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野蠻人與叛徒：早期現代殖民意識形態以及
荷蘭福爾摩沙土著人民暨華人移民之再現 (1622-1662)
Savages and Traitors: Early Modern Colonial Ideology and the
Representation of Indigenous Peoples and Chinese Migrants in
Dutch Formosa (1622-1662)

馮芮珂

Rinske Visser

指導教授：黃舒楣 博士

Advisor: Shu-Mei, Huang. Ph.D

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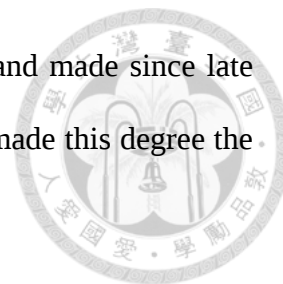


The past one and a half years of study abroad have left a deep understanding of how little academic work can truly be considered one's own achievement. Numerous mentors and peers have helped me realize aspirations, inspired me on larger and smaller research projects, and discover passions for subjects I would never have considered otherwise. First and foremost is my thesis supervisor, Huang Shumei, who not only taught the most interesting classes of the past year, but organized field trips to Pingtung and Tainan, which were both crucial in awakening my interest in Indigenous cultures and Dutch colonial history respectively. The latter trip, guided by Huang Enyu, was crucial in stimulating my interest in the archaeological and spatial dimension in researching the Dutch period.

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摘要

自後殖民研究誕生以來，話語與帝國主義之間的關係就已經確立。然而，與十八世紀和十九世紀相比，近代早期的殖民意識形態受到了嚴重的忽視。Ernst van den Boogaart (Ross 1982) 提出，荷蘭早期的殖民意識形態除了制度化程度較低之外，還具有文化偏見，而不是生物偏見。本論文將應用社會學和後殖民理論以及話語分析方法，將意識形態和興趣與荷屬福爾摩沙（1624-1662）VOC 員工的文本生產聯繫起來，分析關於華人移民和台灣原住民群體（兩個最大的群體）所產生的話語。荷蘭人將其視為他們的殖民地臣民。此外，該研究還將把話語的變化與軍事和經濟利益的變化聯繫起來，追蹤有關這些群體的刻板印象的演變及其產生的原因。

關鍵詞：殖民意識形態，文化偏見，早期現代殖民主義。



Abstract



The relationship between discourse and imperialism has been well-established since the inception of postcolonial studies. However, colonial ideology in the early modern period has been severely understudied as compared to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ernst van den Boogaart (in Ross 1982) proposes that early colonial ideology in the Netherlands is marked by cultural, rather than biological prejudice, in addition to being less institutionalized. This thesis will apply sociological and postcolonial theories and a discourse analytic method, connecting ideology and interest to textual production among VOC employees in Dutch Formosa (1624-1662), analysing the discourses produced about Chinese migrants and Indigenous Taiwanese groups, the two largest groups the Dutch saw as their colonial subjects. Moreover, the study will connect changes in discourse in to changes in military and economic interest, tracing the evolution of stereotypes about these groups as well as the reason for their production.

Keywords: Colonial ideology, cultural prejudice, early modern colonialism.



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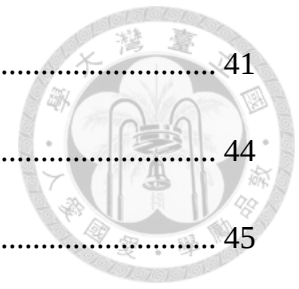


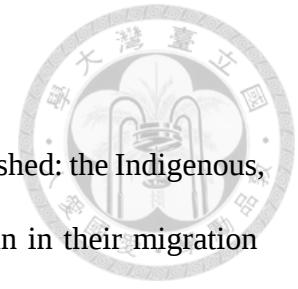
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1. Introduction



In current-day Taiwan, generally, three major ethnicities are distinguished: the Indigenous, the Taiwanese, and the Mainlanders.¹ Each of these find their origin in their migration history during different historical periods. The mainlanders, forming the most ‘recent’ ethnic group, will find no place in this study, as my research will focus on the two most prominent ethnic groups of seventeenth century Taiwan. The first of these two groups are the Indigenous Taiwanese peoples², whose archaeological record traces back thousands of years, and are currently recognized as consisting of 16 different ethnic groups (Council of Indigenous People 2010). The second group is the Taiwanese, the current ethnic majority, which consists of people of Chinese descent whose migration only started in full in the 17th century. When the Dutch arrived in Tayouan, they described the population situation, where Indigenous villages housed only a small number of Chinese. These temporary migrants were usually on Taiwan for the sake of fishery or trade. A more permanent settlement only started to develop along with the VOC’s need for manpower and establishment of trade outposts. By the end of Dutch rule in Taiwan, this population had increased to numbers that were almost equal to those of the Indigenous inhabitants.³

¹ A note on the terminology surrounding the Taiwanese ethnicities: In this thesis, as the ‘mainlander’ group does not yet exist, the ‘Taiwanese’ will be referred to by their ethnicity (Han/Chinese) or as ‘migrants’. The term Taiwanese will be avoided for this group, as migration history during this period was so recent, that almost no new generations born in Taiwan had been able to form yet. Indigenous Taiwanese will therefore be referred to as either Indigenous, natives, Formosan or Taiwanese.

² In contemporary Taiwan, sixteen ethnic groups are generally recognized. My choice to group all Indigenous peoples under a single ‘ethnic’ banner may therefore be seen as an overgeneralization which did, in some cases, not exist in the original documents. My singular usage of ‘ethnicity’ despite the fact that the Dutch also recognized a certain degree of cultural/ethnic diversity among the Indigenous peoples they came in contact with will be further expounded upon in the analysis. Of course, where necessary, distinctions will still be made between the different Formosan groups.

³ Recorded numbers list between 25.000 and 30.000 households, or an estimated 100.000 Han people in Taiwan. The actual number is likely much lower, perhaps even below 50.000 (Elvin 1998, p. 167).

The Dutch colonization of the early- and mid-seventeenth century can therefore truly be seen as the beginning of the primary ethnic divide in Taiwan, which has remained significant up until today.

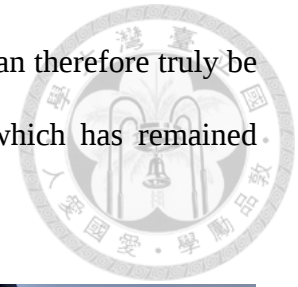


FIGURE 1: THE 228 MEMORIAL MONUMENT WHICH STANDS IN THE CENTER OF THE 228 PEACE PARK. THE THREE BLOCKS AT THE BASE SYMBOLIZE THE THREE MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS OF TAIWAN, MAINLANDERS, TAIWANESE AND INDIGENOUS, WHICH TOGETHER HOLD UP TAIWAN. IMAGE BY AUTHOR.

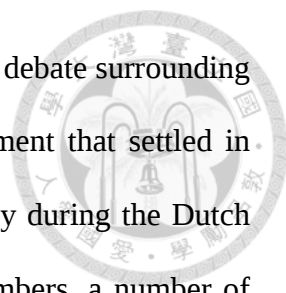
In 2024, a variety of institutions will be reflecting on this history. In some views, the year represents 400 years of Taiwanese culture, in others, it implies 400 years of international connections. The commemorations will take different forms depending on the city, and levels of enthusiasm differ depending on one's perspective on the importance of the Dutch to Taiwanese history. Taiwanese Minister of Culture Che Shih⁴ expressed his doubts on

⁴ A note on names and transliterations: This thesis has made use of sources in a wide variety of languages, usually with diverging rules for written language. The author has opted for the use on *Hanyu Pinyin* in the case of historical persons, as this is the most widely used by scholars doing research on Chinese language

the usage of the rather positive connotation in the word ‘celebrations’: “We are not talking about celebrations or commemorations. We are talking about the importance of the year 1624 to Taiwan’s history,” he said. “We will not shy away from reflecting on colonialism, but the year is meaningful to Taiwan” (Cited in Taipei Times 2023). However, this lukewarm comment on the position of the Dutch colonization in Taiwanese history should be interpreted in the context of the Netherlands being named “Guest of Honour” at the Taipei International Book Exhibition (TIBE).

The TIBE is not the only instance of a positive evaluation of the history of Dutch Formosa. Tainan will be kicking off its own celebrations at the end of 2023, using this 400-year history as a starting point to reflect on the city’s values going forward. A majority of the related activities will take place around themes such as economic innovation and urban governance, but the website makes regular mention of ethnic diversity and international connections as well (Tainan 400 2023). The promotional materials include images of famous sightseeing spots and dancers of various ethnicities, casting doubt on the prior statement on which of these commemorative activities should or should not be considered ‘celebrations’.

sources. However, with contemporary persons, the author has decided to use the scholar’s preferred method of transliteration, as indicated in their English-language academic profile, which implies the use of Wade-Giles for Taiwanese scholars and other persons, such as Chou (2016) for 周 (2016). In the case of exceedingly well-known names, the common written variant has been used, such as the case of Coxinga (rather than Guo Xing Ye as the Pinyin transliteration would have it). Finally, for place names and Dutch personal names, as the Dutch written language was not yet standardized by the 17th century, the most common variant used in the original Dutch documents has been used, and in translations, the name as it was written in the original source. While the result may be confusing at times as to the original pronunciation of words, this decision has been made to facilitate the reader’s search for further information in the original sources.

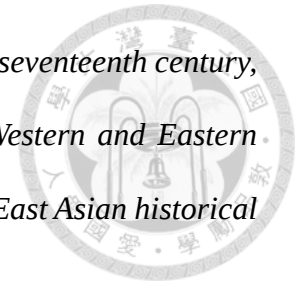


Of course, the ‘celebrations’ question is only derived from the larger debate surrounding the Dutch colonial legacy in Taiwan. As the first colonial government that settled in Taiwan, 1624 can be seen as a national milestone. Since it was only during the Dutch period that ethnic Chinese started migrating to Taiwan in large numbers, a number of Taiwanese today are able to trace back their family histories to the mid-seventeenth century. On the other hand, though some may remember the Dutch period with some nostalgia, the VOC has had a fraught relationship with the various groups on and around the island. The primary ethnic divide on Taiwan, between Chinese and Indigenous people, was initiated during this period, and it can be expected that certain colonial institutions – and the stereotypes connected to these institutions - built during this period will echo on in present-day Taiwan.

The National Taiwan Museum is a relatively new museum, opened in 2011. The museum’s permanent exhibition can be seen as symptomatic for the confused relationship to colonialism the country appears to have. The permanent exhibition, which is entitled “island of encounters” (National Museum of Taiwan History - Official Website), displays artifacts and narratives from prehistorical Taiwan to the current day befits a national history museum. A significant portion of this space is dedicated to the Spanish and Dutch legacy. Unexpectedly, the curators appear to have made little effort to emphasize the negative aspects of colonial rule, instead having opted to fill the space with ship models, historical publications of the first accounts of Taiwan, maps, architectural peculiarities and historical currencies. The website introduces the content of the exhibition as such:

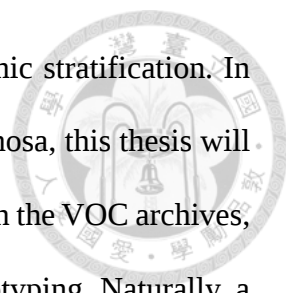
“In the middle of the 16th century, Taiwan gradually became a meeting point and transfer point for East Asian trading. Maritime powers from the West and East competed here, and Indigenous Taiwanese society started to receive wave after wave of outside impacts. First were private traders from China and Japan, pirates,

using Taiwan as a meeting point for trade. After entering the seventeenth century, the European Dutch and Spanish were added in as well. Western and Eastern cultures met here, making Taiwan into a major player on the East Asian historical stage” (ibid.) (translation by author).



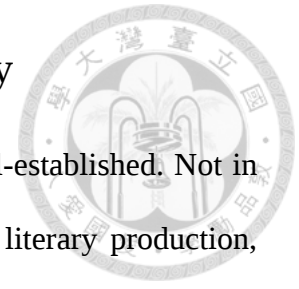
Debates on Taiwan’s colonial legacy are intricately tied up with further debates on Taiwan’s status as a settler colony. J. Bruce Jacobs (2013) argues against the notion that Taiwan is a settler colony, based on the fact that during the beginning period of migration in the seventeenth century, the dominant political power (the Dutch) and the migrants (Chinese) were of different ethnicities. As such, both the Chinese and Indigenous peoples of Taiwan should be considered victims of colonization, rather than ascribing blame to the powerless migrants. Tonio Andrade (2006), on the other hand, sees the power relations in a different light, describing the migration process as ‘Cooperative Colonialism’. Whereas the Dutch lacked the manpower to create a settler colony, the Chinese state was unwilling to lend its state capacity to settle another island, despite the fact that the population’s numbers would easily allow for such a project. The combination of Dutch state support and Chinese population numbers was exactly what allowed for the settlement on Taiwan to flourish. Andrade’s thesis describes the relationship between Dutch administration and Chinese settlers as a far more reciprocal relationship than in Jacobs’ conception. Of course, from the perspective of Indigenous groups, regardless of the power (im)balance between Dutch and Chinese in the seventeenth century, the loss of control over land and the settlement process is an ongoing reality.

