows, it was also a window to the conflict especially inside the Basay of Kimaurij as they maneuvered through this chaos according to their own interests.

Ranges Hermana of Kimaurij

Ranges Hermana was a headman of Kimaurij. One evening after one month after the war (June 17th 1666), he and three friends were invited to De Meijer’s place on Quelang. At that moment, ten to twelve Basay carrying war bows and arrows also came to Quelang but it was not normal for “never before has it happened that any Basay or other inhabitant has come to this island at night”,²⁹⁵ obviously not without an invitation. Several Dutch guards spotted them and shouted in Spanish ‘Guarda!’. The Basay warriors were surprised and fled away, except for four of them whose proa was halted and who were arrested.

De Meijer was informed of this violation. He asked his Basay guests if they knew these prisoners. They all denied knowing them and said that no Basay would ever come to Quelang at night because they knew the rule. They must come from

²⁹³ FE IV, p. 604.

²⁹⁴ Wills, ‘The Dutch Reoccupation of Chi-lung’, p. 286.

²⁹⁵ FE IV, p. 612.

other villages like St. Jago. However, when the arrested four were brought before Ranges and his friends, they were very surprised. They admitted knowing them, and started to apologize and pleaded for forgiveness. However, De Meijer denied their request. He sent away his guests, kept the prisoners on the island and determined to find out the truth.

Two days after that evening, the first investigation was held. Not much was told except for that this action was meant to “capture a Dutchman alive and take him along in the proa”.²⁹⁶ The next day, De Bitter as the commander of the military on Quelang brought in six more Basay; two of them were Ranges Hermana and Pinarau Appingh. They were accused of associating with the Chinese and conspiring against VOC. De Meijer did not waste much time and immediately had another investigation. Pinarau Appingh confessed that he knew about the plan of capturing a Dutchman for the Chinese almost three months ago in Tamsui. A soldier was deemed especially useful because he would know the Dutch military strength the best. It was thought to be possible to catch a Dutchman at night when he was about to defecate outside. Pinarau Appingh was asked to do the job, but he refused. Instead, he brought this news back to all headmen in Kimaurij so that they could warn the Dutch. Until this point, nevertheless, De Meijer was clueless about who among the headmen chose to act exactly the opposite.

When Ranges Hermana was questioned, he did not say much. He only begged for mercy and proposed to pay a fine. But his wish was denied. During his imprisonment, another Kimaurij inhabitant Lebos Linien who worked for the Chinese

²⁹⁶ FE IV, p. 614.

returned to his village and was arrested by the Dutch. It was this prisoner who revealed the biggest ‘secret’ to De Meijer.

Lebos Linien said Ranges Hermana was more than a Basay assistant to the company. He was already approached by a Chinese commander who “made [him] a Junior Cauja and bestowed the honorary title ‘Fauqua’ on him, and had presented him with Chinese clothes and a silver medal. He was to be the commander of the assaults”.²⁹⁷ Ranges Herman was a Chinese ally who pretended to be a helper to the Dutch. He had a double identity. Obviously, this commission was supposed to be a secret. Lebos Linien could have known it via his own Chinese connections. De Meijer confronted this with Ranges Hermana. He denied the accusation, but it did not help him. Within two weeks since the night he was invited to De Meijer’s place, he and six other people were charged with treason. Two years later, they were to be sent to Batavia in chains. At that time, the Dutch also were also preparing to leave Quelang and Formosa for good. After learning that China had again denied the Dutch wish for open trade, Governor General Joan Maetsuijcker in Batavia decided that “because of the high costs and few revenues it brought in, Quelang had to be abandoned”.²⁹⁸ In the end, this ‘new Tayouan’ project had “all been in vain”.

What happened to Ranges Hermana afterwards is not known, but the impact of this event upon North Formosan politics is clear. The Kavalan people, for example, did not hesitate to replace the Basay as provision providers. Previous experiences with these Formosan middlemen taught the Kavalan to distrust and dislike them. As the interrogation of Ranges Hermana and others was going on, no Basay dared to

²⁹⁷ *FE IV*, p. 622.

²⁹⁸ *FE IV*, p. 656.

approach Quelang and trade with the Dutch. Seeing this void, the Kavalan did not wait but immediately assumed their new role. They brought the products from their land and were happily permitted to come to Quelang without the mediation of the Basay.²⁹⁹ As long as they had the chance to deal with the Dutch directly, the Kavalan never hesitated to get any Basay out of their way.

If North Formosans like Ranges Hermana were the source of fear of betrayal for the Dutch on Quelang, the help of the Basay headmen Domingo, Barnabe and Du Pon Nang was comforting because these kept fighting the Chinese for the Dutch. At the moment of the interrogation of treason, they went to Tamsui to kill some Chinese and Basay defectors. De Meijer and his men on Quelang were dealing with two groups of Basay assistants: one group played a double face and the other remained loyal. The most faithful figure throughout the turbulent Dutch reoccupation must be Lamma or later Capitan del Campo.

Capitan Del Campo of Quelang

Capitan del Campo was originally named Lamma who came from Kimaurij. He moved to Quelang as a shepherd and helped the company when necessary. When Senior Merchant Nobel first arrived, Lamma was one of those who complained about not being paid for his services. Despite the call from his fellow Kimaurij villagers who asked him to return in case “he claimed to have authority over them”³⁰⁰ as he

²⁹⁹ FE IV, p. 617.

³⁰⁰ FE IV, p. 535.

was living among the Dutch, he continued to live near Quelang with his herd and serve the company.

When Quelang was threatened by a possible Chinese invasion, Lamma gathered many reports about the Chinese and Basay defectors and swore to join the company army “with bow and arrow”.³⁰¹ But it was a time of tension when the commander of Quelang, De Meijer, was filled with distrust. Everyone entering or leaving the island was strictly checked. So when Lamma went across the narrow strait to Kimaurij and returned to Quelang in the evening, he was captured and put in prison.

