

ΜΑΚΟΥ.



Maritime Prowess

Zheng Zilong and Zheng Chenggong

Shaping the Political Landscape in the Ming-Qing Cataclysm

CHRISTINA MIU BING CHENG *

ABSTRACT: The Macau-baptized Zheng Zhilong took the opportunity of the Ming-Qing transition and emerged as a compelling Ming official and an invincible pirate king rivalling the elusive Dutch. He forged a huge piratical empire and helped install a shadow government of the defunct Ming court in south China. Immersed in Ming Loyalism, his son Zheng Chenggong ousted the Dutch from Taiwan and established the Kingdom of Dongning to challenge the ruling power of the new Qing Empire.

KEYWORDS: Southern Ming; Battle of Liaoluo Bay; Ming loyalism; Dutch Taiwan; Kingdom of Dongning.

Geographically, no more than a mere speck on the south China coast, the present-day casino-dotted Macau was a weighty bastion for Portuguese missionary activism and an outpost for maritime adventurers in the seventeenth century. In 1644 the Ming dynasty was overthrown and the northern capital Beijing was lost to the Manchus from Manchuria, northeastern China. They were proclaimed rulers of the Celestial Empire and, amid the dynastic transition to the Manchu Qing, an exiled government of the Ming court—the Southern Ming 南明 (1644-1662)—was set up in Nanjing (literally, the

southern capital), the provincial capital of Jiangsu.

In the Ming-Qing transitional cataclysm, Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍 (1604?-1661)¹ and his son Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-1662) played pivotal roles in shaping the political landscape in south China, as well as engaging in a maritime enterprise rivalling the Dutch across the East and South China Seas.

This paper considers Macau's "visage" as a springboard for Zheng Zhilong's burgeoning influence and dominance in south China. It examines the East-West confrontation at sea where Zheng Zhilong defeated the Dutch in the historic Battle of Liaoluo Bay 料羅灣 off the coast in Fujian in 1633, and his fatal gamble in switching allegiance to the Qing authorities in 1646. It also discusses the political magnitude of Zheng Chenggong, who ousted the Dutch from their colonial stronghold in Ilha Formosa (Taiwan)² in 1662 and claimed ownership of the island.

*Christina Miu Bing Cheng 鄭妙冰 is the author of *Macau: A Cultural Janus* (1999), *In Search of Folk Humour: The Rebellious Cult of Nezha* (2009) and *Tracing Macao through Chinese Writers and Buddhist/Daoist Temples* (2013). She has written extensively on Macao and Hong Kong, with more than twenty articles appeared in various publications. She received a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Hong Kong in 1996.

Doutorada em Literatura Comparada pela Universidade de Hong Kong. Autora de Macau: A Cultural Janus (1999), *In Search of Folk Humour: The Rebellious Cult of Nezha* (2009) e *Tracing Macao through Chinese Writers and Buddhist/Daoist Temples* (2013). *Publicou numerosos trabalhos sobre Macau e Hong Kong.*

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

An Unruly Boy from Quanzhou

Zheng Zhilong (hereafter Zhilong) was born in a village of Nan'an 南安, near Xiamen 廈門 in Fujian province. He was named after the imagined animal attribute *long* 龍 (dragon). As he was the eldest son, he was affectionately called Yi Guan 一官. Hence, he was popularly known as Iquan (the Portuguese transliteration of 一官) in European accounts. In Japanese sources, he was referred to as Tei Shiryu.

His father Zheng Shaozu 鄭紹祖 was a minor official in Quanzhou, a seaport located in southeastern Fujian that had a long tradition of maritime trade. The father placed high hopes to provide good educations to his sons so that they could be selected as candidates through the imperial civil service examinations and obtained officialdom in the state bureaucracy. Much to his disappointment, Zhilong and the younger sons never took his advice to pursue academic accolades. Rather, the unruly and mischievous Zheng boys were running wild in the streets, vandalizing property and picking fights (Hang, 2015:42).

Zhilong spent much of his childhood in Quanzhou.³ An apocryphal story has it that he was a handsome boy with “the face of one destined for wealth and nobility” (Andrade, 2011:21). Another account describes him as “lazy by nature with no taste for learning; strong-armed, fond of boxing and martial arts” (Clements, 2004:11). A more sensational story tells that he had an incestuous affair with his father’s concubine (Wills, 2016:118-119). Just as his fellow Fujianese had gone abroad to earn a living, the teenager Zhilong and his two brothers left their homeland and arrived at Macau around 1610. The boys were put to work in the family business run by their maternal uncle Huang Cheng 黃程, a trader there.

Baptism in Macau

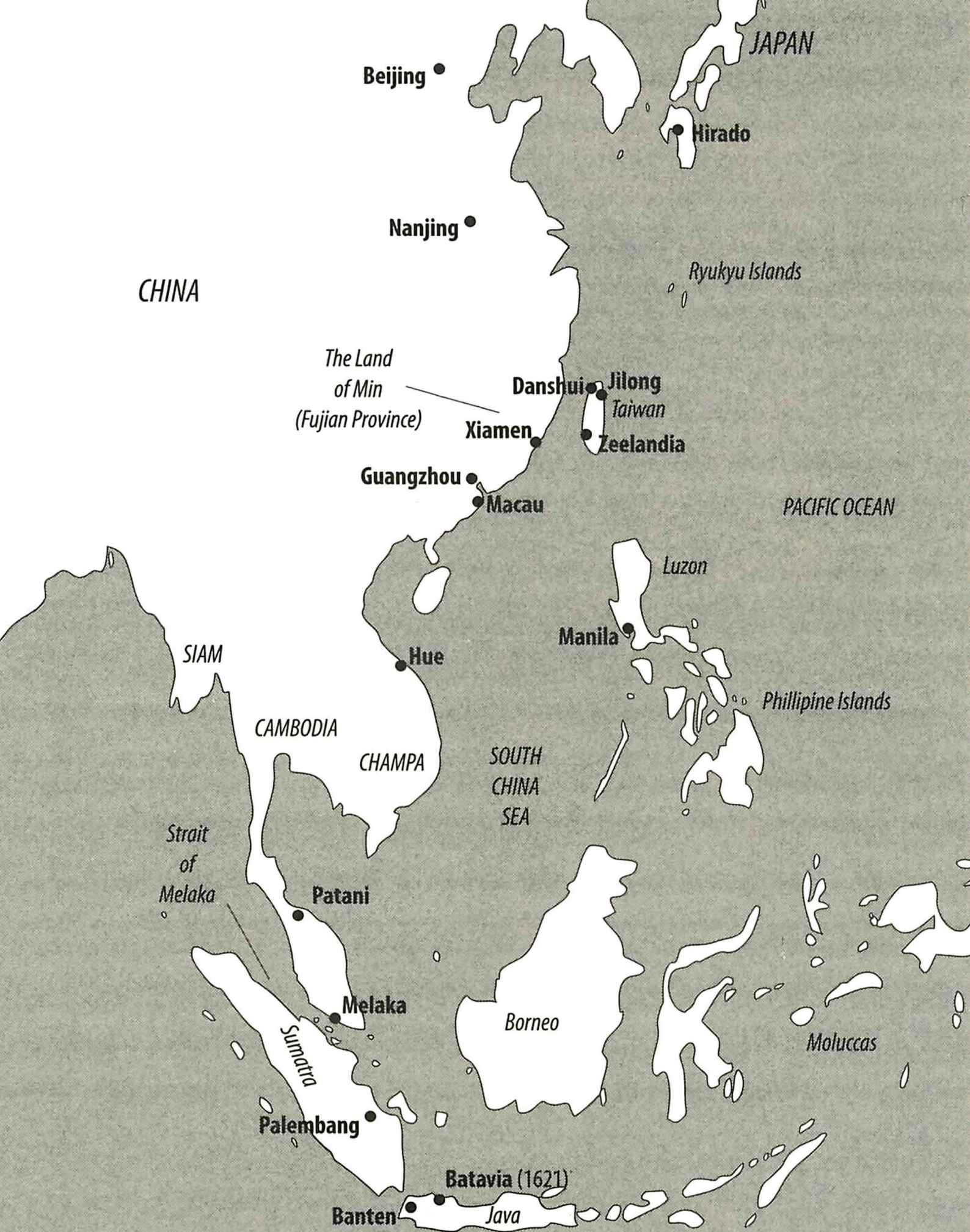
Located at the mouth of the Pearl River estuary, Macau officially became a Portuguese settlement in 1557. This Portuguese enclave turned into a port

city where ships loaded and unloaded, and in which ships may take refuge from storms. With ambiguous administrations and uncertain jurisdictions under the Chinese and Portuguese authorities, Macau soon evolved into an infamous rendezvous for marauding pirates, bandits, smugglers, vagabonds, outcasts, and adventurers.