As we have seen, debates on colonialism in Taiwan are intricately bound up with conceptions of ethnicity and nationality. However, the existence of such ethnicities should not be taken for granted. Ethnicities are situationally defined, and segregation is often caused by differing socio-economic roles. On the other hand, existing prejudices can also



solidify such roles, creating a vicious cycle of colonial socioeconomic stratification. In order to shed light on existing prejudices and interests in Dutch Formosa, this thesis will explore the representation of both Taiwanese and Indigenous groups in the VOC archives, investigating the division of labour, Dutch interest, and ethnic stereotyping. Naturally, a master's thesis is insufficient to discuss the extent to which image making in and on Dutch Formosa would have affected cultural production back in the Low Countries. Such an undertaking would mean investigating popular culture and textual production in its broadest form for over the entire timespan of the colony on Formosa, and beyond. For the purposes of this thesis, it will suffice to study the discourses being created by the company officials on what they saw at the time as their colonial subjects: the Chinese migrants that were brought over for labour and trading purposes, and the natives that had been living on the island for millennia. Moreover, in line with the theory provided by Mannheim, an attempt will be made to provide a connection between Dutch colonial interests and the images being constructed in these archives.

2. The origins of colonial ideology



The relationship between colonialism and discourse is by now well-established. Not in the least due to its emergence from the field of literary analysis, literary production, whether fictional or not, has proven to be an exceedingly useful lens through which to analyze an ideology. The realization that imperialism is not simply limited to political and military domination opened up a greater realm of study related to not only the precise actions taken by colonial powers, but also the attitudes that accompanied it. As Edward Said phrases it in his *Culture and Imperialism*, ‘Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination: the vocabulary of classic nineteenth-century imperial culture is plentiful with words and concepts like “inferior” or “subject races,” “subordinate peoples,” “dependency,” “expansion,” and “authority.”’ (p. 9). Said’s genealogy of western thought on the Orient, *Orientalism* (1979), has long reached the status of a classic in the field. In the prologue, he sets out the book’s thesis on the West’s long history of prejudicial image-making of the orient – largely focused on Great Britain’s and France’s ideas on their colonies – from the middle ages to the late 20th century. He demonstrates that early writings were often influenced by religious encounters, trade and travel writings. Such early images formed the foundation for the later orientalism that became more formalized and ingrained into the broader culture of the colonial superpowers. Such integration requires, among other material conditions, a large amount of widely circulating texts and personal and financial investment into the colonial hierarchy.

According to Nicholas Hudson, ‘race’ in the modern sense can be understood as a late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century development (1996). In the prior century, race

was still understood as describing lineage, describing either families or animal pedigree. The later conception of race was more closely approximated by the term “nation”, describing a group of people with common traits. A major point of difference, however, is that the conception of race implies a biological aspect underlying these common traits. There is a consensus among scholars that this process of biologisation was propelled by the ideological needs of the colonial project (Ross 1982). This racism solidified and lent an air of scientific credibility to prior statements of national/racial superiority and inferiority of the colonizer and colonized respectively.

Naturally, racism is only one ideological product of the colonial period. In the absence of biological essentialism, we may wonder what other ideological justifications early colonial projects were based on. In a study on Dutch colonial ideology in Africa, Ernst van den Boogaart (in Ross 1982) proposes that prejudices were primarily cultural, rather than biological. the domination and enslavement of South Africans was in the seventeenth justified through the assumption that African cultures were inferior to Dutch culture, particularly in the religious aspect. Enslavement, through increased contact with the superior Dutch, would in the long term improve the African individual’s life as well.

This essentializing tendency can be understood through Homi Bhabha’s concept of “fixity” (2012). Despite its production and popularization during the renaissance and enlightenment, periods that are known for their scientific veneer, he sees the tendency to repetition – rather than increased contact with other peoples and a thorough research process - as the core to the (racist) stereotype.

“Fixity, as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition.

Likewise, the stereotype, which is its major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place’, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated... as if the essential duplicity of the Asiatic or the bestial sexual licence of the African that needs no proof, can never really, in discourse, be proved.” (p. 94-95).

Alatas (2013), studying the origins of the “myth of the lazy native”, ascribes the Southeast Asian native reputation for laziness to the introduction of colonial capitalism, and the plantation economy in particular. Borrowing Karl Mannheim’s conception of ideology, H. S. Alatas (2013) chronicles the development of the ‘myth of the lazy native’ in colonial southeast Asia. In this work, he establishes the connection between colonial governments’ ideologies and interests on the one hand, and the representation of their colonial subjects on the other. This analysis points out that, throughout the course of the 16th and 17th century, numerous travel writings, while displaying other contemporary stereotypes, almost wholly lack the later obsession with Javanese, Filipino, and other ethnic groups’ alleged laziness. The proliferation of writings condemning the laziness of these peoples is largely a product of cultural misunderstanding at best, such as negative judgements about taking a break during the hottest of the day, though this actually made physical labor more bearable and efficient, and worse, a disguised offense at the lack of participation in the colonial economy of extraction and indentured servitude. This condemnation of native laziness as such in reality only condemned the lack of native participation in the most exploitative, dehumanizing industries. The praise of ‘usefulness’ oftentimes reserved for Chinese migrants, on the other hand, often derived from their indentured servitude and forced labour through debt traps, and the ensuing exploitability of such groups.

For the purposes of further exploring the relationship between interest, ideology and colonialism, it is worth returning to the above-mentioned Sociology of Knowledge as developed by Karl Mannheim. Writing in the late 1920's, Mannheim explores the perceived disintegration of the intellectual foundations of society. Only in a society where there is no absolutely dominant class, and is marked by profound conflicts of interest, can the foundations of all ideologies be questioned so thoroughly. Though mostly writing for (to him) contemporary times, it is possible to use his theory in historical contexts as well.

To Mannheim, the very root of ideologies derives from the human tendency to focus on the areas that concern them directly. This focus leads to biases and oversights that actors in different social circumstances would not have missed. Such tendencies become more solidified over time, and when representatives of two different styles of thought encounter one another, their respective biases will lead them to accuse the other of either conscious deceit, or ideological bias. The fact that many social groups, such as classes, have commonly shared experiences leads to a further solidification and increased visibility in these worldviews. Importantly, worldviews do not develop out of nowhere, instead being strongly influenced by whatever worldviews were developed before them, being picked according to situational interests, and further adjusted according to the needs of the moment.

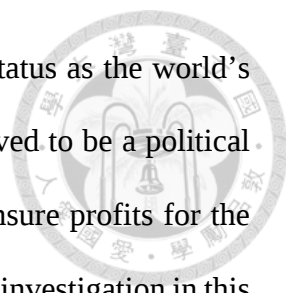
3. Historical background



Civil war and overseas trade

The eventual settlement of the VOC on Formosa was aided by a number of geopolitical factors and economic interests. On the Dutch side, interest in maritime trade with the East Indies can be traced back to the late sixteenth and late seventeenth century. By the early seventeenth century, the United Provinces had been embroiled in a war of independence against the Spanish for several decades. This so-called Eighty years' war (1568–1648) provides the background for the eventual consolidation of the United East India Company – and its subsequent colonial activities. Due to the state of war, political leaders in the Netherlands attached great importance to overseas trade as a means to fund ongoing military actions. The opportunity to make hopes of a flourishing trade empire a reality would come sooner than anyone would expect.

Already in the late sixteenth century did the economic point of gravity shift from the south to the north of the Netherlands. Due to the Spanish blockade of the port of Antwerp, maritime trade with the Netherlands was forced to look northwards for opportunities to profit, which was further hastened by a temporary truce signed between the rebelling provinces and Spain (Geyl 2001, p. 448). This unprecedented chance was grasped with full enthusiasm by the central government, which consolidated the previously dispersed and competing trading companies under a single flag. This consolidated trading empire was then granted monopoly rights for all Dutch trade in the East Indies, the right to conclude trade treaties in name of the crown, as well as the right to annex lands in place of the state through the Charter of 1602 (Meilink-Roelofs 2023, p. 17). One of the factors limiting the profit margins of the pre-charter companies, competition, was therefore eliminated, enabling far greater profits for the VOC's shareholders and directors.

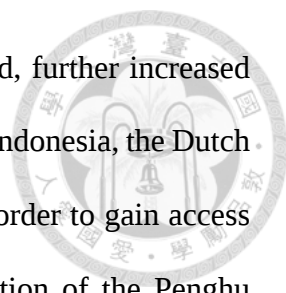


In contrast to what might be expected, considering the company's status as the world's first publicly traded company, its function was from the start conceived to be a political and military extension of the Dutch state, though the best way to ensure profits for the state were hotly debated (Weststeijn 2014). Even in the sources under investigation in this thesis, we can see the tendency to conflate profit for the company and shareholders with profits for the entire country. Moreover, the country's enemies were regarded as the company's enemies, often being simply referred to as 'the enemy' (Den vijandt) in the documents under investigation (Chiang 2010, p. 10).⁵ This conflation of private and public interests only further emphasizes the VOC's role in limiting Spanish and Portuguese profits for the sake of the Dutch politico-economic and military advantage.

Though from inception conceived to be a profit-making machine for the Dutch, the VOC did not follow a simple centralized structure. Shareholders were notoriously powerless, and the ones with actual power were mostly directors from the larger chambers. In order to increase efficiency, trading activities in the East Indies were consolidated under the authority of Batavia in 1619 (Emmer and Gommans 2020, p. 22). This organizational change allowed for easier inter-Asian trade, especially considering the relative availability of silver in this part of the trading empire. The role of inter-Asian, as compared to Asia-Europe, trading activities increased in the following decades, and their relative profits reached their high point in the latter half of the seventeenth century (Parthesius 2010, p. 13).

In order to access silver, especially Japanese silver, the Dutch would need to access goods with a high demand on the Japanese market. This, combined with great demand for

⁵ Even after the treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which signalled the end of the war with Spain and the recognition of the Netherlands' sovereignty, the diaries continue to express a distrust of any forces related to Spain.



Chinese products, including silks and porcelains, from the homeland, further increased the need for access to the Chinese trading sphere. After settlement in Indonesia, the Dutch moved to the Penghu Islands (at the time called the Pescadores), in order to gain access and hopefully a monopoly (Chiang 2006, p. 147). A short occupation of the Penghu islands ended in failure, after which a mandarin called Ongsoepie (Wang Shoubei 王守備) suggested the Dutch relocate to “an island called Tamsui” (Chiang 2007, p. 27). Afterwards, as they were unable to find more suitable harbors, the company’s leaders decided to settle on Tayouan’s sandbank (Chiang 2007, p. 44). Of course, Dutch documentation confirms that trade activities on the Penghu islands covertly continued, as Tayouan harbor’s relatively shallow depth made the nearby islands significant transfer points between larger western ships and Chinese junks.

Taiwan’s relative ‘availability’ for colonization was not solely due to geographical isolation. An analysis by Cheng Wei-Chung posits that the land may have been left alone specifically due to its critical geopolitical position: an incursion into Taiwan by China would have been considered a hostile act by Japan, and vice versa (2014). The Dutch, with their state support and nearby settlement in Batavia, could therefore easily take advantage. The flip side of this situation means that the Dutch lost their strategic advantage once the Chinese did have state support, which led to the takeover of the island by Zheng Chenggong in 1662 (Andrade 2006).

4. A brief overview of the Formosan economy



Pre-Dutch Formosa

Before the arrival of the Dutch, Taiwan was populated by a wide variety of tribes which are currently identified as members of the Austronesian language family. Due to the wide variety of languages, scholars have hypothesized that Taiwan may be the point of origin of this language family, though there is as of yet no consensus (Chou 2016, p. 43).

The primary means of sustenance for the tribes living on Formosa was hunting-gathering. Small-scale agriculture existed for a diversification of the diet, but no surplus was produced. Products included but were not limited to taro, millet, rice, yams and sugarcane. The Formosans consumed all they produced, and were not in the habit of producing surpluses (Shepherd 1993, p. 32). The Dutch did not record much on the matter of traditional land ownership: it is likely that the low population density and abundance of land did not necessitate formal rules of ownership.

In addition to hunting and agriculture, a number of communities existed that made their living off of trade. The archaeological record also points out interaction with Southeast Asia, interactions that may have stimulated the development of iron-working skills (Ibid., p. 28). By the beginning of the 17th century, all of Taiwan's cultures were iron- and bronze-smelting ones, benefitting hunting, agriculture and warfare (Ibid., p. 34).

The beginning of the Dutch colony

Before moving to Tayouan, the Governor General of the Netherlands Indies, Jan Pietersz. Coen sent a number of exploratory expeditions to Taiwan. The first impressions of the people living around Tayouan were hardly promising. The Governor's letters to the Governor General described a warlike people living on a poor land. This poverty further

discouraged the Dutch, as starting a war would bring few profits. By late 1623, a more suitable place had still not been found, leading to a primitive settlement in early 1624.