It was not until the war was over that Lamma was interrogated for his previous misbehavior. Quite contrary to De Meijer’s expectation, the interrogation proved Lamma to be faithful and honest. Every piece of his reports was true. To compensate for his loss, the company made him “Capitan del Campo...he will be considered to have command over all others of the village of Kimaurij who fall under the authority of the Honourable Company”.³⁰²

In his new role, Captain del Campo was as trustworthy as the old Lamma. He fulfilled his assignments faithfully. He caught Chinese men, collected useful intelligence and made reports about the Basay. De Meijer seemed to trust him a great deal for he also took him on several business trips. Even his wife was involved in the business. She was sent to comfort villagers of Kimaurij when Ranges Hermana and the others were imprisoned. They complained why De Meijer kept their men for so

³⁰¹ *FE IV*, p. 603.

³⁰² *FE IV*, p. 605.

long. They claimed if De Meijer did not release them, they would set fire to their village and move elsewhere.

It is true that Capitan del Campo also cared for his people in Kimaurij. Several times he took advantage of his position and De Meijer's trust to help his villagers. Once he tried to find a place for twelve Kimaurij inhabitants to live; another time he made De Meijer agree that villagers of Kimaurij could live on Quelang like the Basay; and still another time he tried to look after the living place for around thirty villagers. He scolded Ranges for being unfaithful, but when he tried to solicit freedom for an imprisoned fellow "[with gold] of a weight over a real",³⁰³ he was denied and severely reprimanded by De Meijer who saw his offer as an insult. No information is found about Capital del Campo after this point. Probably he was discharged from the job or from De Meijer's personal trust circle. Nevertheless, before that he appeared to be very faithful to both VOC and Kimaurij.

From these two narratives of Formosan-Dutch encounters reconstructed with Formosan characters foregrounded in the series of events, one gets a sense of how North Formosans were making many types of decisions to react to the 'unusual' situations of encounter. In Campbell's term, they were 'experimenting with their behaviors in a process of trial and error'. Characters such as Theodore, Kirrach and Ranges Hermana exploited their relations with fellow Formosans, the Dutch and the Chinese to maximize personal profits, while characters like Capitan del Campo clung to a single role and played it to the full. The 'roundness' of their role in these encounters comes to life, and being ambivalent is only one aspect of that roundness.

³⁰³ *FE IV*, p. 646.

Chapter III: The Basay of North Formosa



North Formosa by map (Kang, 2010; Palemeq, 2012)

Community History

The study of a small community as “a kind of human whole”³⁰⁴ is known among anthropologists. Such communities have the qualities of “distinctiveness, smallness, homogeneity and all-providing self-sufficiency”.³⁰⁵ They can be studied either as a present whole like Redfield’s Maya Indian villages of Yucatán Mexico or as a past whole like Le Roy Ladurie’s Montailou in the fourteenth-century France. By conceiving a small community from its ecological, economic, social and spiritual

³⁰⁴ Redfield, p. 2.

³⁰⁵ Redfield, p. 4.

aspects, one may understand “what a human society is and the variety of ways of thinking about it”.³⁰⁶

In history, the study of small communities is often a case of a ‘past whole’. For instance, the Paravas or a maritime people living on the Madurai coast of the seventeenth century were considered as a ‘client community’ in Southeast India. They used “their unique skills as fishermen, merchants, and cross-cultural brokers as bargaining chips, [and] skillfully manipulated their Portuguese (until 1658) and Dutch (after 1665) patrons”.³⁰⁷ They were also often referred by Europeans as a people of “habitual inconstancy and...two minds”.³⁰⁸ In North Formosa of a similar period, the Basay is the most studied community. It has been understood by current scholarship as the Formosans working for the VOC (the Basay) and a language that was used by the Basay and other North Formosans (the Basay language). As assistants to the VOC, the Basay were excellent go-betweens who facilitated business between foreigners and Formosans. As a means of communication, the Basay language towered over other dialects and became the lingua franca of the region.

My experiment in this chapter is not a reconstruction of the Basay or Basay language. It is a reconsideration of the nature of Basay in the hope of complementing previous community studies of Basay people. To reach this goal, I will first review previous reconstructions of Basay and point out an underlying assumption that seems to take Basay as an ethnonym. Then, I will study the word ‘Basay’ in historical sources by employing nomenclature analysis. This approach contextualizes the word

³⁰⁶ Redfield, p. 14.

³⁰⁷ Vink, p. 65.

³⁰⁸ Vink, p. 88.

Basay and traces the development of its usage by the Spaniards and the Dutch who had the most intensive contact with the people. Finally, I will discuss the nature of the Basay community or the Basayness of the Basay by borrowing inspiration from scholarly debates over *Melayu* in the context of Southeast Asia.

Basay in Previous Studies

Linguists and historians have been involved in the reconstruction of Basay. They use existing Basay vocabulary and European sources. Based on one thousand Basay words, the linguist Li Jen-kuei makes the following conclusions. First, North Formosans were Austronesian; second, they sailed because they had nautical terms; and third, the users of the Basay language were found on the northern coast and in the Kavalan Plain.³⁰⁹ Father Esquivel's report was especially specific about the Basay language. Based on the report, Li defines the geography of the language: "Basay was a lingua franca...in the northern part of Taiwan, especially in and near the Taipei area, including the border area between Basay and Kavalan".³¹⁰ Using the same source, Boraó offers even greater details: "there was a Bacay language area spread in the north of the island, with its center in Quimaurri-Taparri; that language was known up to the boundaries of the Kavalan province and the mouth and valley of the Tamsui river".³¹¹ Combining the two, one may say that users of the Basay language spread throughout today's Taipei City, New Taipei City and Yilan County.

³⁰⁹ Li, 'Taiwan bei bu ping pu zu', pp. 202 and 210-212.

³¹⁰ Li, 'The lingue franche in Taiwan', p. 742.

³¹¹ Boraó, 'The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan', p. 117.

Nevertheless, Basay was not the only language used in North Formosa in the seventeenth century. It coexisted with other Formosan and European tongues. In 1632, Father Esquivel wrote, “a common language is spoken in all of them...--the Bacay tongue”.³¹² In his report to the VOC Governor General Anthonio van Diemen in 1644, Governor François Caron also mentioned how Spanish was spoken fluently by those from Kimaurij.³¹³ Clearly, Basay was the lingua franca used by different Formosans from diverse dialect backgrounds, but it was not the only language.