Likewise, Fujian province (abbreviated as Min 閩) was the breeding ground for adventurers, who tended to risk their lives for seeking fortunes at sea, mainly because this province was a land of many mountains and few fields. The Fujianese people were China’s greatest seafarers and they made their living by becoming fishermen, traders, and pirates (Andrade, 2011:22). During the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, the demarcation among traders, smugglers, and pirates was blurred, as they were not only rascals and social deviants, but also ordinary soldiers, merchants, and fishermen.

Fujian and Macau had long developed a close maritime connection. Macau was originally founded as a trading port by the Fujianese, who were believed to be the earliest known settlers there (Clement, 2004:10). For the Fujianese, Macau was a favourable shelter and a safe haven for fishing boats and trading junks to replenish with food and water before venturing into longer journeys to Southeast Asia.

The seventeenth century was the golden age of Macau, which was certainly an exotic place by the time Zhilong arrived. Since the Diocese of Macau was inaugurated in 1576, the City of the Name of God⁴ grew into a flourishing Christian community, where different religious orders set up branches consecutively. Moreover, this Christian City was a prosperous commercial centre; and a magnet to many traders and merchants from abroad. The young Zhilong must have found Macau fascinating and full of captivating charm after his arrival. The splendour of this city was in great contrast to his impoverished and isolated home town. Nurtured in the sea-oriented environment of Quanzhou and Macau, Zhilong seemed to covet seafaring adventure and found his talents better suited to do seaborne business.



PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

In Macau, Zhilong was baptised as a Catholic with the baptismal name Nicholas Gaspard Iquan. In Western sources, he was referred to as Nicholas Iquan, Nicolas Icoan, or sometimes Gaspard or Jaspar. It was speculated that his conversion was partly out of his desire to learn more about foreign acquaintances, who were sources of information about the outside world, and partly in gratitude for a missionary doctor who cured his mother's illness (Clements, 2004:15, 233). His Catholic faith was questionable. It is noted that he "was so impious, or so ignorant, that he equally burnt incense to Jesus Christ and his idols" (Palafox, 1978:82). It is also described that "the layout of his private chapel, which had a crucifix placed together with idols of native gods, while the Mass took place alongside traditional ceremonies" (Hang, 2015:43).

Zhilong's conversion, to some extent, brought him closer to European friends, and he started learning Portuguese with local missionaries. His ability to speak Portuguese later paved the way for his appointment as an interpreter serving the Dutch East India Company (VOC).⁵ At that point, the Portuguese language was in effect the international language of trade (Clements, 2004:18) and the commercial *lingua franca* in maritime East Asia (Hang, 2015:43). Macau was not just a window through which Zhilong could perceive the world outside; it was a springboard for his upward mobility as well.

Ventures in Hirado

Zhilong earned a living as a comprador in his youthful days between Macau and Hirado, Japan. Located at Kyushu, the port city Hirado was then a major centre of trade and an active commercial entrepôt in Asia. The Japanese policy of seclusion virtually left the Asian waters to the Chinese and foreign traders. In the early 1620s, Zhilong came to work for the immensely rich Quanzhou trader, Li Dan 李旦, who was in his seventies. Known to Europeans as Andrea Ditties or Captain China, and in Japanese sources as Tojin Captain, Li Dan was an influential

leader of the Chinese community in Hirado. He was the chief Chinese agent of the Dutch, and the lord of the Chinese smuggler-traders in south China (Clements, 2004:16).

During most of the Ming dynasty, the government imposed austere sea bans (*haijin* 海禁) prohibiting overseas trade. As a result, merchants and seafarers turned to piracy and smuggling, which noticeably surged in southeastern China in the early seventeenth century. According to Robert Antony, piracy and smuggling were part of the process of commercialization. Despite piracy and smuggling detracting from legitimate trade and profits, they nevertheless had positive economic consequences. These activities helped stimulate and foster an extensive shadow (or informal) economy and a vibrant subculture (Antony, 2010:1-2, 9). In reality, that the shadow economy provided jobs to tens of thousands of poverty-stricken and marginalized people nestling along the south China coast naturally boosted local and regional economies.

In the same vein, James Chin has argued that:

Booming illicit commerce on the south China coast, which lay outside the control of the imperial court and deviated from official political norms and formal economic intuitions, had in fact greatly facilitated the development of a commodity economy in local society. Furthermore, clandestine trade supplemented what the legitimate and regulated imperial economy failed to provide. (Chin, 2010:43)

The shadow economy represented by the smuggling trade undoubtedly contributed to the rise and formation of a new type of maritime economy during the late Ming and earlier Qing periods. It was at this juncture that Zhilong was assigned to the piracy and smuggling ventures in Hirado.

Zhilong became Li Dan's right-hand man and adopted son. It is said that Li Dan had a pederastic rela-

PIRACY IN ASIA

tionship with this good-looking young man. Pederasty was actually quite common among Fujianese traders, smugglers, and pirates. In the meantime, with Li Dan's arrangement, Zhilong married an Hirado girl, Tagawa Matsu, a woman from a low-level Samurai family (Andrade, 2011:25, 62). Before long, he left his pregnant wife (mother of Zheng Chenggong) behind and joined Li Dan's maritime business in Southeast Asian regions.

The Battle of Macau

The dawn of the seventeenth century saw the first wave of European expansion and colonial penetration into Asia. The Portuguese, Dutch, Spaniards, English, and Chinese were competing for trade in Japan and along the Fujian coastal areas. At that moment, Portuguese Macau was already an enviable centre of trade. In 1611 the Dutch gained their foothold in Hirado to wrestle with the Portuguese in their trade with the Japanese (Clements, 2004:25, 27). In 1619 they founded

Batavia (present-day Jakarta) in an attempt to control the spice trade in the South China Sea (Vande Walle, 2015:247).

Portugal's success in establishing a trading port in Macau drew the envy of the Netherlands. The Dutch East India Company was serious about having a place close to China, like Macau. In Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies,⁶ the first Dutch Governor-General of the VOC, Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1619-1623), decided to capture Macau by force, so as to create a commercial base for Chinese silk and to take over the profitable Macau-Nagasaki trading route from the Portuguese.

From Batavia, Coen dispatched an armed fleet of eight ships bringing eight hundred invaders and advanced weapons to launch a full-scale attack on Macau. On 22 June 1622, the powerful fleet reached the offing of Macau, which stood almost defenseless and unprepared, as there were only fifty musketeers and about one hundred residents capable of bearing arms.



Monument inside Jardim da Vitória. (Photo by the author).

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

On 23 June, the Dutch started to bombard the São Francisco battery (Boxer, 1948:76).

At dawn on 24 June, the fleet was close to the “Holy City.” This date was the Feast Day of St John the Baptist—Macau’s patron saint. The Dutch intruders marched towards the foot of Guia Hill. In the nick of time, a Jesuit fired a cannon-shot from the Fortaleza do Monte,⁷ which precisely landed on a barrel of gunpowder in the midst of the Dutch formation. That this fortuitous shot destroyed most of the Dutch ammunition and threw their forces into disarray promptly saved the city from siege. With a

small group of Macanese and African-slave defenders, Macau narrowly escaped becoming a Dutch possession and won a godsend victory. It was the first debacle of the aggressive Dutch in south China, and more disastrous defeats to the Zheng clan were yet to come.

Legend has it that the victory was guided by divine intervention, and the rout of the invaders was traced to the apparition of St John the Baptist to the astonished Dutchmen, with a mantle into which the enemy’s shots were deviated (Montalto de Jesus, 1984:88). To commemorate the victory,

Chinese settlers in Taiwan, Dutch engraving published in 1667.

In Macabe Keliher, *Out of China or Yu Yonghe’s tale of Formosa: a history of seventeenth-century Taiwan* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 2003), p. 99.



PIRACY IN ASIA

the Feast Day of St John the Baptist had been celebrated as the City Day; and was declared a public holiday, which was observed until Macau's return to China in 1999. In addition, a monument has been erected in Macau's Jardim da Vitória to memorialize the Battle of Macau.

Soon after the Macau fiasco, the Dutch sailed to the Pescadores,⁸ or the Penghu 澎湖 Islands (located between Xiamen and Taiwan in the Taiwan Strait). The Dutch began to build a base as a commercial entrepôt. By 1622 Zhilong already left Macau joining Li Dan in Hirado. In January 1624 he was sent to Penghu as an interpreter, negotiator, and agent for Li Dan in the VOC. The Dutch felt that he was only a mediocre translator (Andrade, 2011:28).

Meanwhile, the Dutch were driven out from Penghu by the governor of Fujian and they moved on to Tainan (literally, southern Taiwan), where Zhilong continued to serve them. His working experience in the VOC opened up his collaboration with the piratical Dutch later. Also, his familiarity with Taiwan set forth his ensuing migration task to bring the impoverished Fujianese there (which will be discussed below).