Though the Dutch, at this point, did not intend to start a war, the warlike peoples living in the neighborhood set fire to the first fort built at the bay (Chiang 2006, p. 87). This was not the only setback these early colonialists had to deal with. Fewer Chinese and Japanese traders frequented Tayouan Bay than the Company had hoped for, and silk prices were far higher than the quality justified. What's more, a lack of personnel was a constant factor inhibiting the Company's possible actions, which was in later years only partially solved through their alliances with surrounding villages. This problem was further exacerbated by the bad environment: Early Dutch settlers fell sick in large numbers. A letter from the 20th of February by de Carpentier reported that the men were only just starting to recover.

By the 15th of August, 1624, the Dutch finally signed the agreement to leave the Pescadores. Having failed to use hard power, their next move would be to use their soft power to make friends among the more powerful Chinese. On the 20th of August, it was determined to use Tayouan as a trade base, and to build a fort befitting one of the Company's outposts. By late 1624, prices started to turn to their advantage, though it was noted that the company had few commodities to trade in return (Chiang 2007, p. 131). A positive development for the security of the environment occurred when the inhabitants of Soulang and Sincan approached the Dutch in an offer of friendship, which the Dutch happily accepted.

In 1625, it was decided to make the Tayouan office into an official colony. The beginning of colonization was slow, as the VOC's officials were primarily focused on trade rather than incursions into the surrounding area. In 1626, another factor limiting movement on the island was added, as the Spanish settled in the north of the island: first in Keelung in

1626, and in Tamsui in the mid-1630's. Overall, we see few altercations between the two, though the Dutch regularly sent out missions to monitor activity around these two bases.

Along with the growth of the Dutch trading base came a growth in the surrounding Chinese community. Upon arrival, the Dutch had already noted a few thousand Chinese living in Indigenous villages. The majority of those were traders and fishermen, living on the island temporarily to profit from the rich waters and active trade in deer skins. After the Dutch settlement, a more permanent community began to develop on the east side of Tayouan Bay, called the Stadt Provintia (Chiang 2006, p. 216). A more invisible process was the increase in Chinese deer hunters, a process which would cause a wealth of conflicts later on.

Though the trading community was growing slowly but surely, The Dutch met with strong resistance from the traders who had frequented Tayouan before the arrival of the Dutch. Not only did the Dutch attempt to monopolize trade of the more valuable goods, their levies were strongly criticized by the Japanese (Chiang 2010, p. 17). Likely not helped by the Company's tendency to ignore these complaints, the incident further escalated. The conflict expanded to involve the Shogunate later that year, and from the reporting by Pieter Nuijts in 1627 involving the Japanese and Indigenous inhabitants we can glean the rivalry between the Dutch and Japanese, all at the same time displaying the curious tendency to dismiss the opinions of their Indigenous subjects. Deciding that the Dutch monopolistic behaviour had gone too far, a group of Japanese merchants had decided to take 16 Indigenous inhabitants of Formosa to visit the Shogun, in order to plead for a Japanese takeover of the island (Shepherd 1993, p. 52). While ultimately resolved diplomatically, the Dutch had already determined guilt and innocence based on stereotypical personality traits given to these two ethnic groups: before the Indigenous peoples had returned home, the Dutch determined that they must have been tricked and

kidnapped by the Japanese (Chiang 2010, p. 41), though this did not prevent them from imprisoning the indigenous collaborators or victims who were later fined and further punished through the destruction of their homes (Shepherd 1993, p. 52). The same primary character trait that was ascribed to the Japanese in this case, namely deceitfulness, can later be seen in depictions of the Chinese as well, indicating the level of distrust merchant populations were met with.

Settlement and land ownership

The earliest years of the colony saw little in the way of land-based expansion. Generally, the Company was most concerned with growing its trading network and finding methods to contact and bribe higher-ups in China's coastal provinces. Besides the growth of the overseas trading network, we see that the VOC attempted to insert itself into the local economy with varying results. In November 1629, the diaries report that all attempts to engage in trade with the island's inhabitants had ended in failure, instead turning into another war. *"In sum, Tayouan's state is currently sober and wretched. May God soon bring improvement"* (Blussé 1986, p.3).

Only in the mid-1630's did the Dutch gain an interest in 'pacifying' peoples based on Taiwan. The impetus for this was twofold: tensions between the Chinese and the Indigenous were growing, and many Chinese hunters had been murdered by non-pacified peoples. The company, determined to correct these vices, organized a punitive expedition, first in 1634 to the village of Mattau (Shepherd 1993, p. 53). This expedition had done so much to intimidate the surrounding villages that nearly the entire surrounding area of Tayouan Bay had requested to become allies (Andrade 2006). In treaties, the Dutch insisted that Indigenous peoples were to protect, rather than harm Chinese hunters, which shows the increasing importance of the Chinese colonists to the local economy (Andrade 2005).

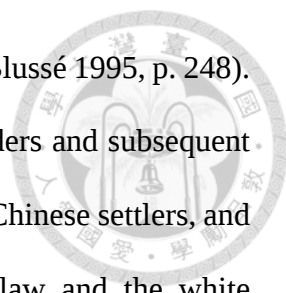
Deer hunting had from inception been a crucial feature of the Formosan economy due to large demand in venison from China and deerskins from Japan, but started to gain more attention in the diaries due to the growing number of conflicts between Indigenous and Chinese hunters. To maximize profits, the company monopolized exports of deer skins, as they were unable to control their trade within Formosa (Ibid.).

In the Late 1630's, we see the appearance of laws to limit hunting, as it was noticed that the deer population was dwindling at an alarming rate. This would not only increase tensions with Indigenous villages in the surroundings, but also hurt the Dutch bottom line (Koo 2011). The changing status of the Indigenous and the Chinese population, and the tense contacts between them deeply influenced which groups the Dutch perceived as having the right to profit from Formosa's natural resources. Tension between Chinese hunters and Indigenous villages was a constant during the period of expansion and punitive expeditions in the late 1630's, coming to a head in the infamous "Favorolang incident", when the inhabitants of Favorolang cut off the heads of a number of Chinese hunters. During this time, the Dutch still condemned these "arrogant actions", placing the well-being of Chinese hunters above the interests of the Indigenous community. This incident is a prime example of the assignment of blame, as the Dutch presumed that the ones who had instigated these actions were a number of Chinese residing in the village, who were assumed to have manipulated the Indigenous villagers into doing their bidding for them. The fact that the Dutch still decided on collective punishment for the Favorolangers as a warning to other troublemakers indicates that at this point in time, the perceived importance of the Chinese population was not only greater, but they were also not considered a threat. An increasing awareness of the need to preserve the commons can be seen in the developments of the early 40's, which banned deer hunting in Favorolang by all Chinese. Through this and similar legislation, we can see how the

VOC's governance compartmentalized the types of economic activity the Chinese and their Indigenous subjects could engage in.

The Dutch and Spanish were not the only colonists settling in Taiwan at the time. Chinese traders and fishermen had a prior history of migration into the island, and within a far wider geographical area. Encounters with these Chinese, and more importantly, the attempts to profit from and limit their economic activities led to the introduction of the deer-hunting permit system. In addition, the Headletter system (*Hoofdbrieffken*) served the dual purpose of tracing the number of Chinese inhabitants while at the same time providing an additional source of income for the Company. At a price of a quarter of a Spanish Real a month, large population numbers such as the 1648 estimate of around fifteen thousand could bring in considerable sums over the course of a single year.

Aside from the major sources of income of deer hunting and trade, the Dutch attempted to stimulate agriculture in all of the areas under the Pax Hollandica. Generally, communities were charged ten percent of their deerskins or grain produce. Though the Dutch called this a voluntary contribution, a token of respect and subordination, villages were regularly subjected to military action in case they failed to produce the proper amount of respect. Though villages were abundant by the time of Dutch arrival, residences gained a more permanent character for the Indigenous peoples during these four decades. During treaties signed during the initial expansion in the 1630's, village communities were forbidden from moving unless given explicit permission by the Dutch. This rule served the double purpose of avoiding migration-based conflicts with neighbors as well as simplifying administration, but also shows the move towards a more settled lifestyle for the natives. The growth of agriculture, the dwindling deer population, as well as the official distribution of hunting fields all served to further restrict movement within the colony and restrict native forms of land-based sovereignty. Failure to follow those



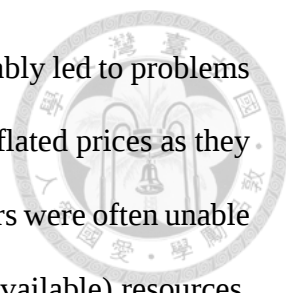
rules led to punishment by the Dutch, usually of military nature (ex: Blussé 1995, p. 248). The parallels here are strong between the formalization of land borders and subsequent intensification of agriculture through imported labour in the form of Chinese settlers, and the North American native experience of dispossession through law and the white takeover of the land based on black slavery (Wolfe 2013). *“settlers not only rely on the labor of variously colonized groups of immigrants, but also acquire territory that has previously been improved by Natives, whether through agriculture (whereby Natives endowed Europe with corn, tobacco, tomatoes, and other produce), through fire-farming (producing grasslands), through fish management [...], through restraining predation (whereby the buffalo and, in their place, cattle prospered), or through any number of other technologies”* (p. 2).

Growing control and increasing familiarity with the land, as well as the need to codify the borders of the various villages, all point to an increasing need to map out the island. In the instructions given to the head of the fort in Keelung, the duty to become familiar with and map out the land in the surroundings was made explicit (Blussé 1995, p. 47), whereas previous mapping efforts had only concentrated on the coastline. These activities provide us with the first known historical maps of the island.

The Company's lack of personnel seriously inhibited the ability to restrict trade between Chinese and Indigenous villagers. After some fruitless attempts, the Dutch came up with a solution that turned their lack of personnel into their favour by 'employing' Chinese to collect taxes in their stead. This leasing (*Pachten*) system sold the rights to levy taxes over certain goods in a limited area for a price that was determined through a bidding process early every year. The implementation of this system meant that the VOC only had to make an effort to collect their revenue once before the start of the leasing period, and afterwards when the lessee had had the opportunity to reap the profits of their purchase, while the Chinese lessee would have an interest in protecting 'their' land from unwanted traders (Strydom 2003, p. 25).



FIGURE 2: MAP OF THE ISLAND FORMOSA AND THE PESCADORES BY JOHANNES VINGBOONS. 1640. IMAGE IN PUBLIC DOMAIN.



Essentially handing over a trading monopoly to an individual predictably led to problems early on. While landholders were to some extent able to cope with inflated prices as they were the ones reaping the profits from this system, Indigenous villagers were often unable to keep up with the rising cost of living and decreasing number of (available) resources. Individual merchants as well saw a dramatic fall in the number of villages they were allowed to trade in (Strydom 2003, p. 26). In order to counter these effects, the VOC introduced a number of strict measures such as a price cap on goods and a common market Indigenous people could freely trade their wares on. Whereas the latter was severely restricted in its efficacy due to its limited scale, the prior greatly restricted the previous in theory unlimited potential profits. Along with a fall in deer skin prices, these measures caused landholders to be unable to repay the debts they had incurred to lease the land in the first place. In Strydom's analysis, these leases and the restrictive measures that followed were the primary cause of the 1652 Quo Fa-Yi rebellion. We will see in the discussion section that, along with the looming threat of Coxinga in the background and its accompanying ethnic tensions, the reputation of Taiwan's Chinese population would never recover from this event.

Expansion and suppression

In the first years after arrival, the Dutch were most concerned with pacifying their surroundings. In October, Governor Gerrit Fredericksen de Witt reported having hardly enough people to defend their own property, which at the time included Zeelandia and Provintia. For safeguarding the surroundings, subjugating a number of surrounding villages and intimidating the rest, he would require only 150-200 men (Chiang 2006, p. 213). Of course, gifting and buying off their surroundings was a common strategy as well (Ibid., p. 216). The lack of personnel was resolved not only through an increase in

Company employees from Batavia in the following years, but also through the creation of alliances in native society (Ibid., 269).

Further expansion was a combination of two factors: punitive motives, and hopes of profit. Mid-1630's movement to the southeast was motivated by rumors of gold to be found in the mountains (Kang 2018). Other expeditions, such as the Favorolang incident, were motivated more by moralistic purposes, though Favorolang's defeat was still considered profitable for both the Chinese and the Dutch (Andrade 2005). At this point, it is important to mention that at no point was all of Taiwan under Dutch control. Even in the 1650's, when territorial expansion had reached its peak, the Dutch continued to advocate during the *Landdag* that their Indigenous allies make an effort to introduce and revert allies to their side (Blussé 1996, p. 314-315).

An extreme case of this punitive motive can be seen in the Lamey massacre. In retaliation for an incident that had happened a decade before, nearly the entire island was either murdered or forcibly transferred to Taiwan and Batavia. The incident received great attention from the governor, who detailed most of the military actions and subsequent transfers of prisoners. The entirely disproportionate act of revenge gives us a great example of not only the othering process against the Lameyans, but also the double standard between the range of acceptable behaviour for the Dutch and the Chinese and Indigenous.