How the Basay language acquired its lingua franca status is not explained in the sources. Nor has such an explanation been attempted by linguists or historians. According to Li, although there have been a number of indigenous languages in Taiwan, “no native Formosan language has ever acquired such a status [of lingua franca]”.³¹⁴ Only Japanese and Mandarin, he argues, have been used as a lingua franca by the different Formosan peoples as a result of the Japanese and Chinese hegemony over the natives. It will be difficult to apply this theory to the Basay language in the seventeenth century. Users of the Basay language did not exercise complete dominance over other villages. Instead, it even happened that they were attacked by arrows or robbed to the last piece of their clothing.³¹⁵ The Basay were not always supported by North Formosans. It is therefore unlikely that the Basay language became a lingua franca because its users were politically or economically dominating.

³¹² Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 116.

³¹³ *FE* II, p. 489.

³¹⁴ Li, ‘The lingue franche in Taiwan’, p. 741.

³¹⁵ *FE* III, p. 180; *FE* III, p. 390.

A possible explanation may be related to the pidgin character and relative simplicity of the Basay language. Ferrell finds loan words from Spanish, Malay and Filipino in North Formosan dialects.³¹⁶ Father Esquivel said Basay was so easy that the Spanish fathers soon picked it up as the language of mission. These features fit the definition of a trade language Mark Donohue finds in his study. According to Donohue, a trade language is a pidgin language spoken by traders in little or no permanent trading posts. As a pidgin language, it is simpler than its parent language in the sense that it alters the word order, simplifies possession and prefers independent words to infix- or suffix-combination. Besides, it is often used when two groups meet.³¹⁷ It is common for people in Southeast Asia where linguistic diversity was a daily experience to resort to a lingua franca such as Malay, and Malay was also quick to pick up for foreign traders.³¹⁸ Therefore, one may conclude it is likely that the Basay language was picked up because it was easy and practical for doing business.

Historians are more concerned with reconstructing the people who used the language. Their historical reconstruction exhibits a development that goes from general to specific, from group to individual and from ethnographic descriptions to analyses of cross-cultural encounters.

Borao comes out with an ethnographical account of North Formosans from his reading of Spanish sources in 1993. In his account, he describes the land, the people, and the social and economic aspects of life in North Formosa.³¹⁹ Although his sources claim to be “applicable to all the aborigines in northern Taiwan”, Borao finds

³¹⁶ Ferrell, *Taiwan Aboriginal Groups*, p. 20.

³¹⁷ Donohue, pp. 713-715.

³¹⁸ Reid, ‘Early Southeast Asian categorizations of Europeans’, p. 272.

³¹⁹ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’; *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, especially Chapter 3 The Encounter. Also see in the thesis **Chapter I. ‘The Place and Its Peoples’**.

it safer to assume “they refer more to the aborigines of Quimaurri-Tapparri and Tamsui”, namely the Basay.³²⁰ On the whole, this account is general about North Formosans. In his 2009 *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan 1626-1642*, Borao singles out the Basay as a special case. According to him, the Basay speak “a common language”, live “in isolated coastal settlements”, have “kinship...founded between Basay villages”, create “a trading network that links by sea...not only used for trade but also for communication” and practice no “headhunting”.³²¹ He also identifies eight Basay villages and uses the term “Basayan natives” of Quimpauli village.³²²

Borao’s increased knowledge of North Formosans owes much to the development of historical studies of Dutch archives. As he himself puts it, “the Dutch sources are very much more detailed than the Spanish because they are written in a diary basis”.³²³ For instance, five of the Basay villages were already identified by Kang in 2003: Tapparij, Kimaurij, St. Jago, Talebeouan and Tarraboan.³²⁴ His study of the Basay in 2003, Chiu’s PhD dissertation in 2008 and Blussé’s ‘Introduction’ to the fourth volume of *The Formosan Encounter* in 2010 discover many aspects of the Basay people. According to these historians, the Basay were skillful interpreters, middlemen, loggers, miners, and smiths. Unlike other Formosans who were primarily involved in farming, fishing and hunting, the Basay lived on their skills and networks.³²⁵ They were considered as peddling-traders that moved around in

³²⁰ Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 114.

³²¹ Borao, *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, p. 73.

³²² Borao, *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, p. 80.

³²³ Borao, *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan*, p. 90.

³²⁴ Ang, pp. 128-129; Kang, ‘Shi qi shi ji’, note 6, p. 4; Kang, *Colonial Contact and Imperial Periphery*, pp. 53-54.

³²⁵ Kang, ‘Shi qi shi ji’, pp. 9 and 13-18; Chiu, pp. 154-157; *FE IV*, ‘Introduction’, pp. xiv-xv.

Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century,³²⁶ and their language functioned like Malay as the lingua franca in the Indonesian Archipelago.³²⁷ Moreover, the relations between the Basay and the Dutch company which they served as middlemen were not always friendly. It has been shown that they often took advantage of their position at the expense of others. This caused complaints from both Formosans and the company servants.

To summarize, previous studies clarify who the Basay were, what their way of living was like and how they dealt with Europeans. Nevertheless, these previous studies also seem to assume Basay as a term of ethnicity. The Basay came from several hamlets along the northern coast. Since Kimaurij was a Basay village, an inhabitant from Kimaurij must naturally be Basay. Likewise, villagers from Tapparij and St. Jago were also Basay, *Ma Sai Ren* (馬賽人). They as a whole belonged to one ethnic group.

The meaning of the word 'Basay' according to a twentieth-century informant might even strengthen this argument of ethnicity. When Li was doing his field research in North Taiwan, an eight-three-year-old lady told him the word Basay means "mountain people or savages".³²⁸ It is a common practice among indigenous peoples in Taiwan to take the word 'people', 'man' or 'mountain dweller' from their own language as a self-reference. "The northern Paiwan", Ferrell says, "refer to themselves as ka-tsalisi-an, 'mountain-slope dwellers'".³²⁹ The word Seediq, which

³²⁶ Kang, 'Shi qi shi ji', p. 24.

³²⁷ *FE IV*, 'Introduction', p. xv

³²⁸ Basay 指"山地人, 土著族". The informant was from Gongliao District of New Taipei City. It was the Spanish Santiago or the Dutch St. Jago in the early modern period. Li, 'Taiwan bei bu ping pu zu', pp. 207 and 211.