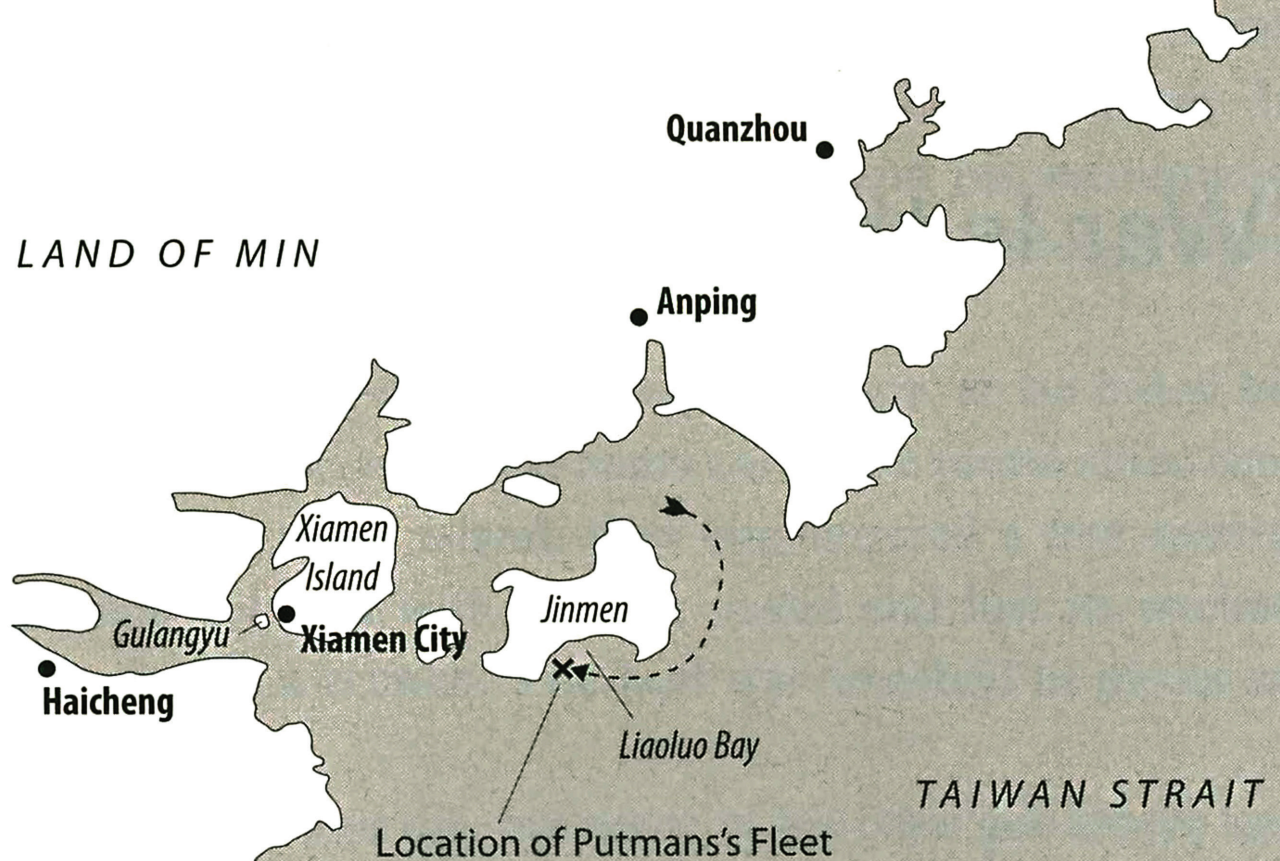
Zheng Zhilong's Ascendancy

The ascendancy of a rambunctious Quanzhou boy to the compelling leader of a vast maritime empire was full of convoluted dramas and intrigues. One may wonder about the socio-historical context in which Zhilong took the opportunity to transform the economic and political landscape in south China. As mentioned above, Ming China had been imposing rigid policies to restrict overseas trade, which throttled both domestic and foreign business. Even worse, commencing in the 1590s, a series of natural calamities disturbed the socio-economic equilibrium of the Fujian and Guangdong coastal areas. These regions had experienced successive earthquakes, droughts, and floods, which left innumerable people destitute to struggle for survival (Calanca, 2010:87-88).

The turning point for Zhilong was when the aging Li Dan died in August 1625. He took over his Taiwan business, seized his wealth, and filled the power vacuum (Wong, 2017:41). Zhilong and his family members soon began to forge a piratical empire in south China. According to Paola Calanca, Chinese pirates were usually associated with smuggling syndicates that conducted trade with Japan, the Philippines, and Macau. Between 1610 and 1630, over ten pirate-merchant fleets operated, competed, and coexisted in the waters of Fujian and eastern Guangdong (Calanca, 2010:87). Zhilong capitalized on these circumstances collaborating with the Dutch for trade and for piratical assaults in the East and South China Seas. In fact, he was allowed to carry out privateering ventures under the Dutch flag (Andrade and Hang, 2016:12). He was no longer an interpreter and trade emissary, but rather a privateer in splitting the spoils with the Dutch.⁹

In 1627 there were severe drought and mass famine in Fujian. In the years that followed, countless people died from catastrophic starvation and displaced survivors became wandering refugees and beggars, let alone raiding bandits and pirates. Zhilong readily rendered a helping hand to the desperate. On the one hand, he operated a massive project of migration and transported tens of thousands starving fellow Fujianese to settle in central Taiwan, providing them with cash, cows, tools, and lands (Wong, 2017:42). And on the other, he pillaged goods and valuables from the rich and gave a small part of the booty to the poor (*jiefu jipin* 劫富濟貧) (*Mingshilu Minhai Guanxi Shiliao*, 1971:158). Dubbed a "noble robber", he won a reputation as a beneficent and righteous person, and attracted many people to come to his service.

In the wake of Li Dan's death, the pirate-merchant Xu Xinsu 許心素 snatched Li's Xiamen business. In early 1628 Zhilong attacked Xiamen and eliminated Xu Xinsu, who was then the most important commercial partner of the Dutch. No



sooner had Zhilong occupied this island city than he gained control of the shipping routes between Japan and China (Tsai, 2009:40). Xiamen hence served as the major base of operations for the Zheng clan's piratical empire (Antony, 2010:10). With Zhilong's growing power across the Taiwan Strait, the triangle trade of Xiamen, Dayuan 大園 (a coastal city in Taiwan), and Hirado was under his sway (Wong, 2017:44).

As Paola Calanca has noted, Zhilong "had the most powerful armed fleet on the seas and con-

trolled a vast maritime empire based on trade and pillage. His armada, better equipped and larger than the imperial navy, stood as the only one capable of resisting European ships" (Calanca, 2010:89). Obviously, he came out as the pirate king in south China, possessing superior European cannons and advanced military technology. Not only did he disrupt coastal stability and pose a threat to the faltering Ming dynasty, but also prevented the government from collecting a huge sum of revenues from the maritime trade.

PIRACY IN ASIA

In view of his supreme military power, maritime connections, and his knowledge of trade and of the Europeans, the Ming Empire was compelled to accommodate Zhilong. The imperial authorities manipulated a pragmatic way to entice him to adopt a “summon and appease” (*zhao fu* 招撫) policy, in which the crafty and charismatic pirate king was induced to help defend the coast against the elusive Dutch and rampant pirates. He was happy to accept the appointment as he was given the imperial rank of “Patrolling Admiral” (*youji jiangjun* 游擊將軍), thus putting him in charge of coastal security and in control of substantial forces. He officially became a Ming naval commander in the summer of 1628 (Wong, 2017:45).

Zhilong was like “a tiger with wings” (*ruhu tianyi* 如虎添翼). With the Ming court’s official sanction of his maritime activities and his exceptional competence, he was able to restore peace in the turbulent coastal areas; to defeat his rivals at seas; and to pacify virtually all rebels. Moreover, he established his own empire of monopolistic seaborne commerce on the Fujian coast, enjoying even greater power, wealth, and prestige without being a smuggler/pirate. It was reported that his annual income exceeded 100,000 taels of silver in the 1630s (Tsai, 2009:40). He was fabulously wealthy and owned sizable areas of land in Fujian.

The Battle of Liaoluo Bay

By the 1630s, the Dutch already firmly established their maritime enterprise in East Asia. At the same time, Zhilong rose to a crucial figure among the Chinese pirate-traders. In early 1630, Zhilong received the newly arrived VOC Governor of Formosa, Hans Putmans (1629-1636) in Xiamen. A “honeymoon” period in trade with the Dutch began. Be that as it may, their mutual relationship was soon over, and they turned from collaborating partners into bitter rivals, if not opponents. Their animosity was triggered by the following incidents.