"Lamey" or the "Golden Lion Island" (Gouden Leeuw) is the name given by the Dutch to a small island off the coast from today's Kaohsiung, today known as Lambai island or Xiao Liuqiu (小琉球). In 1622, when the Dutch were still exploring the area around Formosa, the ship the Golden Lion (hence the name) landed on the island and dispatched men to fetch fresh water. The men failed to return, and weather conditions forced the ship

to set off without a proper search. Following this incident, rumors started to circulate that the inhabitants of the island had cannibalized the Dutch intruders. Chiu Hsin-Hui theorizes that this morbid image, in spite of a lack of evidence and contact, may have developed due to the negative image of the islanders among the Company's Chinese contacts (Chiu 2008, p. 51).

After this initial encounter followed a decade without contact between the islanders and the Dutch. Only in 1633 was it decided to send a punitive expedition to Lamey, in order to “devastate and depopulate” the island. Upon arrival of the VOC force, the Lameyans reportedly faced off with the Dutch, while the majority of the people hid in a system of caves that are today known as the “black devil caves” (*Wugui Dong* 烏鬼洞). After the confrontation, the Dutch decided to smoke out the inhabitants, setting fires near the entrances and letting the smoke fill the caves. This, along with a number of later military confrontations with those who had escaped the caves, nearly eliminated the native population from the island in a matter of weeks.

An investigation team sent out on the 22nd of September 1634 came across no more survivors, indicating the population of the island had been reduced to almost nothing. The garrison was subsequently reduced to a mere fifteen men, which was considered sufficient for the few survivors that may have been left (Blussé 1984, p. 274). A resolution early in the next month determined that the empty island was to be leased to some Chinese under certain conditions (Ibid., 275). The following months only describe an occasional transfer of survivors.

One more expedition in late November 1637 found another 63 survivors, who according to the letters sent by the Pangsoya expedition submitted to the Company and volunteered to cultivate the island in their service (Ibid., 385). This request was approved, as the

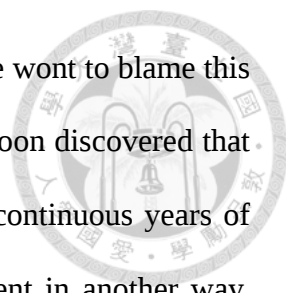
Chinese who had originally leased the island were judged to have neglected the island – and therefore lost their right to the land. The land was to be provisionally handed to the remaining Lameyans – they would be allowed to keep it, under the condition they would be as obedient and would work the land as hard as they had promised. Later that year, the island was again leased to a Han Chinese, with no word of what had happened to break the contract with the Lameyans.

While the Lamey massacre was the most extreme case of violent conflict and territorial dispossession, the fact was that the Dutch period saw a codification of borders between tribes that ultimately led to a more fixed living place for indigenous groups. If they encountered difficulties due to changing ecologies, they were first required to ask the Dutch for permission to move, especially if this move implied infringing upon the territory or hunting ground of other tribes.

Migration and conflict

Though the 30's saw a dramatic increase in interaction with Taiwan's Indigenous peoples and other Taiwan-based economic actors such as Chinese settlers, this does not imply the disappearance of Chinese traders, and traders of other ethnicities from the Taiwanese scene. Records of ships arriving from, and leaving for the coast of Fujian continued strong for another 2 decades. However, the greatest hit the Company's trade took in all of the colonial period was the Chinese civil war between the Ming and the Qing. Though the Qing dynasty is known to have started in 1644, the economic effects only really hit Formosa by the end of the 1640's.

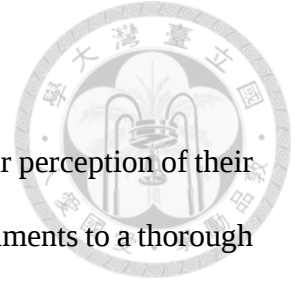
Settlement by the late 1640's started to take on not only larger proportions, but even started displaying patterns that pointed to the intention to settle for a longer period of time. Due to the Qing's conquest of China, the past few years had already seen a decrease in



the arrival of high-quality merchandise. While at first the Dutch were wont to blame this lack of quality goods on a lack of will from the Chinese side, they soon discovered that the crisis had deeper underlying issues. The diaries report several continuous years of disappointing profits. Lack of trade was made up for to some extent in another way, namely through the income brought by the head letters (*hoofdbrieven*) for the new arrivals. These letters cost a quarter of a real per month, and were at first valid for three months. The high point for these head letters were the late 1640's, when its profits reached even higher than the profits from the land leases. and migration numbers started dwindling once the conflict between Zheng Chenggong and the Qing reached a stalemate in the mid-1650's. Shortly before Zheng's attack on Formosa, migration even reached a negative, as many Chinese started sending their wives, who had been brought over during the preceding decade, back to their family in China. After noticing this suspicious trend, the Dutch were quick to put a stop to it, banning all women from travelling to China without accompaniment from their husband or guardian.

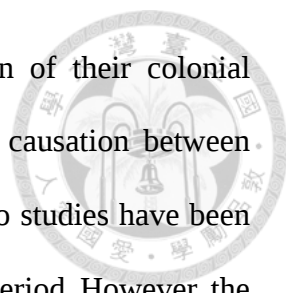
Ultimately, the majority of Formosa's Chinese population consisted of agriculturalists (Chiu 2008, p. 85). Unlike deer hunters and traders, this profession was almost entirely new to the island, as Indigenous communities tended to produce only the amount of grain the community could consume. These farmers, too, were a major source of profit to the company through a variety of means. Taxation on outgoing ships was 10% of cargo for most of the Dutch period, providing a steady supply of grains and fish. Most importantly, villages leased out part of their lands for agriculturists to work on, yearly profits of which varied anywhere between twenty and seventy thousand reals a year. These leases played a major part in the development of an agricultural economy. The lease system would persist into the Qing era, featuring in a majority of historical accounts on the period and general histories alike (Ex: Chou 2016, p. 70-110).

5. Methodology



In order to investigate the connection between Dutch interest and their perception of their various colonial subjects, we have chosen to subject a number of documents to a thorough discourse analysis. The primary subject under analysis was the representation of two groups, both in the virtual and the nominal sense. These two groups represent the two ethnicities with permanent residences under the Dutch during the occupation of Formosa from 1624 to 1662: The Formosans, or Indigenous peoples of Taiwan, and later on, the Chinese.

The reason for the selection of the missives and the diaries is twofold. First, they present the richest textual source on daily life on Dutch Formosa, documenting not only large events, but any smaller details the Governor and the Council of Formosa concerned themselves with. Secondly, they represent an “insider” discourse. In correspondence with outsiders, such as the communication they kept up with various Chinese mandarins, the traders would be restricted in expressions of disdain or insult. The documents selected, however, circulated throughout the Dutch empire, possibly shaping images of the colonial subjects among the Company’s leadership. The documents in question were viewed in Batavia as well as in the Amsterdam and Zeeland chambers of commerce, therefore being among the more influential pieces of literature on the Dutch colonial project in Taiwan. This wide circulation among insiders ensured the widespread standardization of the stereotypes (re)created through these documents. Unsurprisingly, archives are efficient producers of social kinds (Stoler 2010). The barring of outsiders, on the other hand, led to the conviction that the documents would be viewed by the Company’s leadership. This meant that courtesy towards either colonial subjects or other ‘relevant others’ would not have been a restriction on the Council of Formosa’s expressed opinions.



Of course, scholars have previously studied the Dutch perception of their colonial subjects (see Kang 2014), though this study concentrates less on causation between economic relation and representation. To the author's knowledge, no studies have been done on the representation of Chinese living on Formosa during this period. However, the purpose of this thesis is not only to study the perceptions and representations of these peoples, but rather to provide the background and motivations necessary to interpret these texts. Additionally, the comparative character of the study ensures that trends in representation can be distinguished between those shared between all groups living under the Dutch empire, and those limited to a single ethnic group. For this reason, I have attempted a close reading of these documents, paying special attention to the characteristics ascribed to the Chinese and the Indigenous Taiwanese. Most instructive were the passages in which the VOC made attempts to describe the national character of either of these groups, but attention has also been paid to more general representation, the types of passages in which the above groups were generally mentioned.

Sources

Due to the lack of Indigenous written language before the arrival of the Dutch, Dutch records from the 17th century form the primary historical source of information on 17th century Formosa. Besides its importance for Taiwan, the tightly knit regional trading network ensured a wealth of records even in areas that were only briefly visited by the traders. Not only did the Council of Formosa involve itself in trading activities in the areas of Tayouan, Tamsui and Keelung, it was also occupied with colonial rule over the land to the extent they would personally appoint village elders to act as envoys and representatives. Even more, the geographical location ensured that the company recorded their activities in the various wars in the region, against the Spanish, Portugese, Chinese, and even Quinam, to not even speak of the ethnic diversity in the entire trading network.

It is therefore unsurprising that the importance of these documents was recognized in East Asia far before their popularization among Western scholars (Blussé 1986, p. VII). This popularity has also ensured the availability of transcriptions, which I have gratefully made use of during the research process.

Diaries

The primary sources under analysis can roughly be divided into two: the missives and the diaries. For the years 1629 to 1662, the records studied have been the Diaries of Castle Zeelandia (*Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia, volume 1-4*). The diaries were first made available to the general public by the Institute for Dutch History, and published online by the Huygens institute. The diaries provide daily entries on a variety of topics, including but not limited to the weather, traded goods, arrivals and departures, summaries of resolutions, conflicts, both trade-related and military, rumors, records of correspondence, land leases, records of important events such as the “*Landdag*”, policy decisions and summaries of legal decisions made by the Council of Formosa.

This detailed record-keeping not only provides fantastic materials for detailed historical research of any kind and discourse analysis in particular, rather, it gives us the opportunity

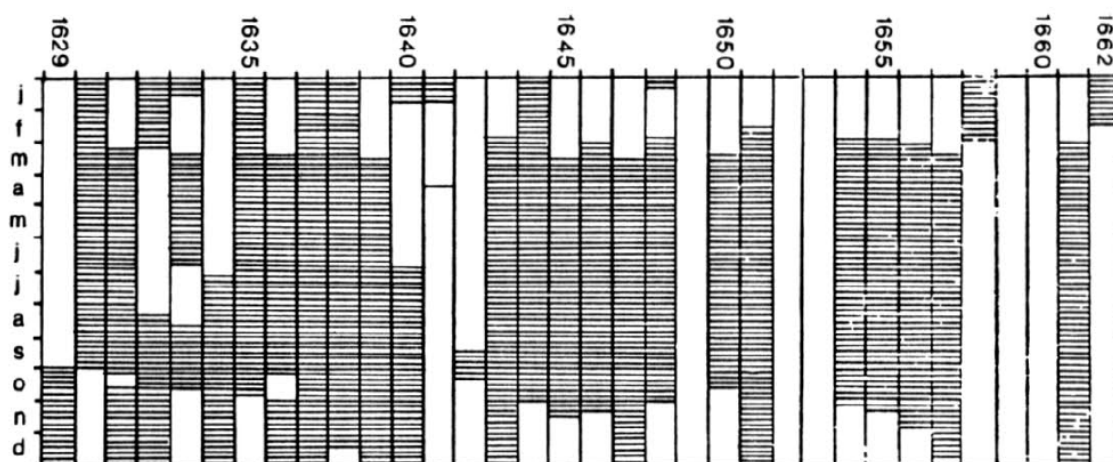


FIGURE 3: THE SURVIVING ENTRIES OF THE DIARIES (BLUSSÉ 1986, P. IX)

to see how much attention certain issues took up and what the day-to-day concerns of the

council were like. The Diaries run from 1629, the year governor Hans Putmans took office, to early 1662, the year the Dutch were expelled from Taiwan by Zheng Chenggong.

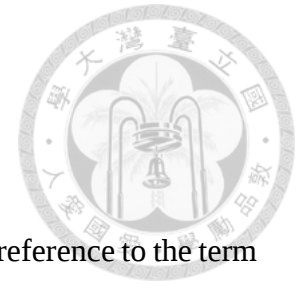


Missives

For lack of more detailed records, the years 1622 to 1629 have been studied through the missives instead. Missives were generally only sent out once every few months, and were meant to inform the Governor-General in Batavia of the general situation in and around Formosa. For this reason, they tend to be of great historical value for those attempting to study the military and political situation in the region. For the study of the representation and stereotyping of the Dutch' colonial subjects, they are less suitable due to their more compact nature, only providing us with which events the governor deemed most important in retrospect, rather than seeing the issues as they came up.

As with the diaries, the missives are of great historical importance, and have therefore been published both in their original language and in translation. Due to greater accessibility, I have opted in my studies to make use of the series edited and translated into Chinese by Chiang Shu-Sheng and published by the National Museum of Taiwan History (Chiang 2007 and Chiang 2010).