³²⁹ Ferrell, *Paiwan Dictionary*, p. 1; Miyamoto, p. 188.

means ‘people’, is also the name of one of the fourteen legally recognized indigenous groups in Taiwan.³³⁰ Dawu people from Orchid Island or Lanyu actually prefer the word ‘dawu’ or ‘dao’ (meaning man) to the word Yami given by Japanese anthropologists as the name for their people.³³¹ Along this line of thought, one may say that the word Basay, which means mountain people or savage, also functions as an ethnonym.

Was every individual from Basay villages a Basay? Did the Basay belong to one ethnic group? In ethnology, it is not a given that one ethnic group corresponds to one language because one ethnic group can have many languages, and one language can be spoken by many ethnic groups.³³² Even if the Basay spoke the Basay language, it does not follow that they also belonged to an ethnic group called Basay. If, as argued before, the Basay language was a trade language chosen for practical reasons, the nature of the Basay as a community that used the Basay language and Spanish in North Formosa may be studied further. To discover how the Basay were perceived by the Spanish fathers and the VOC servants stationed in North Formosa, I now turn to Spanish and Dutch sources.

Basay in Historical Sources

North Formosans are mentioned in various ways in the Spanish sources. They have been called “los indios”,³³³ “los naturales”, “los indios naturales”,³³⁴ “los de la

³³⁰ Miyamoto, p. 96.

³³¹ Miyamoto, p. 192.

³³² “一個民族對應一種語言並不是民族誌的通則”. Wang Ming-ke, p. 99. My paraphrase.

³³³ Álvarez, Tomo II, p. 428.

³³⁴ Álvarez, Tomo II, p. 423.

tierra”,³³⁵ “los nativos de la tierra”³³⁶ or “los isleños”.³³⁷ Among these variations, ‘los indios’ or ‘los naturales’ are the most frequent. They are often used interchangeably. Those from the coastal Basay villages have been called as “estos indios de Kimaurij y Taparri”³³⁸ by Father Esquivel or “los indios de Taparri y Kimaurij”³³⁹ by Álvarez. They were not called Basay. The combination of an indigenous individual with his or her origin is rather common in the sources.

One rare example when ‘Basay’ is used as a reference for the people is in the meeting minutes written in February 1642 when the Spanish garrison commander, the fathers and others gathered to discuss necessary measures against the imminent Dutch invasion. In the meeting, Father Teodoro de la Madre de Dios³⁴⁰ reported that the Dutch were near the shore in the company of “los basaes” with an intention to seize the Spanish ship and conquer Fort San Salvador. This intelligence was offered by “los indios de Santiago” and “el indio de Tamchuy”.³⁴¹ Curiously, Father Teodoro called villagers from the Basay village St. Jago ‘los indios’ rather than Basay, but he called the defectors on board with their Dutch enemies ‘los basaes’ (the Basay). Nowhere else did Father Teodoro use the word ‘Basay’. In his personal letters to Manila, he always called North Formosans “los indios”, “los naturales de estas naciones”, “estos indios” or “los naturales de aquella isla”.³⁴² It seems that calling a North Formosan ‘Basay’ is unusual for the Spanish fathers. They regarded the word more as the lingua

³³⁵ Borao, *SIT* II, p. 417.

³³⁶ Borao, *SIT* II, p. 446.

³³⁷ Borao, *SIT* II, p. 573.

³³⁸ Álvarez, Tomo II, p. 426.

³³⁹ Álvarez, Tomo I, p. 326.

³⁴⁰ For Father Teodoro de la Madre de Dios or Teodoro Quirós, see Nakamura, pp. 158-159; Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 101.

³⁴¹ Borao, *SIT* II, p. 369.

³⁴² Álvarez, Tomo II, pp. 428-438.

franca than as an ethnonym. When the word was taken to mean people, it carried a negative connotation.

The Dutch merchants who came later had various ways of calling North Formosans. Before they were stationed in North Formosa, they had already heard about North Formosans. They called them “een heel wilt volck”.³⁴³ In the letters of the VOC Governor Generals in Batavia, North Formosans were mentioned as “d’inwoonders van ‘t landt” and “de inwoonderen van Tamsui”.³⁴⁴ At this stage, North Formosans were only a general collective like ‘inhabitant’ or ‘people’ for the Dutch.

After expelling the Spaniards in August 1642, the Dutch merchants became the nominal ruler of Formosa. Their colonial rule expanded on the island, so that “by 1645...it even became possible to travel overland from Zeelandia to the two northern settlements Tamsui and Quelang”.³⁴⁵ In the process, their knowledge of North Formosans also progressed.

As said, the company servants started with grouping North Formosans under the collective title of ‘inhabitants’, ‘people’ or ‘inhabitants of Tamsui’. The Dutch word ‘inwoner’ (inhabitant or resident) appears as often as the Spanish word ‘indio’.³⁴⁶ As their encounters with local inhabitants increased, they also developed various names for them: “d’inwoonders van Quimaurij, Taporij end St. Jago” or “Kimauresche ende

³⁴³ *FE I*, p. 3; Cheng, *De Nederlanders in China*, p. 176.

³⁴⁴ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662 II*, pp. 70 and 157.

³⁴⁵ ‘Introduction’, *FE II*, p. ix.

³⁴⁶ The Dutch also used the word ‘indio’. Rather than meaning Formosan, this word in Dutch sources refers to “persons of Indonesian origins (Bandanese and Moluccans) or...the deep black people of Malabar who indeed worked as slaves or sailors in the VOC settlements”. *FE II*, p. 383; Blussé, ‘The Cave of the Black Spirits’, p. 144; *Primsa Handwoordenboek*, p. 1402.