In spite of Zhilong’s newly acquired official rank and title, some of his followers went back to sea and continued to pillage. One of his former subordinates, Li Kuiqi 李魁奇, stood out as a pirate leader and went up against him. Li Kuiqi invaded the Zheng coastal base and forced Zhilong and his family to flee. Under these circumstances, Zhilong requested the aid of Putmans. Zhilong assured him that if the Dutch could put down these pirates, Ming China would open up the coastal areas to them for free trade. Putmans successfully wiped out Li Kuiqi’s fleet but received no guarantee about trade, as the Ming officials considered these “red-haired barbarians” to be ruthless bandits (Andrade, 2011:31-2).

Putmans wanted to punish Zhilong for the broken promises; and in order to compel Ming China to grant them trade, the Dutch stormed Xiamen and badly damaged Zhilong’s unprepared fleet in the harbour. As a matter of fact, the Dutch had already interrupted the Chinese shipping routes between the Philippines and Zhangzhou 漳州 (lo-



The earliest picture of the Dutch Fort Zeelandia, 1635.
In Macabe Keliher, *Out of China or Yu Yonghe's tale of Formosa: a history of seventeenth-century Taiwan* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 2003), Illustration 4.

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA



A Taiwan head hunting aborigine, 1665.
In Jonathan Clements, *Pirate King: Coxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004), Illustration 5.

cated in the south end of Fujian) since early 1633, and in July of that year they “waged war on China” with a number of demands to open up free trade between Xiamen, Dayuan, and Batavia (Wong, 2017:49-50).

Putmans allied with Zhilong’s enemies, Li Guozhu 李國柱 (Li Dan’s son) and Liu Xiang 劉香 (his rival pirate chief), planning to crush the Zheng forces. In August 1633 the war began and the Dutch fleet moored in Xiamen harbour but was pushed back to Jinmen 金門 (an island located off the southeastern coast of mainland China). On 22 October 1633 the battle between the Zheng clan and the Dutch broke out at Liaoluo Bay, near Jinmen.

In this momentous “East-meets-West” confrontation, Zhilong won a dazzling victory over the formidable Dutch fleet by surprise. Fake information was first spread to the Dutch that a severe storm in early October had destroyed the Zheng clan’s numerous ships. Actually, Zhilong was well equipped vis-à-vis the Dutch with about 25 to 30 battle ships outside the Xiamen harbour. During the warfare, Zhilong employed the tactics of fire attack by sending good swimmers to covertly hook up

the Dutch ships and connect his deliberately burned vessels to set the enemy ships on fire. Wong Youngtsu has recounted:

The Dutch testified that the fearless Chinese crazily hooked our ships and set them on fire, during which two large, tall Dutch ships, Brouckerhaven and Kouckercke, were burned and sank. Slooterdijck was hooked up by four Chinese junks and captured. Putmans desperately got the remaining ships, namely, the Bredam, Bleyswijck, Zeeburch, Vierubgeb, and Salm hastily back to Dayuan. (Wong, 2017:50)

In the Battle of Liaoluo Bay, the Dutch fell into the trap set by Zhilong. Worse still, at the critical moments Putmans’ allied pirate-friends hastened out of the battlefield in a great rush without regard to his orders (*De VOC en Formosa*, 2000:143). Tonio Andrade is of the opinion that this warfare was even larger than the battles that Zheng Chenggong fought against the Dutch in Taiwan in 1661. Moreover, it was one of the largest naval encounters between Chinese and European forces prior to the Opium Wars two hundred years later (Andrade, 2011:35). All in all, after the blistering defeat in Macau, the Dutch were also routed by their Chinese *bêtes noires*, who even won a superlative victory over them three decades later (which will be discussed below).

The Zheng clan’s triumph was hailed by Ming officials as a “miracle at sea” (*haishang zhi qiji* 海上之奇迹). While Zhilong had received an enormous share of the spoils, the officials sent a petition to higher authorities to bestow more glory upon him (*Ming Qing Shiliao*, 1951:158).

The Dutch East India Company cared most about free trade with China. Putmans lost no time in making gestures of goodwill by sending lavish gifts to Ming officials and by returning the prisoners of war. Meanwhile, Putmans switched his partnership from Liu Xiang to Zhilong. In 1634 the trade route between Dayuan and the southern Fujian coast was re-established (Wong, 2017:51).

PIRACY IN ASIA

The Invincible Ruler of south China

Ever since Zhilong had become the Patrolling Admiral, he legitimately controlled the entire Fujian economy. His new appointments as Regional Vice-commander (*fu zongbing* 副總兵) in 1633, and later, in 1640 as Regional Commander (*zongbing* 總兵), further assured his authority over the military (Calanca, 2010:89). With his staying power, he formed a legal private maritime organization—the Zheng Ministry (*Zheng bu* 鄭部) in 1636-1637. It was constructed in the footsteps of the Ming official military system to garrison the coastal areas.¹⁰

From the mid-1630s, the Zheng organization dominated the China Seas and controlled up to 90 percent of all Chinese shipping in maritime East Asia (Andrade and Hang, 2016:11). His personal impor-

tance was burgeoning due to his strong naval capability and the skills to organize people. It was estimated that there were 100,000 to 200,000 men under his command, and he possessed a large fleet of battle ships and superior European weapons of different kinds (Wong, 2017:52).

Apart from being an adept smuggler-pirate, Zhilong was a canny businessman. In south China, he levied a 40% tax on cargoes, and collected tolls on all ships that called in his ports. He also extorted protection fees from private Chinese merchant vessels for flying a flag bearing the clan's surname Zheng on it so as to avoid attack by other pirates and to show eminence at sea. As Paola Calanca observes, "All merchant junks passing through the South China Sea had to have Zhilong's safe-conduct pass. Therefore, all of



Dutch troops suppressing rioting Chinese in Tainan, by François Valentyn, 1724.

In Jonathan Clements, *Pirate King: Coxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004), Illustration 10.

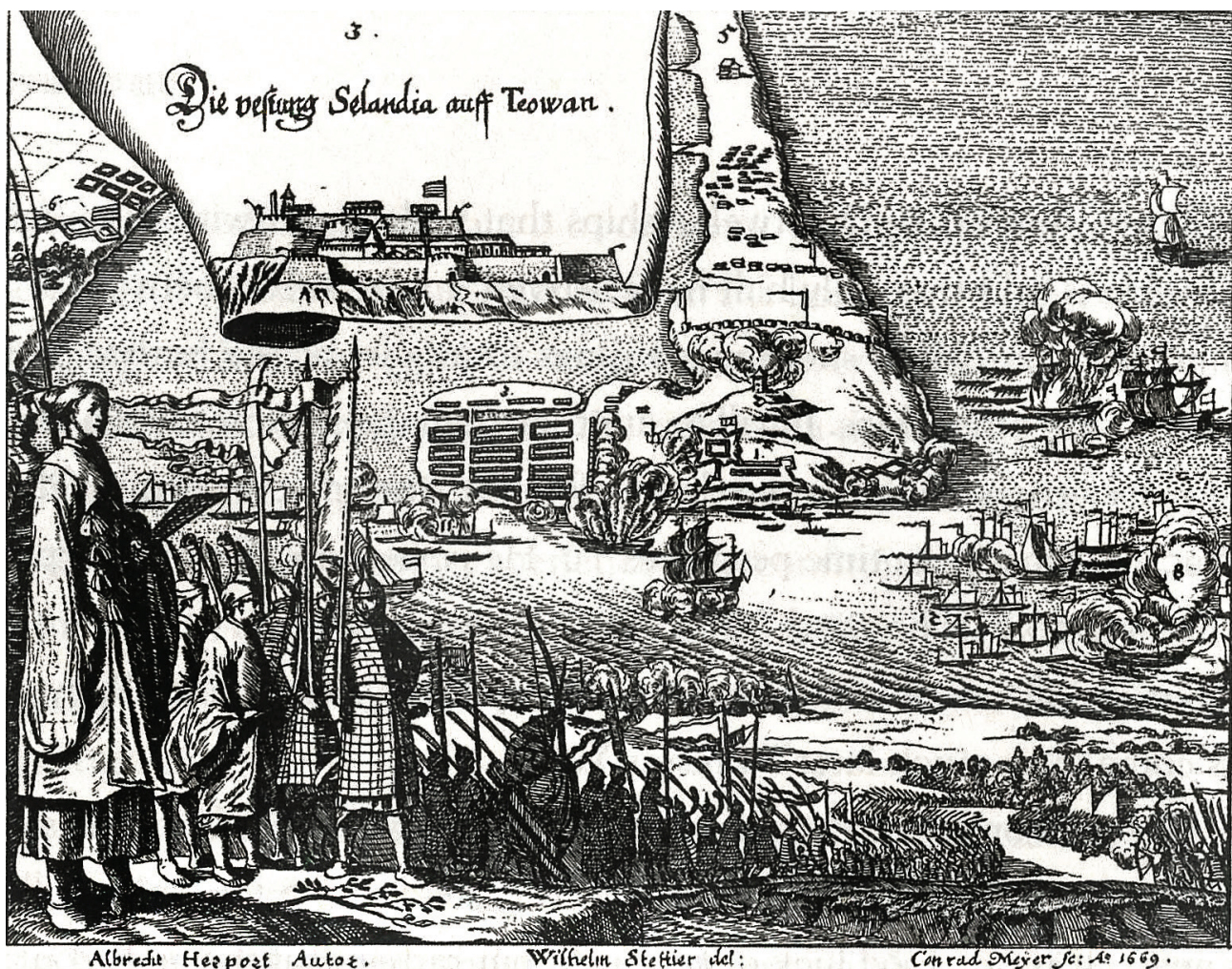
PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

the outlaws and rabble in the whole region pledged allegiance to him and came under his control” (Calanca, 2010:87). By the 1640s, Zhilong’s coffers swelled even more, and every ship in south China appeared to be part of the Zheng fleet (Clements, 2004:64).