6. Analysis



Dutch descriptors of the ethnic landscape

The Dutch, in describing the peoples encountered in Formosa, gave preference to the term nation (*natie*). Such nations could take all shapes and sizes: individual villages were regularly described as a single nation, though larger political units were also recognized. In most cases, Indigenous peoples were referred to not by ethnonyms, but by the village they belonged to. Neither did the Dutch attempt to make classifications based on linguistic traits or architectural and artistic habits. The division of Indigenous Taiwanese into sixteen ethnic groups that we see today (Council of Indigenous People) has only existed since the Japanese period, during which great care was taken to classify imperial subjects in ‘scientific’, ‘objective’ terms (Barclay 2017, pp. 191-192). Both the Qing, Zheng and Dutch regimes only made the basic distinction between Han/Chinese and Indigenous/barbarian, with only a slight degree of distinction between the more and less cultured barbarians (Kang 2014).

This lack of classification is a rather natural one considering the context. Ethnographic details about their neighbours were of very little interest to the Dutch, as their primary objective was to keep the peace on the island (or around Tayouan) in order to engage in Sino-Japanese trade with as few distractions as possible. Ethnolinguistic traits, on the other hand, did not overlap with political-military alliances (Shepherd 1993, p. 32), drastically reducing their use to the newly arrived colonists. Only during the latter half of the Dutch occupation of Formosa did the amount of attention dedicated to the Indigenous peoples increase, providing greater detail on social organization, dress, economic circumstances, and, most importantly, the Dutch’ opinions on the above subjects. However, the fact that they were not considered a priority during the earlier decades of

the occupation does not imply a lack of judgements, and the early descriptions used are still informative in many cases.

There are some indicators that, despite lack of interest in their cultural or ethnic commonalities, the Dutch thought of the Formosans as a single ethnicity (Chiu 2008, p. 35). At the time the Spanish had been defeated and nearly the entire island was under Dutch control, we also see an increase in the usage of the word “Formosans” (*Formosaanen*) to describe all inhabitants of Taiwan as a collective. Prior documentation had focused on the local level, and as island-wide policy would not have been implementable, such an ethnonym would have had very limited usage. On the various iterations of the *Landdag*, while an eye to local situations did not disappear, speeches were still addressed to the entire population, and any evaluations handed out during the rattan ceremony were remarkably uniform.

Skin colour was used to distinguish peoples, but only very occasionally. While this may be called biological racism, its form was rather different from the four or five races we popularized in the 19th century (Hudson 1996). The first passage that explicitly mentions skin colour in as a relevant factor in the missives can be found in Pieter de Carpentiers letter to the Governor General in Batavia. Reporting on the state of the fort in Pescadores, along with two ships, he mentions that the ship *Cleen Tolen* is currently manned by “117 people and 17 blacks” (*117 personen ende 17 swarten*). This understanding of blackness is broader than contemporary classifications, as people from southeast Asia (Blussé 1995, p. 93), as well as Taiwan’s Indigenous people (Ibid, p. 320) were all considered ‘black’ – apparently denoting any people of colour. The only ‘whites’ mentioned in Taiwan were the Dutch, Spanish, and other European Company employees.

When it comes to the Chinese side of the equation, the Dutch recognized far less cultural (or national) diversity. The Chinese were described as a single nation, usually in negative terms. For example, after another failed attempt to open the Chinese empire for a trade monopoly, the council received correspondence from the Chinese side questioning their reasoning. In describing their response, the diaries display one of the most feverish passages on China and the Chinese character written during the entire stay in Formosa:

“Receiving news from Joxwan, a Chinese living in Tayouan, with a missive signed by the 21 foremost captains of the king’s armada, in which was written to us libelously and villainously, who it was possible that a dog could rest its head on the king’s resting place, what moved us to want to take their country [...] God give, as we ask him, victory to glory of His Great Name and general wellbeing over this disloyal and sodomistic nation (Translation by author⁶) (Blussé 1986, p. 136-137).

The following passage was written in response to a more diplomatic incident. The head of the ship Wieringen was accused of the theft of 1900 silver reals from another ship returning from Manila. Even a case which had yet to be investigated – meaning the Dutch had no way of knowing the guilt or innocence of their comrade – elicited such a strong response:

“[...] Whatever the case may be, we will see with the coming of the ship. As things are, we can see from this that the Chinese bar us from trade, because 1900 reals had been taken out of one of their ships (which is not yet certain). Then what would have happened if their people or goods had been damaged? Indeed, this is a sad

⁶ All early modern Dutch passages from Blussé 1986, 1995, 1996, 2000 and Chiang 2007, 2010 in this thesis have been translated by the author of this thesis.

development for the Company, that such a trade as the Chinese one must be found with such a disloyal, treacherous, fearful, and lying nation” (Blussé 1984, p. 54).

As we will see, negative judgement on the Chinese nation were usually expressed in response to setbacks. However, this does not imply that more positive encounters elicited more positive responses. The more fruitful interactions were instead responded to by praying and thanking or praising god (*God loff*).

Self and others in Dutch Formosa

It would be fair to say the VOC saw itself as a representative of the Dutch state in Formosa. Not only did they see themselves as engaging in trade for the sake of the United Provinces (Weststeijn 2014), equating profit for the company as profit for the Netherlands, they even engaged in unprofitable activities that are more closely connected to colonial states’ ideologies of civilizing missions and religious conversion. Another aspect in which we can see the overlap in state and company identity is the oaths of fealty they required their Formosan subjects to swear. Some oaths were sworn to the governor-general and the East India Company (Blussé 1986, p. 434), while other times alliances were said to be between a concerned village and not the VOC, but the United Netherlands (Blussé 1986, p. 333). This overlap of identities is unsurprising considering the historical background of the company, its responsibilities and privileges as set out in the charter, and the assumption of shared profit between company and patria. After all, collective identities form naturally when involved actors see themselves as sharing common goals of a ‘common fate’ (Wendt 1999, p. 343, 349-353).

This state identity, even in the case of non-state actors, has far going consequences in the case of a study of Dutch identity. As a general rule, ‘relevant others’ tend to be used as a foil for the self – which includes collective identities (Jenkins 1994). Naturally, colonial

powers are no exception to this rule: Said's famous critique of orientalism lays out clearly the tendency of the colonial powers to use the 'Orient' as a mirror for the self, defining 'them' according to what 'we' are not, and vice versa. Rather than the 'West', the VOC would use their nation-state as their primary defining feature of identity, and could use their colonial subjects as a mirror for what they did not see themselves as.

Hierarchical consciousness

Before we address the representation of any particular group, we will start with a general observation on the hierarchies established in colonial societies. According to Edward Said, the "great cultural archive" is

"[...] where the intellectual and aesthetic investments in overseas dominions are made. [...] Above all, your sense of power scarcely imagines that those "natives" who appeared either subservient or sullenly uncooperative were ever going to be capable of finally making you give up India or Algeria. Or of saying anything that might perhaps contradict, challenge, or otherwise disrupt the prevailing discourse"
(Said 1994, p. 20).

Most essentially, the ubiquity of imperial culture ensured that this colonial cultural archive was entrenched deeply into people's minds and went largely unquestioned. By the 19th century, the discourses that had developed around this cultural archives we so common that *"Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand"* (Said 1994 p.7).

Though the biologisation of racism would not yet happen for another one and a half century, the Dutch had clearly developed a cultural archive with the Dutch on top of the colonial hierarchy. According to Alatas (2013), colonial societies in southeast Asia

generally followed the same pattern: On top of the hierarchy was the white race, followed by Chinese migrants. Only at the bottom of the pyramid could one find the natives of any given society (p. 19). This hierarchy is reflected in the economic circumstances of these groups as well. At the basis of this hierarchy is the idea that peoples can be divided into more or less civilized groups, where the western world was the most ‘civilized civilization’, followed by the Chinese empire (sometimes including other great Asian empires), while native society in the colonies was denigrated to the inferior civilizational stage of barbarism or even savagery.

The civilizational hierarchy in Dutch Formosa much followed the same pattern. Kang (2014) extensively studies the usage of the term “savages” (*wilden*) in the company’s archives. The Chinese, on the other hand, are never described in such terms, despite a similarly great prevalence of negative stereotypes. They were rather seen as trading partners who, despite not being on equal footing, did not require thorough education. We will see that the majority of Chinese residents were not subjected to ‘civilizing’ Christian education in the same manner the Indigenous peoples were. A few sparse examples do show that the Chinese culture was placed below the Dutch one. First, though the Chinese community in Formosa had a rather temporary character, some Chinese men took on wives in their host community.

Economically, the Chinese were often better off than the Indigenous inhabitants. Communications concerning the leasing of agricultural fields were written in Dutch and Chinese, without interference from the Indigenous inhabitants. Though hunting rights were severely restricted, and lands had to be leased from either the company or the Indigenous inhabitants for any Chinese to engage in agriculture, the traders still formed the ‘middle class’ of Formosan society. By the early 1650’s, the Chinese were already described as “the only bees in Formosa that give honey”. Such evaluations show us the

rising status of the Chinese on the island, which was largely due to their economic productivity. Due to this economic productivity, but also due to their prior history with the Chinese nation, the Dutch had a more equal relationship to the Chinese traders in their colony than to their Indigenous subjects. When attempting to convince either party to join their cause, the Governor would use similar language, but the most violent exploitation was limited to the Indigenous population.

What's more, the Dutch were not satisfied to rule simply in force. Though they subjected most villages to violent punishments during the initial expansion, the Company was not satisfied to have their authority rest solely on their military might. Upon multiple occasions, they required their Indigenous subjects to assure them that they did not accept Dutch rule only out of fear, as the Dutch distrusted peace that was brought about only by threat. Despite this aspiration towards a perception of legitimacy among their subjects, force was the primary means through which the Company brought allies under its wing.

“We forced a certain inhabitant that had met us along with other villages lying next to the Calabcab river and led us along the beach on a long detour, to lead the right way to the villages as was required of him. Despite the elders that had met with us yesterday and voluntarily accepted the proposal, and had paid with pigs, but we can tell that their friendship and obedience cannot but have been caused by our weapons, and consequently, will last no longer than our presence here” (Blussé 1995, p. 348).

One more linguistic particularity that stands out in the missives and diaries is the tendency to describe relations with any surrounding nation as either ‘friends’ or ‘enemies’. When describing the other as friends, however, it appears the Dutch were unconcerned about the implication of equality this word usually carries with it.

An overview of Indigenous representation in Dutch Formosa

Aside from the aforementioned tendency to describe Formosa's Indigenous peoples as savages (to the extent 'savages' and 'inhabitants' could be used interchangeably), the Dutch provide us with a few qualifiers to what this 'savagery' implies. On various occasions, especially during encounters with new tribes, we can see descriptions of the Dutch first impressions, including which behaviours they judged would be in need of correction.

According to Kang (2014), the degree to which the Dutch recognized a degree of civility among the Indigenous was largely informed by the extent to which these groups conformed to the capitalist trading company's general expectations of economic behaviour. Actions such as ignoring or ripping up contracts would earn a group a negative evaluation, while conforming to these agreements would look relatively civilized in the Dutch's eyes. By these standards, writing in 1636, the people of Lonckjouw were judged to be the most civilized peoples encountered in all of their colonial tenure. However, colonial capitalism was not the only standard against which the VOC measured their encounters.

Heathenism

Considering the extent that Dutch identity in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century was bound up with Protestant Christianity, it is unsurprising that religious conversion became a prominent aspect of the VOC's colonial project. The Formosans' perceived heathenism was already from the start a point of fixation: Marinus Sonck in March 1625 already requested, along with an increase in workers, to be sent two or 3 preachers, "[...] so that God's name is spread here, and the barbarian inhabitants of this island may be added to the number of Christians." This request was obliged some time

later, and in 1629, the famous preacher Candidus was the first of these missionaries to reach Formosa. This number remained limited, as during the full 38 years of official settlement, the total of missionaries at one point active on the island only reached 32 (Huging 2015). At first, such activities were funded by the Company, and even later on the proper treatment of the missionaries was still monitored by the VOC. As an example, in 1630 the governor took it upon himself to inspect the housing being built for the missionary, showing just how high of a standing the missionaries could have.⁷

Christianity was generally seen as another qualifier for the status of ‘civilization’. Heathenism and barbarism were often textually conflated, and Christian education was a major component of the Dutch ‘civilizing process’. On the *Landdag*, a major occasion in addressing the population under their control, the diaries describe the attending elders as “*although part Christian or at least educated in our religion, for the most part heathens, yes, even barbarians* (Blussé 1995, p. 482). Apparently very happy with their eloquence, the same passage was repeated on the next *Landdag* (Ibid., p. 558).