Tamsuische inwoonderen”,³⁴⁷ “de Tamsuiers” or “St. Jagers” or “de Cabalanders”,³⁴⁸ “de wilden”,³⁴⁹ “de landsaten”,³⁵⁰ or “ingesetenen”.³⁵¹ Moreover, they also started to recognize individuals: “Mattey [uyt het dorp van St. Jago]”,³⁵² “De Kimaurijër Bartholomeus”,³⁵³ “Domingo Aguilaers vrouwe”,³⁵⁴ and “den Japancen tolcq Jasinto Quesaijmondonne”.³⁵⁵

Regardless of the linguistic possibilities that are specific to the Dutch language, these various ways of calling North Formosans indicate that the Dutch company servants went deeper and wider in North Formosa than the Spaniards. Not only did they interact with North Formosans that were close to Fort Noord Holland, but they also traveled to the Greater Tamsui River Region and the Kavalan Plain. Moreover, their knowledge of North Formosans was also organized. They started to distinguish the people by their village, name, relation and function. An anonymous collective started to have an individual face. Rather than someone from some village, they were Mattey, Bartholomeus, someone’s wife or an interpreter.

Since 1646, there was an increasingly varied use of the word Basay as a group of people. In 1646, Merchant Gabriël Happart used “de Basayos” to refer to those who dealt in Spanish silver.³⁵⁶ In 1647, Junior Merchant Jacob Nolpe used “Basayos” to refer to those principal headmen that represented their villages.³⁵⁷ In 1648, Lucas

³⁴⁷ *FE II*, pp. 311 and 468.

³⁴⁸ *FE II*, pp. 299, 300, 456 and 534.

³⁴⁹ *FE II*, p. 315 and 381.

³⁵⁰ *FE II*, pp. 430-431.

³⁵¹ *FE II*, p. 454; *Primsa Handwoordenboek*, p. 1391.

³⁵² *FE II*, p. 309.

³⁵³ *FE II*, 382.

³⁵⁴ *FE II*, pp. 379-380.

³⁵⁵ *FE II*, 431.

³⁵⁶ *FE III*, p. 72.

³⁵⁷ *FE III*, p. 195.

Kilas had both “Bassayossen en Quimaurierse tolcken” as his company to Kavalan.³⁵⁸ In 1654, Merchant Thomas van Iperen reported that he intended to send “eenige Basayers” and Chinese to chop woods in Mount Marinats and he had sent “veel Basayers” to Taraboan to trade.³⁵⁹ In 1655, Merchant Pieter Elsevier hoped “twee Basayers” had successfully delivered the letter to Fort Zeelandia.³⁶⁰ In the same year, Junior Merchant Pieter van Mildert delegated “een Basayos” to ask peace from a Formosan chief Backie Goemau.³⁶¹ However, six months later in 1656, he lamented why his company had to rely upon “de Basayers...dat cleen hoopken bloothartige menschen”.³⁶²

Formosan governors sitting at Fort Zeelandia also used the word ‘Basay’ in their daily journal. In 1655, “een Basayschen”³⁶³ delivered a letter from Tamsui to Fort Zeelandia and “drie Basayers”³⁶⁴ rode on the junk full of rice to Quelang. In 1656, “de Basayers”³⁶⁵ were threatened by North Formosans who told them not to deliver woods to the company, but “de Basayos”³⁶⁶ urged those Formosan rebels to cooperate with the company. In 1658, “eenich Hollander besayer”³⁶⁷ was again threatened by North Formosans and when Coxinga came in 1661, “de basayers”³⁶⁸ changed sides to become the company enemies. Learning about these Basay defectors,

³⁵⁸ *FE III*, p. 213.

³⁵⁹ *FE III*, pp. 506 and 521.

³⁶⁰ *FE IV*, p. 84.

³⁶¹ *FE IV*, p. 120. Backie Goemau is not a name of a person. Instead, it means ‘the chief of the village Goemau’. Backie sounds like bagui (chief), while Goemau is a village in the Tamsui region. Borao, ‘The Aborigines of Northern Taiwan’, p. 114; *FE IV*, p. 120.

³⁶² *FE IV*, p. 149.

³⁶³ *DZ III*, p. 554.

³⁶⁴ *DZ III*, p. 556.

³⁶⁵ *DZ IV*, p. 9.

³⁶⁶ *DZ IV*, p. 28.

³⁶⁷ *DZ IV*, p. 306.

³⁶⁸ *DZ IV*, p. 577.

the VOC Governor General Joan Maetsuyker concluded a dismissive remark about them: “de Bassayers een stout volck”.³⁶⁹

This list of Basay used by the servants of the VOC infers two things. First, the Basay were not equivalent to villagers from Basay villages including Kimaurij, Tapparij or St. Jago. A Basay was a Basay, whereas a villager from Kimaurij was often a ‘Kimpoulier’ or ‘d’inwoonder van Quimaurij’. Second, whenever mentioned, the Basay were always performing some kind of function for the company. They were not like a villager from St. Jago who might come to Fort Noord Holland on his own behalf. Rather, they were employed. They were the company representatives, messengers, loggers, middlemen and peace initiators. For North Formosans, they were the servants of the Dutch company who moved around for their employer and for themselves. They can be paralleled to the dubashes in Madras of India.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Madras dubashes formed a group of go-betweens in India. They performed for the English “varied duties as interpreters, translators, secretaries, supervisors, and mediators between Indians and Company officials”,³⁷⁰ but the English thought they were “not merely corrupt but also totally contemptible”.³⁷¹ As Mukund clearly summarizes, “The English classed all employees from household servants to men of affairs under one common rubric—dubash”.³⁷² In the most general sense, dubash as it was used by the English in India is a name of function. It refers to a group of Indian employees of the

³⁶⁹ Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa 1624-1662* II, p. 492.

³⁷⁰ Basu, p. 4.

³⁷¹ Mukund, p. 153.

³⁷² Mukund, p. 153.

English company. Rather than being ethnically dubash, these Indian employees became dubashes by being employed by the English company.

Similarly, Basay as it was used by the Dutch in North Formosa also refers to Formosans who delivered many types of service for the company. In the sources, the Basay were always related to the VOC by their employment. It shows that the Dutch seemed to regard Basay as a name of function, which ranged from a headman to a pora pilot. Although Formosan chiefs like Penap and Gommon from the Greater Tamsui River Region or the chief of Parrossinan from the Kavalan Plain were also expected to deliver services like annual tributes or military assistance, they were not considered as company employees like the Basay. Chiefs were promised protection, whereas the Basay were promised wages. Similar to that not all villagers from Basay villages were Basay, not every service provider was to the Dutch company Basay either. In the eyes of the VOC servants stationed in North Formosa, the Basay were local employees hired by the company, not an ethnic group. In this sense, Basay may serve as an earlier Dutch equivalent of the English dubash. It was a client community but this time on the west rim of the Pacific.