Zhilong’s political allegiance to the Ming court effectively enabled him to dominate the overseas trade connections from Xiamen with the Japanese, Dutch, and Portuguese merchants. Cashing in on his official appointments, he built up an unchallenged multinational commercial network that included his fellow countrymen and relatives, as well as European and Japanese merchants and officials.

In the words of Wong Young-tsu, Zhilong “was truly the indispensable man for the Ming government, not to mention that he ensured his own influence on the Fujian coast” (Wong, 2017:52).

In 1640 Zhilong moved his headquarters from central Taiwan to Anhai 安海 in southern Fujian.¹¹ Anhai shortly grew into the hub of sea-borne commerce and an international port. From Anhai, trade routes stretched to Japan, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and the East India coast (Wong, 2018:55). By showing his great pride and spectacular wealth, Zhilong built an extraordinarily magnificent castle at Anhai that spanned in cir-



War between Zheng Chenggong and the Dutch, 17th century Dutch engraving.

In Macabe Keliher, *Out of China or Yu Yonghe's tale of Formosa: a history of seventeenth-century Taiwan* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc. 2003), p. 52.

PIRACY IN ASIA

cumference for almost five kilometers. Within the enclosure, there were resplendent decorations, and a canal leading to his bedroom (Andrade, 2011:53). In order to defend the walled compound, he recruited the Black Guard (approximately 500-strong) in Africa and Macau, and they turned into his own imposing private army (Clements, 2004:70).

By all accounts, Zhilong reached the zenith of his life. Forging a maritime kingdom in his heyday, he enjoyed unsurpassed status as a distinctly prominent political and military figure. He was the master of all the seas upon the coast of China (Palafox, 1978:72), and the invincible sea lord of the Taiwan Strait (Clements, 2004:4-5). He was indeed the most powerful ruler of south China, and one of the wealthiest and most influential men in all of China.

The Kingmaker of the Southern Ming

During the golden era of Zhilong's maritime success, the Ming dynasty collapsed in 1644. A shadow government—the Southern Ming (1644-1662)—was first established in Nanjing by the Ming loyalists. Prince Fu 福王 (Zhu Yousong 朱由崧) was enthroned as the Hongguang 弘光 Emperor (r. 1644-1645). As Zhilong showed his loyalty to this exiled court, he was given the title Earl of Nan'an (Nan'an Bo 南安伯, the title referring to his birthplace in Nan'an) by Hongguang in 1645 (Wong, 2017:56). The fledgling Nanjing court lasted for only one year when the Qing forces captured Nanjing and the emperor was executed.

At that instant, Zhilong emerged as the kingmaker *par excellence* shaping yet another political landscape with his son Zheng Sen 鄭森. Born to a Japanese mother while his father was working for the Dutch in Penghu, Zheng Sen was raised with the Japanese name Fukumatsu 福松. At the age of six, he joined Zhilong in Fujian in 1630, whereas his mother stayed behind because of the seclusion policy in Tokugawa Japan.

Even though the father showed no interest in pursuing studies, the Japanese-reared son was passionately introduced to traditional Confucian education. The 14-year-old Zheng Sen passed the imperial civil service examination at the county level for the elementary *xiucai* 秀才 degree in 1638. In 1642 he passed at the provincial level for the *juren* 舉人 degree, but was tainted by the evidence of his father's bribery for the son's degree (Andrade, 2011:63). In 1643 he was sent to the renowned Imperial Academy in Nanjing—a centre of literati culture—to continue studying. Zheng Sen also received an excellent military training, learning the arts of war and the use of various kinds of weapons (Wong, 2017:59).

In 1645 the father and the son supported the pretender Prince Tang 唐王 (Zhu Yujian 朱聿鍵) to ascend the throne as the Longwu 隆武 Emperor (r. 1645-1646) in Fuzhou 福州, the provincial capital of Fujian. At the same time, Prince Lu 魯 (Zhu Yihai 朱以海) claimed the title of "acting ruler" (*jianguo* 監國) on the Zhejiang coast, challenging Longwu's legitimacy. The lack of unity and internal power struggles markedly aggravated the wobbly exiled court. Emperor Longwu was grateful for the support: Zhilong was made a Marquis and ennobled as Duke of National Pacification to control the three ministries that related to martial matters (Clements, 2004:109-110).

Besides, Longwu must have been impressed by the 21-year-old Zheng Sen, and granted him a new personal name Chenggong 成功, meaning success. So he changed his full name to Zheng Chenggong (hereafter Chenggong). Remarkably, Zheng Sen was bestowed with the imperial surname Zhu 朱, and was addressed as Guo Xing Ye 國姓爺, meaning a gentleman bearing the surname of the imperial house. This honorific appellation was commonly translated as Bearer (or Lord) of the Imperial Surname. Guo Xing Ye was pronounced as Kok Seng Ya in the Hokkien dialect.¹² The Dutch mistook the title for Chenggong's name and addressed him as Koxinga (alternative spellings: Coxinga and Cocksinja).

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

The bestowal of the imperial surname was a rare gesture, which implied a sort of adoption into the royal family (Wills, 1994:223). Becoming the adopted son of Longwu, Chenggong now had an adoptive royal father and a biological pirate father.

Longwu also gave him an imperial sword (a symbol of regal authority), and a seal inscribed with the words “Great Rebel-Quelling General,” as well as the grandiose title Loyal and Filial Earl (Andrade, 2011:64, 67). Furthermore, Longwu entrusted



PIRACY IN ASIA

him with the command of the imperial guards and troops (Wong, 2017:62).

Apart from the Confucian values of loyalty and righteousness with which Chenggong was nurtured, these imperial badges of honour embodied

a motivating force in his enduring Ming loyalism. Bound to his adoptive royal father by loyalty and filial piety, he envisioned restoring the ruling power of the Ming court, even though the “barbarian” Manchus had already taken over the seat of the highest power in Beijing.

Catastrophic Gamble

In October 1646 Emperor Longwu was captured and killed. The Qing court sent two envoys to meet Zhilong and offered him the high office of governor of both Fujian and Guangdong provinces if he would switch allegiance. Lured by the promise to continue securing his commercial empire on the coast in the new dynasty, Zhilong and his 500 followers left Anhai for Fuzhou in November 1646 to defect to the Manchus, ignoring the strong objections of his brothers and Chenggong (Wong 2017:60-61).

Zhilong's defection constituted the peripeteia of his fate. As the saying goes, “a tiger leaving the hills becomes unworthy of his claws, and fish out of ocean are trapped” (*hu lishan buwei, yu tuoyuan er kun* 虎離山不威, 魚脫淵而困). Shortly, his hope to remain a leading figure in south China was quashed. He had made a fatal gamble and could never return home.

From Fuzhou, Zhilong was taken to Beijing in confinement. Chenggong and his uncles were left as successors to the leadership of the military and naval forces of the Zheng organization. Before long, Chenggong launched amphibious raids on the Manchu-occupied territory in Fujian. And in return, the Manchus stormed the Zheng family's hometown at Anhai in the spring of 1647. The Zheng's exuberant castle was devastated and their lands were confiscated (Wong, 2017:61). In the castle, Chenggong's Japanese mother, who came to join the family in 1645, was seized and violated by the Qing troops. She committed suicide by plunging a dagger into her throat and tumbling into the moat below (Clements, 2004:116). After the storming, Chenggong actively resisted the Qing regime, and his forces harassed the Manchus in a number of skirmishes.

Zheng Chenggong expels the Dutch from Taiwan, by Cheng Shifa, 1955.
In Jonathan Clements, *Pirate King: Coxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004), Illustration 14.



PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

By 1657 Zhilong was kept in chains in Beijing. While he was in captivity, he wrote letters to Chenggong entreating him to surrender, but the son did not submit to his traitor father's orders, though his life was at stake. In Zhilong's final days in a prison cell, his only friends were occasional Jesuit visitors, who were sympathetic to the plight of this fellow Catholic, and slipped him money to bribe his jailers for small comforts (Keene, 1951:64).