The Christian community played an integral part in the Formosan colony. Though preachers tended to stay in the area around Tayouan, school teachers were sent out to villages in order to teach both adults and children a variety of disciplines, most importantly being the Dutch language, and prayer. Since interests between the Company and the church were generally assumed to overlap, the procurement of funds was

⁷ The standing of the missionaries as compared to the political representation was an issue in itself. Though they were generally not in conflict with the highest authorities on the island, the year 1657 saw the appearance of friction between a number of missionaries and teachers, and the politics on the other hand. This was apparently caused by disagreement about their ranks: missionaries tended to be recruited from high ranks within the company, as they required a sound secular and religious education for their teaching activities. The politics did not generally have so strong a basis. However, as the politics were officially ranked higher, confusion ensued over the respect due to both positions.

generally not a problem, though in times of shortage of cash the secular company apparatus tended to prioritize itself (Fetzer 2019). The Calvinist company leaders assumed that Christian education would improve the civilizational level of the natives, and therefore improve the ease of interaction – and ease of profit (Fetzer 2019). In order to get started on this project, Martinus Sonck wrote in 1624, that

“We ought to have several of the Company’s youth learn the language of this land, as well as the Chinese one, both spoken and written, the first of which we shall have some boys practice.” (Chiang 2006, p. 154)

Despite this passage’s mention of the Chinese language, the same degree of fervour displayed for the conversion of Indigenous peoples was never shown for the education of the Chinese. Only in the case of Chinese men that had married Christian Indigenous women were they absolutely required to be religiously educated.

Shortly before Zheng Chenggong’s attack, it was decided that certain crimes should receive a standardized punishment. The first of those was the crime of idolatry, and since the diaries never speak of the Indigenous religions, it is interesting that the VOC felt the need to ban something never spoken of before. This may be interpreted as a need to reinforce the national identity the VOC had been introducing to the Formosans. According to Daniel Druckman (2001), collective identities (such as nationalism) are *“an imminent capacity that takes on manifest forms in response to external forces. This view presumes a prior cultural sensibility, a well of latent sentiments, a shared heritage; a primordial infrastructure, as it were, from which appropriate signs and symbols, political practices and ethnic emotions, may be extracted when the situation demands it.”* According to this view, the outside threat of Zheng Chenggong had stimulated nationalist feelings in the VOC, leading them to manifest in the form of an enforcement of roles

presumed to be inherent to the Dutch nation. These forms were then forced onto their subordinate Formosans:



“The honoured council of Formosa has now discussed the matter of fixed punishments for various crimes and hideous sins, which are among the inhabitants of the rural areas in villages frequently committed. Among these are idolatry, incest, adultery, whoredom and drunkenness, have made a fixed decision and formulated the following punishments on these crimes. On idolatry:

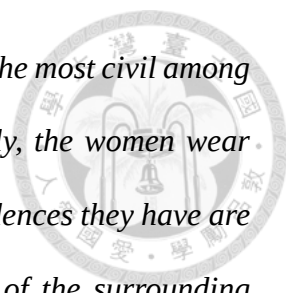
Offenders ought to be flogged severely with a rod and for the time of five succeeding years to be chained to work on general projects, as well as having the instruments, whether clothing or jewellery used for these horrors, banned and burnt.

Also, we shall take the primary instigators and servants of such cursed idolatry as well to be severely flogged, and shall for all time be banned and taken away, not only from their place of residence but from all of the land” (Blussé 2000, p. 292).

To an extent, we can see a generational gap in the efficacy of this Christian education, or at least the degree to which the success of this civilizing mission was recognized. While elders were often criticized for being lax in their educational duties, young warriors were happy to fight for the Dutch as it implied material rewards and societal advancement.

Sexual Promiscuity

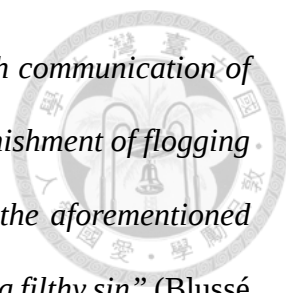
Modesty was another standard by which the Company judged the level of civilization of a particular nation. In the below passage, written in 1636, the aforementioned nation of Lonckjouw was judged to be civilizationally superior based on among others the women’s style of dress:



“These inhabitants of Lonckjouw are according to Lamphack the most civil among those seen on the island Formosa. They are dressed properly, the women wear skirts to their ankles and also cover their breasts, but the residences they have are small and ugly. They are of whiter colour than the people of the surrounding villages, and the head, according to Lamphack, has over a hundred people that are fed from his table.” (Blussé 1986, p. 244).

“This nation is, as it appears, much more civil in their behaviour as compared to their surrounding villages, also of better colour and of smaller stature, keep their authority better among their lesser, and the brother of the aforementioned Lamlock rules in sovereignty over 16 villages, each with their respective head appointed by him. He is served by a great many servants, which are always around him, and do not go around naked as other black nations, but are dressed, and the women even keep their breasts covered; whoredom and adultery are seen as severely injurious, and none are allowed to marry more than one woman; the head having passed away, the oldest son will succeed his position, and will be treated with the same respect as the one that has passed. In case that, in this place (where few deerskins are to be found), there is anything remarkable for the company to be done, there does appear to be something fruitful to be done with this nation. The Almighty may give, however, that our small work in spreading the honour of his name, the conversion of these heathens may be of service and profit for the general Company” (Blussé 1986, p. 250).

The above passage is the first time the issue of infidelity, promiscuity or, as the Calvinist Dutch would have it, sexual promiscuity or ‘whoredom’ (*hoererije*) is addressed. During the era of increasing control over Indigenous society, such behaviours were also subjected to punishment:



“On the people there convicted of whoredom, they have (with communication of the elders) as ordered on the 22nd of August, exercised the punishment of flogging in the presence of the people of the village, through which the aforementioned student, as expected, awakened to a disgust and alarm of such a filthy sin” (Blussé 1995, p. 431).

Standardized punishments for whoredom (*hoererije*), adultery (*overspel*), and drunkenness were instituted at the same time as the official punishment for idolatry:

“Second, the punishment for incest has been formulated as such, that those who are engaged in its most severe form, will be subjected to a severe flogging, as well as for the time of six years

Third, whoever shall be found in adultery or carnal mixing with one who is in marriage bound to another, man or woman, having committed this sin, shall first be severely flogged before being chained for three consecutive years as before.

Fourth, whoredom or carnal mixing with man or woman, both outside of the bounds of marriage, whoever is found to have overstepped thus, the woman shall for the first time be brought forward, take ten reals from her jewellery, and the man an equal amount from his skins or paddy, and if once again found will be subjected to corporal punishment after approval by a judge” (Blussé 2000, p. 292).

There are a great number of parallels between the depiction of Indigenous peoples in Taiwan and the depictions of Indigenous people of the Americas as analysed by Silvia Federici (2014). Both cases justify expropriation of land and subordination of labour through images of witchcraft, idolatry, promiscuity and heathenism (p. 221).

Drunkenness

The yearly *Landdag* presents the modern-day historian a veritable treasure trove of what the Dutch imagined the Formosans to be doing wrong in their society. The regular reports on the *Landdag* provide us with information on exactly which behaviours the Dutch hoped to correct. Though reports were often lacking in details, every few villages had their own appointed elders, in the case of larger villages this number could run up to two or three. Official tenure for elders was one year, but they would generally be reinstated if the Dutch were satisfied with their leadership.

Landdag reports have generally been very well preserved, speaking of the proceedings of the day. The rattan distribution ceremony mentions for each village (cluster) what individual elders were praised, criticized or dismissed for. The primary reason for criticism was most often the failure to attend the Landdag. The second most common reason, however, was drunkenness. Elders were required to give a good example to the younger generations, and their drinking habits remained a point of fixation for the Dutch. Notice also that in the below passage we see a tendency toward dehumanization:

“9. All elders should be seriously exhorted, to abstain from drunkenness and to be in this proper sober predecessors to the young, as well as that our inhabitants in general had complained that some of them in drunk drinking feast to such an extent that they are more like animals than humans, which then after time passes causes the emergence of dawdling of that what is right, murders, as well as many other misfortunes. It should be believed that if not letting up in this behaviour, we shall exercise grave punishment (Blussé 1996, p. 186).

Similar to other passages from speeches during the *Landdag*, this passage was repeated multiple times over the years. However, unlike the many cases surrounding the previous

topic of promiscuity, the actual cases in which extreme alcoholism was either discovered or punished are in short supply.

Like the above vices, drunkenness was finally given a standardized punishment in 1661:

“Finally, those who have initiated meals or meetings in order to drink (without having gained leave for such) will be charged thirty goatskins, that is to say the instigator or host, or the value thereof, to be given to his company” (Blussé 2000, p. 292).

Violence

The most common trait ascribed to the Indigenous people of Taiwan was a tendency toward violence, a representation that held up for the entirety of the Company’s tenure. The majority of passages involving Indigenous people include some form of violent interaction, whether between Dutch and Formosan, different groups of Indigenous peoples, or Indigenous and Chinese groups. First impressions included writings on the violent habits of the natives, a relatively egalitarian societal structure, as well as the status accorded to successful warriors:

“[...] none of them is willing to submit to a maser, consistently engage in Indigenous warfare, and the one that manages to gain the greatest amount of heads, which most do through wiles and lies, is the one accorded the greatest authority” (Chiang 2006, p. 135).

Because of this authority given to the greatest warrior, concluded Sonck, friendship with these savages would require a combination of gifts and intimidation tactics. Rule through fear remained a constant throughout these four decades. Examples range from relatively innocuous tactics, such as using cannon salutes to intimidate visitors during the *Landdag*

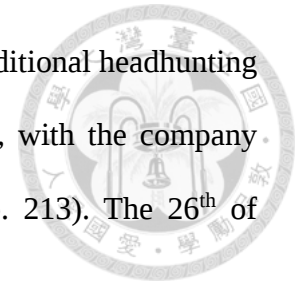
(Blussé 1995, p. 1, p. 238, etc.), to explicitly using intimidation tactics to prevent further villages from rebelling in 1657:

“Aside from these inconveniences, sickness and deaths among ours, the goal of the Company has been achieved: the stubbornness has been punished, and with this the obedient have been given an example and protected, and the confused business on the north side has been restored well” (Blussé 2000, p. 245).

As the VOC took over Formosa in name of the Dutch states, the Company attempted to gain control over the use of legitimate violence as well (Chiu 2008, p. 76), as befits an actor representing a state. Despite having condemned Indigenous violence in earlier texts, Indigenous allies played a pivotal role in the stabilization of the Dutch colony in earlier years, and in its punitive expeditions in later years when the majority of the island was already under Dutch control.

While this representation is a natural product of the Dutch desire for control over violence in the area, this representation also serves an ideological function. Combined with the assumption of lesser worth, the image of the ferocity of natives easily lent itself to usage of these very natives for the purposes of warfare instigated by the Dutch. As the Dutch present on the island at a time were rather few, the company was often forced to make use of Indigenous people for military purposes. With a reputation for ferociousness, such a role would be easily justified (Oostindie and Steijlen 2021). As long as it was assumed that they did not mind fighting dangerous battles, the Dutch would have no qualms about placing their native allies on the frontlines during conflicts, which we see coming true on multiple occasions. As the Dutch would only have several hundred employees on Formosa at a time, any occasional rebellion would be primarily fought by the Company’s Indigenous allies. Lamey is a prime example, to the extent that Hsin-Hui Chiu (2008) sees

the VOC-led raids on Lamey and other areas as a replacement of traditional headhunting practices (p. 76). Later years even saw the return of headhunting, with the company offering a modest reward for every enemy head (Blussé 1996, p. 213). The 26th of February 1646 saw the following passage:



“Good weather, wind mostly northern. Received today a letter of the theologian⁸ Hans Olhoff of Vorrovorongh which was written yesterday, of which we learnt that those of Calenet, Karittongangh and Loepit have attacked the enemy village of Suffungh and have gained from this two men’s and three women’s heads. From this, the Verivuniers have gained the set reward from aforementioned theologian. Aforementioned Olhoff has gained tidings in Verovorongh that the Lonckeouwer is simultaneously preparing ten other villages in tools and weapons to also attack the enemy villages Tarrikidick, Ouaber and Suffungh” (Blussé 1996, p. 1).

The intention to place natives on the front lines in order to avoid deaths in the Company’s ranks is generally not explicit, though the below passage is more frank about their intentions:

“[...] while those of Batseral acted up so violently that he will be allowed to give the Pimers and our friendly villages leave to freely make war as long as this may happen without danger. The mentioned sergeant or corporal may as well station 10 soldiers in Sappat so that our friends may be fearful of fleeing, and may be further motivated to free the Batseralders; but be careful in so doing in order to not lightly spill Dutch blood” (Blussé 1996, p. 31).

⁸ Note on the translation: The Dutch word used was *Proponent*, originally referring to a student of theology. Rather than the English equivalent, the author has opted for the somewhat simplified translation of ‘theologian’, to avoid confusion with the current-day English usage of the word ‘proponent’ as an advocate for a certain cause.