If the Basay in North Formosa formed a community like the dubashes in Madras India, how did a Formosan become a member of this community? What were the elements that created the Basayness of the Basay? To answer these questions, I now turn to a final review of the Basay community and the discussion of Malayness in Southeast Asia.

The Basayness of Basay

Based on the Spanish and Dutch sources, the Basay in North Formosa lived in a few coastal hamlets including Tapparij, Kimaurij and St. Jago. The Basay of Kimaurij were especially close to the Spaniards and the Dutch since their village was next to the Spanish Fort San Salvador and the Dutch Fort Noord Holland. It is not a surprise that most Formosan actors in my previous two chapters were Basay from Kimaurij. They spoke at least Basay and Spanish, and they probably used Basay with the River peoples, the Kavalan and the Spanish fathers, but they communicated with the Dutch merchants in Spanish. Most of them were Christians and eager to exploit this spiritual status for practical purposes. As half of the Kimaurij population in 1655 was Christian, it is likely that the Basay of Kimaurij came from this Christian half, although Merchant Boons did not think very highly of them.

Furthermore, the Basay were also shrewd middlemen. They took the best advantage of their brokerage business in North Formosa at the expense of Formosans and Europeans. There are already ample examples of their business talent. Most of all, most Basay were affiliated with the VOC in one way or another. As company assistants, they expected to be paid for their services in wages or materials. This is not to deny that the Basay could have been the middlemen for different Formosan villages before the company servants arrived. Sources indicate that the Basay were already active in trading with other Formosan villages. However, servants of the VOC arrived and attempted at building relations with individual villages. They threatened the position of the Basay in the region and pushed them to protect their monopoly with sinister schemes. Summing up, the Basayness of Basay refers at least to four

characteristics: multilingual, Christian, trade-oriented and affiliation with a European company.

Are these four characteristics of Basayness enough to make Basay a term of ethnicity? Probably not. For one reason, it is achronological. Anthony Milner especially questions the validity of using the concept of ‘ethnicity’ as a tool to speak about the period before the nineteenth century because ‘ethnicity’, according to him and some others, is “a product primarily of the colonial period, when ‘race’ was introduced as a fundamental, ‘scientific’ classificatory unit for human-kind”.³⁷³ A number of historians involved in the description and definition of *Melayu* (Malay) show how problematic it is to co-opt “‘Malayness’ as an identity or nationality”.³⁷⁴ Their observation can also be applied to Basay. The sources do not indicate where the Basay felt ethnically different from the River peoples or the Kavalan, no matter how tense their relationships were, nor where the company servants saw the Basay as ethnically different from other North Formosans. It might be far-fetched if one grips on the idea of ethnicity to read Basay.

For another reason, it overlooks the historical development. Taking Malayness as “a cultural complex centered in the language called Melayu”,³⁷⁵ Anthony Reid traces the development of the meaning of Melayu in history in order to decipher Malayness. He finds that the meaning of Melayu changed with time. It evolved from “the minority of the Melaka population who had lived there long enough to speak Malay as a first language”³⁷⁶ in the Malay-language source *Sejarah Melayu* to “a community

³⁷³ Milner, pp. 245, 249 and 255.

³⁷⁴ Barnard and Maier, ‘Melayu, Malay, Maleis’, p. xiii.

³⁷⁵ Reid, ‘Understanding *Melayu* (Malay) as a Source of Diverse Modern Identities’, p. 3.

³⁷⁶ Reid, ‘Understanding *Melayu* (Malay) as a Source of Diverse Modern Identities’, p. 5.

of wonderfully mixed ethnic groups...assimilating to the extent of speaking Malay and practicing Islam”³⁷⁷ after Melaka (Malacca) fell to the Portuguese in the early sixteen century. Later in the seventeenth century, one of the associations of the word became “a commercial diaspora that retained some of the customs, language and trade practices developed in...Melaka...[and] was exceptionally open to new recruits from any ethnic background”.³⁷⁸ Key elements attached to the meaning of *Melayu* throughout this history include language (Malay), religion (Islam), economic activity (trade) and movement (dispersion). Ethnicity is excluded because the ways of *Melayu* were adopted and practiced by peoples from ethnic backgrounds such as Javanese, Filipino, South Indian or Chinese traders in major port cities. In other words, the complex of Malayness consists of cultural components such as language, religion and economic activity. To become Malay or ‘*masuk Melayu*’ (enter Malayness)³⁷⁹ implies adopting these cultural components rather than being born as a member of an ethnic group called Malay. Although Timothy Barnard argues that in the eighteenth century, Malayness “was not associated with Islam”³⁸⁰ and in certain situations to ‘enter Malayness’ actually meant to become a Christian rather than a Muslim,³⁸¹ these exceptions explain the changes with the cultural components of Malayness but still do not dictate a prerequisite of ethnicity.

The parallel between Malayness and Basayness cannot be missed. Though developed in different contexts, both terms are associated with a group of people who possessed a language, professed a religion and practiced trade. Generally speaking,

³⁷⁷ Reid, ‘Understanding *Melayu* (Malay) as a Source of Diverse Modern Identities’, p. 7.

³⁷⁸ Reid, ‘Understanding *Melayu* (Malay) as a Source of Diverse Modern Identities’, pp. 7-8.

³⁷⁹ Milner, p. 243.

³⁸⁰ Barnard, ‘Texts, Raja Ismail and Violence’, p. 109.

³⁸¹ Milner, p. 243.

the Malay spoke Malay, practiced Islam and conducted trade, while the Basay spoke Basay (and Spanish), followed Christianity and acted as business agents between Formosans and Europeans. Both terms contain similar cultural elements that do not include ethnicity. As said, to enter Malayness is to adopt Malay, Islam and trade. To become a member of the client community of Basay may mean similarly. It requires cultural assets, not an ethnic background. In conclusion, the Dutch company's Basay assistants formed a community that could be culturally entered without the need of being ethnically Basay.