In November 1661 the captive was brutally tortured to death by "a thousand cuts" (*lingchi* 凌遲). Eleven other members of the Zheng clan were also put to death. On Zhilong's fall, Wong Young-tsu has commented that Zhilong was a shrewd, cunning opportunist, and his dynastic loyalty was nothing more than a means to enhance his personal gains, to accumulate prestige and power, and to maintain a high status. He did not have any political conviction and commitment, and whoever claimed to rule the empire was of little concern to him (Wong, 2017:65). The Confucian-educated Chenggong must have held his unprincipled father in contempt.

In stark contrast to his father, Chenggong constantly embraced the Confucian ideology of loyalty. By unwaveringly defying the Qing, he manifested the justification of his loyalty to his adoptive royal father; and the repudiation of his own biological disloyal father (Croizier, 1977:47). After all, he appeared to

turn back on filiality to his natural father, and indirectly committed parricide.

Zheng Chenggong's Ming Loyalism

Ever since his father had defected to the Qing, Chenggong continued raising the banner of Ming loyalism and expanded the Zheng maritime empire. By 1650 Chenggong was strong enough to establish himself as the head of the Zheng clan. For the sake of creating political and military forces, and re-establishing the maritime trade network on the Fujian coast, Chenggong and his followers set sail to the twin islands—Xiamen and Jinmen in 1650. These islands soon turned out to be centres of smuggling and major commercial ports for seaborne trade.

From the bases in Xiamen and Jinmen, Chenggong fought bitterly against the Qing. His defiant forces at that time emerged as a full-fledged political movement (Struve, 1984:116). After the death of Longwu, Chenggong pledged allegiance to the only remaining claimant to the throne, Prince Gui 桂王 (Zhu Youlang 朱由榔), who was enthroned as the Yongli 永曆 Emperor (r. 1646-1662). The army of this motley court did not merely consist of the remaining troops of the Ming Empire, it also to a large extent included the local militia that had decided to fight against the Manchu invaders.

In 1655 Emperor Yongli bestowed upon Chenggong the royal title Prince Yanping 延平王. This new prestigious honour, together with those given by Longwu, further consolidated his staunch Ming loyalism. In this regard, Wong Young-tsu has argued that Chenggong "exemplified a continued ideological loyalty, or even fanaticism." Wong portrays him as a "revolutionary traditionalist," who transformed sheer violence into a political movement in an unprecedented way (Wong, 2017:58). With personal and political commitments and an indomitable will to topple the Qing and revive the Ming, he continued to accumulate wealth and to train a strong army.



The only known surviving portrait of Admiral Shi Lang. In Jonathan Clements, *Pirate King: Coxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004), Illustration 11.

PIRACY IN ASIA

Like his seagoing father, the son showed his skill, ability, and determination to rule the Fujian coast. Chenggong's ocean-going merchant fleet reached various overseas markets, including Japan, Manila and the Indo-Chinese states. In 1655, at the height of his power, Chenggong virtually controlled the entire south China coastal region, and commanded some 250,000 soldiers and 2,300 ships (Keliher, 2003:29). Monopolizing the huge profit of port tax and seaborne commerce, he gained an average annual income of 2.5 million taels of silver. Given his surging domination and enormous capability, the Qing government classified him as a "sea bandit," and felt the gravest threat he posed in the Zhejiang and Fujian coastal areas (Wong, 2017:63, 76-77).

In 1656 the Qing forces attacked the Zheng military stronghold in Jinmen. Due to a storm, the Manchus were defeated and lost most of their fleet in the battle. In that same year, Chenggong received the first setback when the Qing regime formally issued a maritime interdict, which forbade trade with the rebels (referring to the Zheng clan) under pain of death. In addition, a series of severe sea bans was decreed to burn all boats in coastal areas; to bar the construction of large ocean-going junks; and to forbid the purchase of foreign ships and the sale of Chinese ships to foreigners (Calanca, 2010:90).

In 1658 Chenggong launched a "northern expedition" and intended to capture Nanjing.¹³ Comprising as many as 150,000 people and more than 3,000 ships, the military forces set sail northward along the Zhejiang coast and anchored at the strategic Zhoushan 舟山 Islands (Wong, 2017:71). His expedition, however, was devastated by a 3-day severe storm. A year later, his repaired armada reached Nanjing in August. Due to his underestimation of the Qing's resolve, he was met with a furious assault and his forces broke formation and ran. He was routed with a tremendous loss of men and ships.

Soon after the Nanjing fiasco, Chenggong began having difficulty in collecting tolls and taxes, and

his trade revenues declined (Andrade, 2008:213). At this moment, the Zheng clan could still retain their bases in Xiamen and Jinmen, but almost all the loyalist forces were dying out.¹⁴ Chenggong's resistance had to face the now mighty Qing alone.

In 1660 the Zheng organization faced the second fatal blow when the Qing's new policy of massive coastal excavation (*qianjie lin* 遷界令) came into effect ordering coastal residents to resettle thirty to fifty 里 (fifteen to twenty-five kilometres) inland. For the sake of deterring contacts between the rebels and the local inhabitants, this stringent policy ordered the burning of all houses and buildings within the evacuation zone and the execution of anyone who tried to return home (Calanca, 2010:90-1). As a counter to these draconian policies, Chenggong decided to move on to Dutch Taiwan.¹⁵ He envisioned recapturing the mainland by using the island as a base to train his troops. To raise finance for the wars, he sent more trading junks to Southeast Asia and Japan, impinging on Dutch monopolies (Andrade, 2008:209).

The Dutch-era Taiwan

No sooner had the Dutch occupied Tainan and established its Government of Formosa in 1624 than the Spaniards founded their colony Santiago (today's Jilong 基隆) in the northern region in 1626. Since then, the Dutch tightened their grasp on the island and set up military garrisons. By 1642 the Dutch forced out the Spaniards, and successfully created a viable colony with an unprecedented administrative infrastructure in Taiwan (Wong, 2017:84).

As an accompanying task in colonialism, the Dutch exerted strenuous efforts in the project of Christian proselytization. The first Dutch Reformed Church missionary, Georgius Candidius, arrived at Dayuan in May 1627. The zealous missionary tried to master the native Sinkan 新港 (*pinyin*: Xingang) language and launched a "civilizing mission" to "win souls for Christ." Spreading Protestant faith not only helped the colonial administration, but also enhanced

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

the business of the Dutch (Tsai, 2009:34-5). The propagation of Christianity thus went hand in hand with economic exploitation and colonial plundering.

From the harbour at Tainan, the Dutch East India Company turned Taiwan into a lucrative trading base. By the 1630s the Dutch made Dayuan a major trade centre for Chinese silk, silver, gold, porcelain, deer skins, sulphur, and numerous secondary goods from mainland China (Wong, 2017:89). Having built an export market, they reaped considerable profits. In reality, they were intriguing pirate-merchants, who greatly threatened the coastal regions in south China. Paola Calanca has pointed out:

The Dutch settlements, first, on Penghu (1604 and 1622), and later, on Taiwan (1624), contributed further to destabilizing the coast, not only because they intercept ships trading with China, Japan, and South-east Asia, but also supplied weapons to pirates and fenced their booty. Therefore, the pirates never lacked the money, food, and arms necessary for pursuing their nefarious activities. (Calanca, 2010:87).

The Fujianese whom Zhilong had brought to Taiwan were now *bona fide* subjects of the Dutch colonial rule. On the one hand, the Dutch mobilized them to build the defensive fortress—Zeelandia Castle at Anping 安平 in Tainan,¹⁶ and depended on them for labour works in agriculture, construction, hunting, and commerce. And on the other, the colonialists raised substantial revenues by enacting a series of new tolls and “residency tax” on the colonists. Taiwan soon emerged as the largest Dutch colony in the Indies and one of its wealthiest. The Dutch Governor of Formosa, Nicolass Verburgh (1649-1653), has described, “The Chinese are the only bees on Formosa that give honey” (Andrade, 2008:159-60).

The Dutch, however, did not pamper the productive beehive but mal-treated the hard-working bees. Due to the colonialists’ greedy extortions and abuses, the colonists complained about the tax system. Their seething protest against oppression burst into revolts at Sakkam 赤崁 (*pinyin*: Chikan) in Tainan in

1652. Allied with the aboriginal warriors, the Dutch soldiers savagely suppressed the uprisings by killing and starving to death more than four thousand Chinese inhabitants on the island (Andrade, 2008:174). The seeds of hostility and retaliation were sown.

The aftermath of bloody suppression was met with intense anger even in Xiamen, where people threw stones at the unpopular Dutch and abused them as “red-haired dogs.” In 1653 the alarmed Dutch constructed a new fortress for defense—Fort Provintia at Sakkam, not far from Zeelandia Castle. Despite the solid fortification, the Dutch had yet to face the most fearsome enemy whom they called Koxinga a few years later.