Common purpose

We see in the diaries an attempt to construct a common purpose with the Indigenous, strongly related to the civilizing mission. The Dutch emphasized repeatedly their good intentions to improve the lives of their Indigenous subjects during their rule. For this, their subjects ought to be grateful and pay their due recognition. The below passage noted down on the 11th *Landdag* (1654) is only one example of what was repeated on every such occasion:

“And the Company's intention lies only in making them the longer the happier, in order to, under our rule and obedience, be brought into a better state than before. The favour and great kindness they ought not to underestimate, but ought to always recognize with due gratitude.” (Blussé 1996, p. 307)

Not only did the Dutch occupation of the island work in favour of their subjects, they even purported to have common interests. What those interests were remains unsaid, but what is certain is that the Dutch saw their presence as a blessing for their native inhabitants. Another benefit for which the villagers were expected to pay was the stationing of preachers and school teachers in their villages. As these people concerned themselves with the education of both adults and children, they would be expected to be provided with housing and sustenance. The burden of both fell onto their communities, with the exception of years when a pandemic and food shortage had left various villages on the brink of starvation. To decrease the villagers' burden, the council decided to cover the cost of living for the teachers and other religious personnel, and made sure to emphasize that the Formosans ought to feel very grateful for this generous gesture.

Curiously, no basis is established for why the Formosans ought to accept this common purpose. Colonial societies will sometimes establish historical ties to serve as a basis for

their political unity, such as the growing popularity of the concepts ‘Indo-European’ and ‘Aryan’ in the latter half of the 19th century in Britain. Postulating a common descent would give these colonial powers a justification for their imperial expansion, though additional reasons would have to be given to justify the domination of one side of the ‘brotherhood’ over the other (Leopold 1974). No such attempts were made during the Dutch occupation of Formosa, aside from the implicit message that the VOC were better rulers and the ‘heathens’ should not be left to their own devices. Rather than a brotherhood, Dutch Formosa was clearly based on a more paternal self-image.

Childlikeness

The depiction of Indigenous peoples as childlike may at first seem contradictory to the prior dangerous and violent image. The direct comparisons are also few, as at no point the Indigenous peoples were directly compared to children. My choice to include this trait in the list of Indigenous representation may therefore appear somewhat strange. However, it is well-known that the image of the child is a powerful force in the ideology of empire, allowing for a seeming resolution to the contradictions generally seen in colonial ideologies (Jacobson 2000). With the footnote that this particular trait is not explicitly mentioned, I would like to call attention to the following passage concerning the ‘voluntary’ recognition:

“[...] for although it is not of importance to the Company, as twice the amount of the recognition is lost on a single Landdag, spent on a variety of necessities, and aside from the excessive costs spent on the improvement of their churches and schools as well as the upkeep for the general peace and quiet all over the land, as they all know, they ought to trust that the bringing of recognition serves in the first place to assure us of their willingness, obedience, and childlike fondness” (Blussé 1995, p. 468).

Rather than being described as childlike by themselves, the Dutch were actively attempting to foster a parent-child like relationship, where the parent was responsible for education and nurture, but also domination through force. The childlike natives owed affection and obedience to their 'parents'. We can see this pattern reflected in the many exhortations to obedience, as well as the patronizing tendency to decide on the 'common good' without consultation from the other party.

The *Landdag* as a case study in colonial Formosan hierarchies

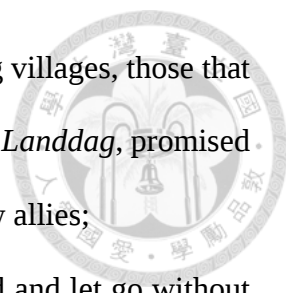
A famed example of the ritualization of this colonial hierarchy is the *Landdag* (Land day, Country day), studied in detail by Tonio Andrade (1997). This day celebrated the unity of Formosan colonial society, and was held on separate occasions in the south, north and later on in the east. The ceremony ideally consisted of a gathering of all the invited elders, though the Dutch were often disappointed by the reality that many elders were prevented from attending due to sickness or old age. After the gathering followed a speech, which was interpreted into the various Formosan languages for the benefit of the invited elders, in which the governor explained the great good done by their ownership of the land of Formosa (Blussé 1996, p. 307). Hereafter followed the ceremony in which elders were appointed or fired, the authority being symbolically conferred through the handing over of a rattan staff and ceremonial cloth. The ceremony of the distribution of the rattan staffs often included firings or criticisms due to the holders of the staffs not attending the ceremony for several years straight, providing a rich resource for those studying Dutch perceptions and expectations of the Formosans. Those who were handed the staffs were symbolically able to borrow the authority of the Dutch, being afforded higher esteem than their peers from the same village, but only for the duration of a year until the next *Landdag*. After this ceremony, another speech was held to explain the terms on which colonial

Formosa was to function. These so-called ‘articles’ from the 11th *Landdag* (1654) can be summarized as follows:



1. The staffs were to be kept for a year, and to be returned at the next *Landdag*;
2. The holders of the staffs were to attend the next *Landdag*, if prevented by sickness or otherwise, the staff was to be returned by a friend or servant;
3. The staffs could not be lent out or handed over to others by the holder's authority, and should be carefully kept to not be lost;
4. The villagers were not to initiate war or conflict with other villages, but were allowed to defend themselves in case they were attacked first;
5. Villagers were only allowed to hunt in their own and on shared hunting grounds;
6. Moving home was forbidden for both individual families and villages, unless explicit permission was given;
7. Chinese without silver permits were to be arrested and taken to the castle, for which the inhabitants would be rewarded;
8. Indigenous people were to lend military aid to the Dutch whenever called upon, *as the Chinese were not to be trusted*;
9. Inhabitants were to treat both the politics⁹ and the preachers stationed in their village with respect;
10. The teaching of the Christian religion was to be respected, and villagers were responsible for part of the cost of the building of churches, the provisions given to teachers, etc.;
11. Elders were expected to give a good example for the younger generations, especially considering the tendency towards excessive drinking;

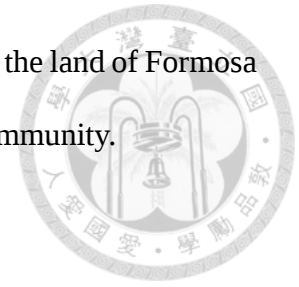
⁹ The Company stationed two types of authority in villages or village clusters: The political representation, and the religious leaders. This political representation was referred to as ‘politic’ (*Politiek*).

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12. Inhabitants were asked to bring those from their neighbouring villages, those that had not yet made peace with the company, to the castle or the *Landdag*, promised to receive them warmly and reward those introducing the new allies;
 13. Even those from enemy villages would be warmly welcomed and let go without harm if they decided to visit the *Landdag*;
 14. Dogs were to be chained so as not to cause harm to livestock and take care in the burning of hunting grounds to avoid damaging Chinese rice and other crops;
 15. Elders were expected to ensure timely delivery from village to village of the company's packages and correspondence;
 16. In addition to the above articles, follow orders from the resident politic;
 17. Follow the above articles and show sincere loyalty and submission to the company;
 18. If anyone has any complaints, address them at the current meeting, so that they can immediately be justly addressed;
 19. Lastly, the *Landdag* was to be closed off with a feast before everyone's return home (Blussé 1996, p. 313-315. Emphasis by author).

Not only does the above passage display the intention to a thorough interference in the lives of Indigenous Formosans, but more importantly establishes a strong hierarchy. Indigenous inhabitants should ask for permission before taking actions of great importance, such as moving the location of the village or initiating wars with neighbours, and the Dutch and their representatives should be treated with respect on all occasions. It is unsurprising that the diaries record a number of abuses of power of those stationed in remote villages which were only discovered at a much later date.

Unsurprisingly, the Chinese were largely excluded from these festivities, only being invited in after the ceremony and in time for the feast. This, it was explained, was because the occasion was meant for the Formosans to show their subjection (Blussé 1995, p. 242).

Thus, the *Landdag* served at the same time to display Dutch rule over the land of Formosa while at the same time excluding the Chinese from the Formosan community.



An overview of Chinese representation in Dutch Formosa

Compared to the Indigenous inhabitants of Formosa, the Chinese nation appeared far earlier in the VOC's correspondence. This is unsurprising, considering that the reason for settling in Tayouan in the first place is to engage in trade with the Chinese empire. This goal was never lost sight of, though trade took a backseat during the pacification of the 1630's as well as the economic crisis in China following the Ming-Qing wars.

Chinese workers played an essential role in the Formosan economy. In the early years, they often played the middlemen in communication between the Dutch and the Indigenous inhabitants, as the Dutch did not yet have sufficient linguistic experience in the Austronesian languages spoken on Taiwan for direct communication with their subordinates. Besides interpreters and traders, we see along with the growth of the community around Provintia and Tayouan an increase in craftsmen, agriculturalists, and any other occupations that an urban community could not be without (Pol 2000). However, the groups most represented in early years were the interpreters, mandarins and pirates, whose untrustworthy reputation continued to echo throughout depictions of the Chinese nation throughout the entire duration of the colony.

Trade

The majority of representation of Chinese people is therefore predictably related to trade. As the diaries recorded arrivals, departures, purchases and sales, most mentions of 'Chinese' are traders. In such passages, little to no emphasis is placed on the character or characteristics of those involved. Despite the businesslike tone of the texts, it is telling that the Company felt the need to record the ethnicity of the traders on newly arriving

ships quite so often. A reading of the early missives (Chiang 2007 and Chiang 2010) reveals the value the Dutch placed on trade with China, for which they were willing to use any means necessary: “[...] *Things being as they are, we shall with any possible means, either with friendship or with war, (so god wills it) attempt to obtain trade relations.*” (Chiang 2007, p. 10).

These words came true on multiple occasions. The earliest example of a war started by the Dutch over Chinese trading contacts took place on the Penghu Islands. Not long after, the Dutch were defeated and forced to retreat. In order to stay in the area, the Company decided to retreat to Tayouan. Though the much desired trade monopoly had not been achieved, the Dutch at the very least would be in a position to attract private traders. Though Chinese trade did remain a goal, diplomatic efforts had already started taking a backseat to the already flourishing trade by the mid-30’s.

Deceptiveness

From earliest contact with Chinese officials and mandarins, the Dutch noted a tendency to lie among the Chinese nation. To some degree, this may have been influenced by their experiences rather than prejudice, as among the first contacts the Dutch met around China was a great number of pirates and officials. In the case of officials, they were often accused of dishonestly when failing to fulfil Dutch expectations of trading permits and monopolies. The person that embodied both the official and the piracy side of the spectrum was the pirate-turned-mandarin Iquan¹⁰, whose representation as “highly questionable” (*zeer dubieus*) informed many later depictions of Chinese of all walks of life alike. See the following passage concerning the mandarin: “*If the letter were true, this would be a desired matter for the company, but the aforementioned Tradenius also did*

¹⁰ Also known as Zheng Zhilong, the father of Zheng Chenggong or Coxinga.

not have the best feeling of Iquan, and as such did not know what to take for truth.”
(Blussé 1986, p. 42).



We can often see the tendency to lie being ascribed to even the most innocent comments. Even when there are no indicators that the other party is lying, and even when lying would bring no benefits, any rumours that were passed on in the diaries were still prefaced with comments about the unreliability of the Chinese.

“[...] asking them whether the Chinese had not told them to search for the 12 runaway Cackejenders and bring them to us, which we had expressly charged the Chinese with to help us spread the word, but they replied they had not done so. The Chinese are such villains, who desire mutiny and hope to cause a rift between the Company and the inhabitants” (Blussé 1995, p. 95).

“From Tixam on the north of the island came along several Chinese, addressing the lord governor that they had 10 days ago at the aforementioned place seen sailing a Dutch ship, judging by its course heading straight for Quelangh. We could not take this for truth, as the Chinese have often with this and similar fables and untruths mistreated us, but we may still hope for the best.” (Blussé 1996, p. 402).

Most reports settle for simply noting down a tendency to untruthfulness, but we catch an occasional glimpse into what the writer considered the root of the problem. In the early period of expansion, Chinese hunters or traders were often either instigators or victims of violent incidents. Considering this context, it is unsurprising that the Chinese would be considered troublesome in the text of the diaries. The authors go further in describing their motives by assuming malice from the Chinese side, rather than a simple desire to continue their livelihoods or make a profit (Blussé 1986, p. 241-242). This assumption of

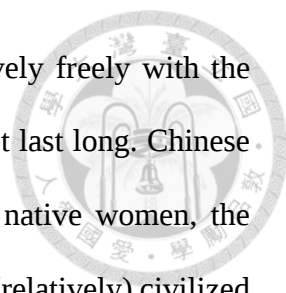
malice did not prevent the Dutch from attempting to protect the Chinese, as it was only in altercations with the violent Indigenous inhabitants that the Chinese appeared comparatively docile.



The attribution of this character trait has remained remarkably constant over time. Other negative traits, such as a tendency towards violence, may be more appropriate at times. The year 1652, when tensions were already running high due to decreasing trade profits and regularly recurring rumours of Coxinga's attention to the Pescadores and Formosa, wealthy Chinese land leasers in Provintia City were faced with a sudden economic crisis when the prices of land became increasingly inflated, which along with plummeting prices for goods left the few leasers unable to repay the debts incurred during the bidding process. This crisis eventually led to the Chinese revolt of 1652, an uprising in Provintia which was quickly suppressed by the Dutch and their indigenous allies (Strydom 2003). Until the arrival of Zheng Chenggong on the Pescadores, this revolt was indeed the greatest existential threat to the Dutch colony on Formosa. It is surprising, then, that in later reports on and references to the incident, it is not the violent character of the Chinese that is emphasized, but rather their deceptive tendencies. Styles of representation appear to display a remarkable tendency to continuity, even at times when other character traits may be considered more appropriate.