Conclusion

A modern traveler journeying through North Taiwan encounters fewer difficulties than an early-modern traveler. Under normal conditions, his or her journey will be smooth and speedy. Provincial Highway No. 2 runs along the northern coast and conveniently connects New Taipei City (including the Greater Tamsui River Region and coastal belts), Keelung City, Yilan County and Hualien County. A ride on Provincial Highway No. 2 and Provincial Highway No. 9 (also known as Suhua Highway) locates our traveler between a blue sea on the left and green slopes on the right. It can be done in half a day and during any season. Whitecap waves breaking at the precipitous cliffs on the east coast especially make up a pleasing sight. The journey is on the whole enjoyable. Those who wish to skip a large part of the northern coastline can take National Highway No. 5, which goes right through Snow Mountain Range and reaches East Taiwan even faster than the ride on provincial highways.

Just as smooth and speedy, our traveler will also find it easy to communicate with the peoples he or she meets on the way. North Taiwan is now the most densely populated area. With the capital Taipei City sitting in its bosom, this area functions as the hub of the entire island. Numerous possibilities in this hub make it population living there the most urbanized and highly educated. There are Mainlanders (11%), Taiwanese (61.2%), Hakka (19.17%) and indigenous people (1.2%).³⁸² With the help

³⁸² Due to various waves of migration over the years, Taiwan now has four major population groups: **Han Chinese (80%)**, which can be divided into the Taiwanese-speaking Hō-ló (70%) and Mandarin-speaking Mainlander (10%); **Hakka-speaking Hakka (16%)**, **Indigenous Peoples (2%)** and **New Immigrants (2%)**. Indigenous peoples belong to the Austronesian-language family and have been active on the island at least since proto-Austronesian time of six thousand years ago. Hō-ló and Hakka migrated to Taiwan as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, harboring discords among themselves due to cultural and linguistic differences and taking up different parts of the island. Mainlanders refer to the Chinese migrants who came with the Nationalist or Koumingtang Government

of Mandarin, Taiwanese or Hō-ló and English, our traveler will have no problem visiting from one place to another. These languages work as much in a metropolitan like Taipei as in a rural county like Hualien.

Return to Ambivalence

Walking into the world of North Formosa in the seventeenth century, our traveler will find the place and its habitants equally lively. Instead of highways and concrete buildings, there were dirt roads and bamboo houses. Most villages were situated along the rivers and the coast. From the west to the east, there were the Greater Tamsui River Region, coastal belts and the Kavalan Plain. North Formosans were known as the River peoples (including Baritsoen and Culon), Basay and the Kavalan. Each village had its own dialect, but a lingua franca called Basay was understood by most inhabitants especially in business. The Great Tamsui River Region and the Kavalan Plain were blessed with large tracts of fertile land where the River peoples and the Kavalan cultivated rice and other crops. Natural resources were also rich and there could be found sulfur, timber, coal and gold. The Chinese and Europeans were especially after these valuable resources, so trade prospered with the Basay as the middlemen of the system.

Inter-village trade was as frequent as inter-village strife. Whereas there were goods to trade, there were also heads to catch. Generally speaking, the relationship between villages was volatile and quick to change. North Formosans worked and they

after the end of Second World War, and New Immigrants are foreign brides from Southeast Asia since the 1990s. Ding; Chi; Bellwood, pp. 336 and 340; Knapp, pp. 47-48.

kept a lively social life. However, as Europeans introduced new religious and legal concepts, the way of life in North Formosa was affected and the peoples learned to appropriate foreign ways for their own benefits.

North Formosans from different regions exercised different strategies in their encounters with the VOC servants. Their decisions were considered. The Basay manipulated the Dutch and Formosans to maximize their benefits in trade. The sinister scheme they pulled off for years in the Kavalan Plain exemplifies their business acumen. Basay individuals such as Theodore and Ranges Hermana used their relations with the company for personal gains, while Capitan del Campo served the meaning of loyalty to the VOC and to his village Kimaurij. The position of a Basay in North Formosa of the seventeenth century is particularly ambivalent. On one hand, they were indispensable middlemen for both Formosans and foreigners such as the Dutch, and they cleverly secured the monopolies granted to this middleman position at the expense of others. On the other hand, however, they also relied so heavily upon this brokerage system that without this mediating role, they would simply not survive, being held in low esteem by inhabitants from other regions. When Commander De Bitter forbade the Basay to trade with neighboring villages, for example, it almost cut off their bloodline because the Basay needed to barter goods for grains. It may seem that these Formosan brokers always won by playing clever tricks over others. However, instead of being the boss of the game, they were in fact slaves to the necessity of the game. The ambivalence of the Basay lies deep in the structure of their brokerage.

In comparison, the River peoples of Tamsui and the Kavalan of Kavalan were less ambivalent about their role in the encounter with the company servants. In fact,

they were very clear about their wishes and often put their own agenda before the company. Two Kavalan chiefs knew the meaning of the company cane and exploited its authority for their private purposes. Villagers of Tarrissan, Parricoutsie and Cheneaer appropriated the rules of the Dutch and used this knowledge against the company. In this variety of strategy, there is an element of conscious awareness of the Dutch and their rules. As the people of Tarraboan said to two Dutch soldiers and their Basay interpreters (including Theodore) who went there to investigate the location of gold, “We do know you people”.

On the whole, either as individuals or villages, North Formosans did exhibit an ambivalent attitude towards the Europeans. They were not a homogenous whole. This unpredictable image of Formosans has been analyzed by Chiu who connects this image with a Formosan awareness “of their position in the ranking of power and prestige in their relationship with the deities and with various Formosan groups and even outsiders”.³⁸³ Being unpredictable is a conscious decision. Native inhabitants of the island of Formosa changed to adapt themselves to the new conditions. Similarly, North Formosans were also consciously playing with their ambivalence. It was their tool to deal with the unusual situations of encounter. As North Formosans moved between cooperation and non-cooperation, the VOC servants stationed there were often at loss, attempting to balance the situation. Instead of enjoying the status of ‘the mightiest village’ among the Siraya, the company was caught in this ever-changing relation with North Formosans. Without sufficient and strong personnel, the company could not help but become a mouse in a trap.

³⁸³ Chiu, p. 228.