The Expulsion of the Dutch

In March 1661 Chenggong assembled all the ships at Liaoluo Bay (where his father defeated the Dutch in 1633) to invade Taiwan. His armada comprising approximately 400 ships and 30,000 well-trained and battle-hardened soldiers crossed the dangerous Taiwan Strait in two echelon formations in April and May of that year. Wong Young-tsu is of the opinion that the number of Zheng’s forces, even just counting combatant soldiers (about 16,000 strong), was ten times superior to the Dutch (Wong, 2017:98-99). And in the words of Tonio Andrade, the Zheng army “contained an order of magnitude more soldiers than the Dutch had in all the Indies” (Andrade, 2011:6).

The 1652 Sakkam massacre still rankled many, and the Dutch now reaped an intense vengeance. Not surprisingly, thousands of Chinese settlers went to the beaches to help Chenggong’s troops ashore (Andrade, 2008:240). Moreover, they helped attacking the colonialists, destroying their churches and burning Christian books (Wong, 2017:99). The Dutch Governor of Formosa, Frederik Coyett (1656-1662),¹⁷ completely failed to maintain his hold over the “bees of Formosa” any more. Furthermore, two defectors sided with Chenggong against the Dutch.

PIRACY IN ASIA

He Tingbin 何廷斌, a Sino-Dutch translator, gave him the map of Taiwan and served as an informant. Hans Jurgen Radis, a VOC sergeant, directed him to Zeelandia Castle inside and out (Andrade, 2008: 234, 244). The two Dutch citadels at Zeelandia and Provintia were soon besieged and captured.

In the last resort, the Dutch envoy Thomas van Iperen offered Chenggong a large sum of indemnity and the promise of profits in exchange for “leaving Formosa alone.” The envoy also reiterated the VOC’s ownership of the island through a formal contract with the Chinese authorities (Wong, 2017:101). But Chenggong repeatedly declared that the issue of ownership of the island was non-negotiable.

Given Chenggong’s military upper hand, the Dutch surrendered on 1 February 1662 on terms that sacrificed some 471,000 florins in treasure to their Chinese conquerors, who allowed them to leave the island with full honours, “armed to the teeth and with flying banners” (Keliher, 2003:56). Their vessels eventually left the harbour carrying an estimated 900 Europeans but leaving 1,600 dead behind (Clements, 2004:201). It took nine months (from May 1661 to January 1662) for Chenggong to expel the Dutch from Taiwan.¹⁸ Their final departure closed a chapter of thirty-eight years of colonial rule (1624-1662).

In pursuit of profits, the bellicose Dutch employed the classic capitalist imperialism of colonial subjugation, exploitation, and brutal despotism in Taiwan. Their imperial pattern readily brings to mind what Homi Bhaba has described the totalizing tendency of colonial discourse as “at once a civilizing mission and a violent subjugating force” (Bhaba, 1968:148). The callous slaughter of the inhabitants perhaps made up part of the rationale behind their ultimate expulsion from Taiwan.

Having been defeated in the Battle of Macau, the Dutch failed to seize a place for trade and evangelization at the door of south China. They were not only routed by Zhilong in the Battle of Liaoluo Bay, but were also driven out from Taiwan by Chenggong.

The Zheng clan, in a word, was the nemesis of the Dutch in their maritime and colonial enterprises in the East.

On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, Emperor Yongli, the last emperor of the Southern Ming, was captured and executed in June 1662. Hence, the short-lived Southern Ming dynasty, lasting for only eighteen years, completely disintegrated. Simultaneously, Dutch Taiwan and the Southern Ming ceased to exist in 1662.

The Kingdom of Dongning

Shaping an unprecedented political entity as the Kingdom of Dongning 東寧王國 (1661-1683), Chenggong declared ownership of Taiwan and ruled as Prince Yanping (r. 1661-1662). In the West, it was known as the Kingdom of Taiwan or the Kingdom of Formosa. Being the last loyal defender of the defunct Ming dynasty, he was the first Chinese to claim political legitimacy and to exercise administration over Taiwan. The Zheng-era Taiwan began, and the process of Sinicization was implemented. Such process expedited Taiwan’s social, political, and cultural integration with mainland China two decades later.

Just as the son had created the new political landscape, the father was executed. And just as Emperor Yongli had been killed, the grief-stricken prince died a sudden death at the age of 39 in June 1662.¹⁹ Chenggong was succeeded by his son Zheng Jing 鄭經 (r. 1662-1682) and later his grandson Zheng Keshuang 鄭克塽 (r. 1682-1683) as rulers of Dongning. The Zheng family *de facto* controlled and ruled Taiwan for twenty-two years from 1661 to 1683. This period is sometimes referred to as the Koxinga dynasty in Western accounts.

Despite the magnitude of challenges posed by the Zheng clan, the Qing regime proved willing to tolerate the existence of Zheng Taiwan, and had no interest in conquering, occupying, and governing a place they regarded as “a mud ball in the sea,” “a pile of rust-brown mud,” and the “eastern savage land”

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

(Keliher, 2003:xiii, 71). The Qing court had in fact held negotiations on separate occasions and offered numerous contingencies for a peaceful settlement—from the recognition of Zheng Taiwan as a hereditary kingdom to the acquiescence of a tributary relationship. In this respect, Hang Xing contends that Chenggong's occupation of Taiwan and the Zheng clan's rejection of all the Qing offers constituted a broader ambition to control Southeast Asia, along with its rich natural resources and strategic access to new product sources in the Indian Ocean (Hang, 2015:247-248).

It was not until Shi Lang 施琅 (1621-1696) zealously reported a critical analysis to Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1722) urging him to eliminate what he called “the

ideal pirate lair” that Kangxi decided to annex Taiwan (Keliher, 2003:71). Formerly, Shi Lang was an outstanding commander in the naval forces of the Zheng organization. A brilliant naval strategist of his day, he was reputedly a genius at designing naval weaponry and shipboard machinery. In 1651 he shifted loyalties to the Manchus following disputes with the stern-disciplined Chenggong, who then furiously executed his father, younger brother, and other family members (Hang, 2015:81). Shi Lang's remarkable naval expertise and, in particular, his enmity to the Zheng clan made him the most suitable avenger for the expedition.

Appointed Navy Admiral of the expeditionary forces, Shi Lang set off in July 1683 after extensive preparation with a fighting force of 20,000 men and a



Altar to Zheng Chenggong at a shrine in Tainan, 2015.

In Hang Xing, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c.1620–1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 144.

PIRACY IN ASIA

fleet of 300 warships (Clements, 2004:226). He first defeated the Zheng clan's naval forces in Penghu and, in October, seized the Kingdom of Dongning. Shi Lang took four months to annihilate the last remaining Ming resistance against the Manchu Qing.²⁰ In an imperial edict issued in May 1684, this "savage" island off the mainland coast became a prefecture under the provincial government of Fujian, and was an integral part of Qing China.

Conclusion

The Ming-Qing dynastic transition witnessed a time of chaos and anarchy. Amid the cataclysmic period, both Zheng Zhilong and Zheng Chenggong, known to European accounts as Iquan and Koxinga respectively, were decisive figures in the making of history in south China. The father and the son had shaped the political landscape that the new regime viewed as a thorn in the foot.

In his teenage years, Zhilong came to Macau where he was baptized and where he learned the Portuguese language. Macau was a springboard for him to turn into a merchant-smuggler-pirate. An astute entrepreneur, he developed a huge piratical empire in south China and established multinational and transnational

business connections across the East and South China Seas. With unrivalled maritime prowess and unimagined wealth, he was truly a man of the hour on the Fujian coast prior to switching sides to the Qing court.

Chenggong took over his father's legacies, and played even a greater part in history. By expelling the Dutch colonialists, he was the first Chinese to claim ownership of Taiwan, and introduced policies to develop a self-sufficient island kingdom. Socio-political turmoil and disorder on land and at sea continued until 1683 when the Manchus conquered Zheng Taiwan and consolidated their authority, or the notion of sovereignty in modern sense, over all of China.

Regardless of being once condemned as outlaws and bandits, Zhilong and Chenggong are looked upon as heroes on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. In Fujian, people consider the father an upright and benevolent person for robbing the rich and helping the poor, while the son is revered as a national hero for banishing foreign aggressors. In Taiwan, the son is even lauded as the paragon of loyalty and hailed as a saint. So much so, he has been elevated to a divine status and enshrined in temples. That the dizzying jolt of the Zheng story comes to end with heroes and saints simply begins with smugglers and pirates. **RC**

NOTES

- 1 The exact year of Zheng Zhilong's birth remains uncertain. The most likely year should fall between 1592 and 1595, but 1604 was commonly quoted. See Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c.1620–1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 41. See also Young-tsu Wong, *China's Conquest of Taiwan in the 17th century: Victory at Full Moon* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2017), p. 35.
- 2 Prior to the sixteenth century, Taiwan was mainly inhabited by a few non-Chinese aboriginal tribes. In 1517 the Portuguese sailed through the Taiwan Strait and named

this island Ilha Formosa (Beauteous Isle). Some ancient Chinese maps referred to it as "Little Liuqiu." Until the seventeenth century, Taiwan remained an unclaimed land. In the 1630s both Chinese and Dutch sailors called it Dawan (the Big Bay), or Taiwan (the Terraced Bay). After the Manchu conquest in 1683, the island was officially called Taiwan thereafter. See Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 4–5. See also Jonathan Clements, *Pirate King: Koxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004), p. 234.