Character traits and Chinese civilizational particularities

Negative characteristics associated with the Chinese population are relatively few, compared with the indigenous population. It is debatable whether this is the result or the cause of the lack of drive to civilize this part of the population. Absence of negative traits does not imply a positive evaluation, however, as the missives and diaries (as shown above) are fiercely judgemental of the Chinese character.



In a population where merchants and *cabessas* intermingled relatively freely with the village populations, the strict bifurcation of the two groups could not last long. Chinese men which resided on the island for a longer term often married native women, the families of which pose a challenge to the simple dichotomy between (relatively) civilized Chinese and uncivilized natives. We can see a case of a mixed-race child bringing out judgements on the Chinese civilizational deficiencies, with the result that this child was subjected to the same educational process as other indigenous children (Blussé 2000, p. 152). In the description of the case, we can see how the writer, in order to emphasize the need for the child's continuing education, decided to expound upon the vices of Chinese culture as well as the Christian background of (one half of) the family. Rather than the usual character traits, this list of negative aspects takes on the more ethnographic character found in the many descriptions of indigenous life:

The same has already been made known to the deputies of the orphanage who have recently been to Zoulang and the lord governor Caesar, and request has been made that it be ordered that the aforementioned children shall not be left under their father's watch and be led into heathenism [...] Zaqua has even, without consent of his late wife, taken the children from Zoulang to Hamsckam to his concubine, who has shaved the son's head (which had never happened to any of the children when the mother was still alive), and the daughter is not only dressed in the Chinese manner, but was even forced to bear the unbearable pain of binding her feet (according to Chinese custom) [...]. (ibid.)

While such incidents show us that the Dutch were hardly impressed by the civilizational particularities of the Chinese population, their occurrence remained sparse, indicating that the Dutch authorities only saw it fit to interfere with the Chinese population's customs when the alternative would imply the loss of Christian souls. Indeed, the fact that the

children had been baptised, as well as the need to continue the mother's Christian legacy was strongly emphasized in the case description (ibid.).



7. Discussion



A matter of perspective

Due to the nature of the diaries (and missives) as reports for a trading company with additional geopolitical interests, the types of information being relayed are limited. As we have seen, passages with an ethnographic focus are primarily concentrated in the first half of the colony, as the Company was still exploring the island. Even during this period, such reports are extremely limited, and still focus on areas of interest to the growing trade empire. It is quite likely that an investigation of documents produced by colonizers with different motives, such as the preachers, will produce quite different results.

Not only the nature of the document influences its conclusions. Whichever member of the council of Formosa was writing the diary at a time had their own decision-making power, but more importantly, the activities the company was engaging in at the time are another major determinant. Trade with China was prioritized, and as a consequence, Indigenous traders are represented less. When the company attacks an Indigenous village and they mount resistance, they are once again represented as a violent ethnicity. Such representations can become a vicious circle, as in when Indigenous peoples are perceived as useful only when engaged in war for the sake of the VOC, which then limits their ability to engage in other occupations and therefore be represented in a variety of situations. Naturally, the represented influence their representation to a great extent as well, meaning the influence of dominant groups over the representation of minorities, while a relevant factor, should not be overstated. The focus on the Dutch perspective in this thesis is a result of the limited sources, rather than a reflection of the reality of the political situation at the time.

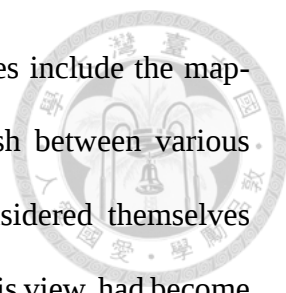
A comparison between Chinese and Indigenous representations

As we have seen in the prior analyses, the majority of the differences between Chinese and Indigenous representation can be ascribed to the fact that the two groups fulfilled very different roles in the Dutch's economic designs. The lack of representation of, for example, Chinese military prowess, or rather its lack of "ethnic character", or the lack of representation of Indigenous traders, limits the potential for a direct comparative study.

One rare topic that may prove a fruitful comparative study is be the subtext related to loyalty, interest and belonging. As seen previously, when describing negative traits of the Chinese nation, the Dutch resorted primarily to judgements of treachery and unreliability. Indigenous nations were in moments of opposition described not as treacherous, but rather as disobedient.

This language of treachery and obedience, while strongly influenced by the image of Indigenous people on the one hand as childlike and simple, in need of correction, while the more mature Chinese nation could only be interpreted as acting in malice when opposing the Dutch. The perceived treacherous nature of the Chinese may also have been influenced by the disproportionate contact of the writers of the diaries with both Chinese officials, pirates and interpreters – men who would have to balance a variety of interests, both of themselves and others, and therefore are more likely to betray or at least disappoint the expectations of the Company's traders. The Formosans who were only expected to engage in agriculture and war would have fewer opportunities to make promises they could not keep, making them less deceptive in the eyes of the Dutch.

The dichotomy between loyalty/innocence and treachery may point to another aspect inherent to the colonial project. By the late 1630's, the Dutch had already overrun the majority of Formosa, engaging in various actions to prove their ownership of the land.



The *Landdag* is only the best-known of those rituals, other examples include the map-making project in 1642, and the decreasing attempts to distinguish between various groups of ‘Formosans’. In summary, the Dutch at this point considered themselves masters of the island in name as well as practice. The Formosans, in this view, had become a part of the Dutch nation, swearing loyalty to the company, the country and the royal family. This (subordinate) insider status may have made it more difficult for the Dutch to imagine opposition to their rule from this side. The Chinese, on the other hand, were consistently considered outsiders, who therefore may have malicious intentions.

Unlike the Indigenous peoples, which the Company identified as Dutch subjects, the Chinese were considered outsiders until the very end of the Dutch period. A revolt of Provintia’s rural community on September 7th, 1652 led to an intense wave of negative depictions of the Chinese character and their (lack of) loyalty, the echoes of which can be found in the documents of the following years. The extreme degree of caution towards the Chinese displayed during the *Landdag* can be seen as paradigmatic for this point of view. Point 8 in the prior translated articles (Blussé 1996, p. 313-315) were found not just in that year’s *Landdag*, but continued into later years, and suspicion of Chinese people was only further exacerbated in the late 1650’s and early 1660’s when Zheng Chenggong’s attack had become an inevitability.

The colonial civilizing project

A second topic for comparison is related to, but does not fully overlap with, the perception of Indigenous peoples’ and Chinese peoples’ civilizational levels, respectively. That is, even though the Chinese civilization was assumed to be more civilized than the various indigenous groups, they were civilizational and economically still placed below the Dutch in the hierarchy constructed on Dutch Formosa. Despite their purported inferiority,

the Chinese population was not subjected to religious education as the indigenous population was.



As seen in the theoretical overview at the beginning of this thesis, ‘race’ as a biological concept was only invented in the late 18th or early 19th century. Prior theories of colonial hierarchy rely more on cultural superiority of establish their hierarchies. Cultural hierarchies are more in line with the civilizing mission: according to Michael Mann, the civilizing mission rested on the two assumptions of A), the civilizational superiority of the colonizer, and B), the perfectability of humankind (p. 4). Naturally, a civilizing mission only appears genuine – the bare minimum needed for its self-legitimizing purpose - if the colonizer believes in the possibility of progress, while biological racial hierarchies severely limit the possibility of such advancements.

As previously mentioned, the majority of education in Formosa consisted of religious education, which was the primary yardstick by which indigenous peoples’ progress was measured. After the large-scale subjugation of indigenous villages in the late 1630’s, as well as the stationing of missionaries and school teachers in the surroundings of Zeelandia and other villages further inland, elders were not only told to ensure that younger generations attended village schools, we even see regular reports on their progress. On the *landdag* as well, elders were exhorted to increase the number of students and their attendance. While reports of Formosan children’s academic achievement were generally positive (numbers were unlikely to go down, as baptisms are irreversible), actual tests of the students’ abilities could be critical at times, as the students were regularly described as being ‘slow’:

“The elders of the villages in which the Christian religion is currently being learnt must take good care to properly respect and be lenient with not only the preachers,

but also the visitors of the sick and the teachers. They should not only be in full attendance themselves, but also exhort their children and youth, as the clergy has occasionally received complaints about their sluggishness. For this reason, fines have been set on this behaviour, which will be used for the purpose of continuing to build churches and schools” (Blussé 1996, p. 11)

8. Conclusions

This thesis has investigated the connection between Dutch economic and political interests and representation of Indigenous peoples and Chinese migrants in Taiwan, the two groups permanently residing in Dutch Formosa. Besides adding to the understudied topics of early modern colonial ideology and the history of Dutch colonialism and ethnic prejudice, this topic is crucial to Taiwan for two reasons: First, as there is both continuity and change in stereotypes surrounding ethnic groups, studying prejudices at various periods in time lends us insights into the origin and change of certain depictions. Second, a thorough study of the Dutch colonial period and its methods of inclusion, exclusion and domination allow us to avoid a romanticized view of the ‘great age of exploration’, which is crucial considering the Dutch occupation’s key role in Taiwan’s growing Taiwan-centered historical narrative.

The VOC’s identity as a mixture of capitalist organization and state identity thoroughly informed the depiction of their colonial subjects. Dutch identity was strongly tied up with Calvinist religion and morality, and though also extant among the Dutch population, behaviours going against this Calvinist morality were perceived as a vice the Indigenous peoples should be educated out of. The perception of the Chinese as outsiders meant that such ‘civilizing projects’ could and would not be applied to them, though negative stereotypes are equally prevalent. The capitalist side of the identity ensured not only that governance was shrouded in the language of mutual profit, both for the Indigenous and for the Chinese, and profit-making was a priority at all times.

As we have seen, despite both being integral parts of the Formosan economy, Chinese and Indigenous groups met with widely diverging representation in the VOC’s correspondence. Such representations are shown to have changed little over time. For the

Chinese population, the emphasis was laid on their role in trade, providing us with far less information on the Chinese population that made their living through other methods. As for the Chinese character, in line with Bhabha's comments on fixity, the malicious and deceptive character was emphasized repeatedly despite in many cases not being proven, or even appropriate for the situation. This view was strongly inspired by the VOC's experiences in the early 20's, when the Company's primary contacts were with interpreters, officials and pirates only. Thus, even with large groups of settlers living in the colony, the Chinese were consistently depicted as outsiders, often with malicious intentions.

As for the Indigenous population, though some internal diversity was recognized, by the time the entire island had been subjugated, the Dutch displayed a remarkably homogenous view of the population. Common traits and behaviours ascribed to the natives were heathenism, sexual promiscuity, and excessive drinking. All of these were behaviours that, the Dutch assumed, the population could be educated out of. For this education, the VOC employed both hard and soft power, alternating between military actions and educational projects centring missionaries and village teachers. The primary trait associated with the Indigenous population, however, was violence, which the Dutch, rather than attempting to correct this trait through Christian education, attempted to use for their own purposes.

None of the representational trends studied are unique to the Formosan colony. The need for education in Christian morality was used to justify subjugation and genocide in the new world as well. In the more ethnographically focused descriptions seen in the early years of the colony, we see hierarchies being created based on a wide variety of traits as well, including skin colour. Such depictions were so few, however, that it can not be seen as a coherent ideology. In this sense, Boogaart's claim of lack of coherence in early Dutch

colonial ideology is true, though other prejudices do show a high degree of institutionalization.

Both representational styles can be seen as a product of the Company's interest. As their primary goals were the stability of the colony and the development of trade, as well as the development of agriculture in later decades, most attention was concentrated on the actors involved in these practices. Rather than changing representational styles of the Chinese when trade was less active, or changing the violent image of the natives in times of peace, representation remained largely the same though the amount of depictions may have decreased. This tunnel vision is likely to have further exacerbated the one-sided representation of both population groups.

Though drawing a strong connection between interest, experience and representation, the theories expounded in this thesis have yet to be further contextualized. Further research may be done about the role of Dutch Formosa in the formation of the Dutch "cultural archive" back in the homeland, as well as the influence of other colonies' experience on Taiwan and vice versa. Considering the regular correspondence as well as the prior experiences of the VOC's Taiwan-based employees, it is expected that the colonial experience in Indonesia may have had strong influences beyond the scope of this thesis.

Moreover, as this thesis has established, the representation of these groups was established not only textually, but supported by institutions that segregated the two ethnicities both economically and geographically. Considering that the Cheng regime took over a significant amount of institutions established by the Dutch, it may be of interest to study continuities and changes in the perception of both Chinese and Indigenous peoples over the long term from the perspective of historical institutionalism.

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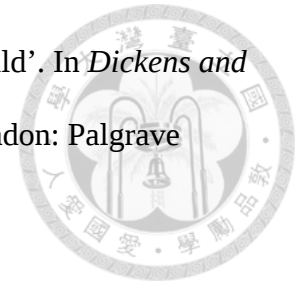
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