Return to Three Experiments

In this thesis, I experiment with micro-ethnography, biographical history and nomenclature-analysis to reconstruct North Formosa and inhabitants as well as to reconsider the nature of the Basay as a special community of service. Methodologically speaking, it is possible to reconstruct a picture of North Formosa and its inhabitants from ethnographic details provided non-indigenous sources. My first two chapters testify that possibility. Such exercise is rather like ‘postmodern ethnography’ in reverse. Stephen A. Tyler says if a postmodern ethnography existed, it could only be ‘dialogic’, ‘polyphonic’ and ‘fragmentary’ because “life in the field is itself fragmentary, not at all organized around familiar ethnological categories”.³⁸⁴ The postmodernness of a postmodern ethnography is in the written ethnography. But for my experiments, the postmodernness of being ‘dialogic, polyphonic and fragmentary’ lies rather in the materials (archives) than in the intended product (the reconstructed ethnography). It poses challenges to a historian.

In my first experiment of micro-ethnography, the challenge is to go beyond the fragmentary nature of the sources and come out with a coherent ethnography. This mental exercise involves more than reading, noting, cutting and pasting. These are but initial steps. What follows must be a constant awareness and critical analysis of the value embedded in these ethnographic details. That is to say, one must read beyond the face value of the word in order to understand and write the picture neutrally. Phrases such as “according to their custom”³⁸⁵ especially need to be taken with

³⁸⁴ Quoted in Hegeman, p. 155.

³⁸⁵ *FE* III, p. 280.

caution because a historian probably will never know the ‘truth’ of that line when it was written down. That ‘custom’ might be the writer’s interpretation and it might also have gone through changes to the point where the writer witnessed and wrote. It should not be taken for granted. In the writing of ethnography from non-indigenous sources, a critical mind is the best tool.

Reading, noting, cutting, pasting and criticizing also applies to my second experiment. But there is more to the reconstruction of indigenous actors with its culturally informed ‘roundness’. Martin suggests historians should be fully armed with anthropological knowledge before they attempt to write about indigenous actors. This is very true and useful. But anthropology literature is not always available. For indigenous actors from a far past that do not have a presence in the contemporary period, there is often either no or very few literature that should be taken especially critically because of the changes that have occurred with time. One useful tip I find from my experiment is the reconstruction of the roundness of indigenous actors by foregrounding them in a series of events or the historical context. If Martin’s ‘roundness’ refers to understanding indigenous actors before the act of writing, my technique of ‘foregrounding’ occurs in the real act of writing. It concerns the presentation of that ‘roundness’. In my experiment, I have mainly relied upon historical contexts to bring out the ‘roundness’ of my Formosan actors. The decisions they made in reaction to other characters in various situations indicate, first, the roundness in them and second, the possibility of reconstructing that roundness without anthropological literature. Actions of these actors sometimes speak louder than the words of an anthropologist.

My third experiment is of a different type. It reconsiders the nature of the Basay community. Sources indicate European knowledge of Basay progressed with time and contact. The Spaniards mostly regarded Basay as the language, while the Dutch company servants used it to refer to their Formosan assistants. The nature of Basay as a reference changes through time. To find out that nature, one must go back to the sources to look for the chain of development. In my study, I find that being Basay does not require an ethnic prerequisite. Like *Melayu*, there is a possibility to culturally become a Basay. This new idea about the Basay is experimental, but it would not come without a systematic investigation of the historical use of the word Basay.

Return to Anxiety

This thesis intends to populate Early Modern Formosan Historiography with Formosans from the seventeenth century and has in the end provided readers with various male actors from Tamsui, the coast and Kavalan. Nevertheless, there is still much to be discovered. The anxiety to be written has not stopped haunting the mind of the indigenous author of this thesis. As Ong observes,

“There is hardly an oral culture or a predominantly oral culture left in the world today that is not somehow aware of the vast complex of powers forever inaccessible without literacy. This awareness is agony for persons rooted in primary orality, who want literacy passionately but who also know very well that moving into the exciting world of literacy means leaving behind much that is exciting and deeply loved in the earlier oral world. We have to die to continue living.”³⁸⁶

³⁸⁶ Ong, p. 15.

Indigenous peoples share the anxiety to be written against a mainstream written culture that often puts them in the background. During the process of writing their own stories down, however, they do not feel relief but agony (in Ong's term) for losing the freedom of living without printed words. This is yet another ambivalent position; it is living and dying at the same time. People write for purposes. For indigenous writers, their purpose is often a mixture of culture restoration, economic improvement and political recognition. If the burden of writing for mixed purposes does not crush them first, I believe they (including myself) will continue to strive in the ambivalence created by the anxiety to be written and the agony of losing the world that is not written.

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Appendix³⁸⁷

34. Parricoutsie (Tamsui; Angry Ally)
35. Perragon (Tamsui; Angry Ally)
36. Pinorouwan (Tamsui)
37. Peitsie (Tamsui)
38. Ribats (Tamsui)
39. Rieuwrijck (Tamsui)
40. Chiron (Tamsui)
41. Kimassouw (Tamsui; the guard village of sulfur mounds)
42. Pourompon (Tamsui)
43. Kimoitsie (Tamsui)
44. Cattayo (Tamsui)
45. Rietsoeck (Tamsui; Chief Penap)
46. Kimalitsigouwan (Tamsui)
47. Kirragenan (Tamsui)
48. Kipatauw (Tamsui)
49. Kirabaraba (Tamsui)
50. Chenaer (Tamsui; Angry Ally)
51. Kaggilach (Northern Coast Belt)
52. Tapparij (Northern Coastal Belt; Lukas Kilas)
53. Kimaurij (Northern Coastal Belt; Theodore, Aloep, Ranges Hermana, Capitan del Campo)
54. St. Jago (Northern Coastal Belt)
55. Talobayan (Kavalan)
56. Kibannoran (Kavalan)
57. Sasinagan (Kavalan)
58. Kipottepan (Kavalan)
59. Modammaer de Kerrionan (Kavalan)
60. Kibarouw Sinouan (Kavalan)
61. Pinabarat (Kavalan)
62. Sochel Sochel (Kavalan; the resistant village)

³⁸⁷ FE IV, p. xxvii. Some village names have been modified by Palemeq to accord with the text.