PIRATARIA NA ÁSIA

- 3 The Chinese sources on Zheng Zhilong's early years are covered in Ji Liuqi, *Mingji Beilue* (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1936), and Jiang Risheng, *Taiwan Waiji* (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1990).
- 4 In an edict that founded the Diocese of Macau in 1576, Pope Gregory XIII gave an official name to Macau: *Cidade do Nome de Deus de Macau na China* (City of the Name of God of Macau in China).
- 5 VOC is the acronym of Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (the Dutch East India Company). This multinational corporation was founded in 1602 as a chartered company to trade with India and Southeast Asian countries. It soon became the world's first formally listed public company.
- 6 The Dutch East Indies was a Dutch colony consisting of what is now Indonesia. It was formed from the nationalized colonies of the Dutch East India Company, which came under the administration of the Dutch government in 1800.
- 7 Tradition holds that it was the German Jesuit-astronomer Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666) who fired the decisive shot. However, some accounts attribute it to the Italian Jesuit-astronomers Christoforo Borri Bruno (1583-1632) and Giacomo Rho (1593-1638). On the eyewitness record by Elie Ripon (a Swiss mercenary in Dutch employ), see Willy F. Vande Walle, "Dutch Perceptions of Macau." In Luís Filipe Barreto and Wu Zhiliang (ed.), *Macau: Past and Present* (Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, I.P.; Fundação Macau, 2015), pp. 249-252.
- 8 Named by the Portuguese as Ilhas dos Pescadores (the Fishermen's Islands) in the 1540s, the Penghu Islands are an archipelago of 90 islands and islets.
- 9 The Dutch and Zheng Zhilong at times became fierce competitors and even enemies. On their ambivalent relationship, see Wei-chung Cheng, *War, trade and piracy in the China Seas, 1622-1683* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013).
- 10 On a detailed study of the Zheng Ministry, see Cheng-heng Lu, "Between Bureaucrats and Bandits: the Rise of Zheng Zhilong and His Organization, the Zheng Ministry (Zheng Bu)." In Tonio Andrade and Xing Hang (ed.), *Sea rovers, silver, and samurai: Maritime East Asia in global history, 1550-1700* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press 2016), pp. 132-155.
- 11 Anhai is located within a shallow estuary. Its geographical position made it the strategic headquarters for the Zheng organization, as it was perfectly sheltered from the threat of cannon attacks.
- 12 The term Hokkien 福建 is etymologically derived from the Southern Min (Minnan 閩南) pronunciation for Fujian. The Hokkien dialect is spoken throughout Fujian province, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia.
- 13 Nanjing was of symbolic significance to the lingering Ming loyalists as it was the capital of the early Ming dynasty.
- 14 The remaining viable Ming loyalist forces were Zhang Huangyan's 張煌言 on the Zhejiang coast; Emperor Yongli's in Guizhou and Yunnan; and Li Dingguo's 李定國 in Guangxi and Guangdong.
- 15 In 1660 Chinese residents on Taiwan were estimated at 50,000. See John Robert Shepherd, *Statecraft and political economy on the Taiwan frontier* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 96.
- 16 Zeelandia Castle was built over ten years from 1624 to 1634 as an international business centre. The site has now been renamed as Anping Fort.
- 17 In the aftermath of the defeat, the last governor Frederik Coyett was symbolically executed for treason in Batavia. Coyett's real punishment was life-imprisonment, but he was soon set free and returned to Amsterdam. See Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), p. 6.
- 18 On the nine-month events leading to the expulsion of the Dutch from Taiwan, see William Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch* (Taipei: Ch'eng-Wen Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 412-58.
- 19 The causes of Zheng Chenggong's death are controversial. It is said that he went crazy and died, because his son and heir apparent, Zheng Jing, had an incestuous affair with his younger brother's wet nurse and had a baby. Medical accounts vary from malaria to dysentery to pneumonia, and syphilis. Another source relates his "madness" before death was due to a feeling of dishonour over his incomplete mission of Ming restoration, making him too ashamed to face Emperor Yongli in the nether world. See Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 301-2.
- 20 The difficulty in conquering Taiwan was reported in Shi Lang's memorial to the emperor. See Pei-kai Cheng and Michael Lestz with Jonathan D. Spence (ed.), *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1999), pp. 48-51.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrade, Tonio. *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- . *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Andrade, Tonio and Hang, Xing (ed.). *Sea rovers, silver, and samurai: Maritime East Asia in global history, 1550-1700*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016.
- Antony, Robert J. "Introduction: The Shadowy World of the Greater China Sea." In Robert J. Antony (ed.). *Elusive Pirates, Pervasive Smugglers: Violence and Clandestine Trade in the Greater China Seas*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010.
- Boxer, C. R. *Fidalgos in the Far East 1550-1770: Fact and Fancy in the History of Macao*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1948.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." *October*, Vol. 28, 1 April, 1984.
- Calanca, Paola. "Piracy and Coastal Security in Southeastern China, 1600-1780." In Robert J. Antony (ed.). *Elusive Pirates, Pervasive Smugglers: Violence and Clandestine Trade in the Greater China Seas*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010.
- Campbell, William. *Formosa under the Dutch*. Taipei: Ch'eng-Wen Publishing Co., 1967.
- Cheng, Pei-kai and Lestz, Michael with Spence, Jonathan D. (ed.). *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999.
- Cheng, Wei-chung. *War, trade and piracy in the China Seas, 1622-1683*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Chin, James K. "Merchants, Smugglers, and Pirates: Multinational Clandestine Trade on the south China Coast, 1520-50." In Robert J. Antony (ed.). *Elusive Pirates, Pervasive Smugglers: Violence and Clandestine Trade in the Greater China Seas*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010.
- Clements, Jonathan. *Pirate King: Coxinga and the fall of the Ming dynasty*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2004.
- Croizier, Ralph C. *Coxinga and Chinese Nationalism History, Myth, and the Hero*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977.
- De VOC en Formosa, 1624-1662. Cheng Shaogang 程紹剛 (trans. and annotated). Taipei: The Linking Press, 2000.
- Hang, Xing. *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c.1620-1720*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Ji, Liuqi 計六奇 (active 1662-1671). *Mingji Beilue* 明季北略. Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan 商務印書館, 1936.
- Jiang, Risheng 江日昇 (active 1692). *Taiwan Waiji* 臺灣外記. Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she 上海古籍出版社, 1990.
- Keene, Donald. *The Battles of Coxinga: Chikamatsu's Puppet Play, its Background and Importance*. London: Taylor's Foreign Press, 1951.
- Keliher, Macabe. *Out of China or Yu Yonghe's tale of Formosa: a history of seventeenth-century Taiwan*. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 2003.
- Lu, Cheng-heng. "Between Bureaucrats and Bandits: the Rise of Zheng Zhilong and his Organization, the Zheng Ministry (Zheng Bu)." In Tonio Andrade and Xing Hang (ed.). *Sea rovers, silver, and samurai: Maritime East Asia in global history, 1550-1700*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016.
- Ming Qing Shiliao 明清史料. Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1951.
- Mingshilu Minhai Guanxi Shiliao 明實錄閩海關係史料. Taipei: Taiwan Wenxian Congkan, 1971.
- Montalto de Jesus, C. A. *Historic Macao*. First published 1902. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Palafox, Juan de. *The History of the Conquest of China by the Tartars* (1649). New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1978.
- Shepherd, John Robert. *Statecraft and political economy on the Taiwan frontier*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Struve, Lynn A. *The Southern Ming 1644-1662*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Tsai, Shih-shan Henry. *Maritime Taiwan: Historical Encounters with the East and the West*. New York/London: M.E. Sharpe, 2009.
- Vande Walle, Willy F. "Dutch Perceptions of Macau." In Luís Filipe Barreto and WuZhiliang (ed.). *Macau: Past and Present*. Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, I.P.; Fundação Macau, 2015.
- Wills, John E. Jr. *Mountain of Fame: Portraits in Chinese History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- . "Yiguan's Origins: Clues from Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin Sources." In Tonio Andrade and Xing Hang (ed.). *Sea rovers, silver, and samurai: Maritime East Asia in global history, 1550-1700*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016.
- Wong, Young-tsu 汪榮祖. *China's Conquest of Taiwan in the 17th century: Victory at Full Moon*. Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2017.