



Illustration 1. An Illanun Sulu pirate carrying a kampeli sword in his hand, a spear and a kris.

Letter from Sultan Kuda of Manguindanao (r. 1699-1702) concerning the trading activities of Chinese nakhoda and the need for military support, 21 July 1700

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sejarah
nusantara



1 Introduction

Ruurdje Laarhoven, “Letter from Sultan Kuda of Manguindanao (r.1699-1702) concerning the trading activities of Chinese nakhoda and the need for military support, 16 November 1699”. In: *Harta Karun. Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta*, document 17. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2014.

BY RUURDJE LAARHOVEN

At present Maguindanao is one of the provinces located on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. The majority of the population in this province is Muslim.

Maguindanao, as a sultanate, had its glory time during the 17th century when two successive sultans, Sultan Kudarat (1619-1671) and Sultan Barahaman (1671-1699) ruled with a firm hand. They were leaders with the necessary diplomatic skills to use and manipulate the Europeans expansionists: Spanish, Portuguese, English and Dutch, and traded lucratively with the help of their following. They expanded their sphere of influence through building alliances with the *datus* or local chiefs and increase their following. Through this network of alliances they received tributes in the form of agricultural-, forest-, and sea products as well as slaves which allowed them to build up their wealth and prestige.

The coming of Islam

From the *tarsilas*, the written genealogical accounts of the Maguindanao ruling clans, it is known that Islam had been introduced to the regions of southern Mindanao by Sharif Muham-

mad Kabungsuwan who arrived with the help of Samal boat people from Johore in approximately 1515. His father was a Sharif from Arabia who had married a royal princess of Johore.¹ Sharif Kabungsuwan is given credit for establishing and spreading Islam in Mindanao although other ulama preachers from Ternate might have been there earlier. He married into the established local royalty. By the time the Dutch East India company interacted with the dignitaries of Mindanao starting with Matelief in 1607, it was noted that Islam was professed from Sibugay to Sarangany and around to the Davao Gulf and the islands further south.

Contenders to the sultan's throne

When Sultan Barahaman died on 6 July 1699 he was succeeded by his ambitious younger brother, Sultan Kuda (r. 1699-1702). Sultan Kuda wrote a letter to Batavia dated 16 November 1699. This letter was signed by two of his ministers and included as a diplomatic letter in the Daily Journals on 21 July 1700. Sultan Kuda, as can be read in the letter, claimed to have stepped in his brother's footsteps after Sultan Barahaman's death on July 6, 1699. The raja muda, the sultan's heir apparent, had unfortunately died on June 18, 1699, just a few weeks earlier.²

Five brothers of the raja muda, sons of Sultan Barahaman, were all contenders to the ultimate ruler's position. Although Sultan Kuda had lived in discord with his brother most of the time, it had been anticipated that upon his brother's death, he would cease his unreasonableness and mellow down, but to the contrary of expectations, he

¹ Majul, Cesar Adib, *Muslims in the Philippines*, pp. 25-27

² National Archives (NA) at The Hague, 1.04.02, VOC 1614, 104-5, 1090-96v.



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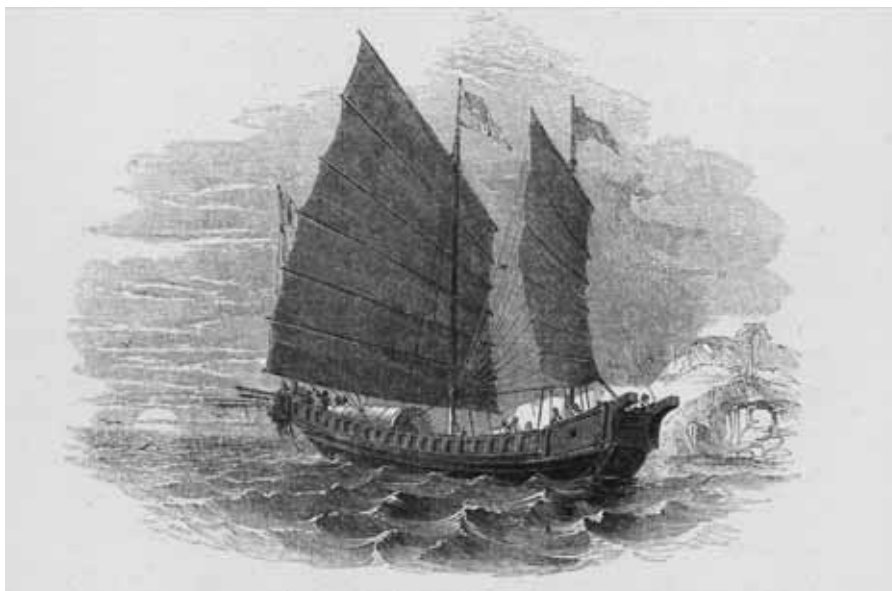


Illustration 2. Chinese Trading Jung at Maguindanao Water.

became impatient, temperamental, and monarchical. He made a political mistake of introducing “a new invention to raise money” by having his people pay for a *pascedule*³ to leave his town. The people refused his self-serving strictness and the panditas, ulamas, datus, shabandars, and all their following left him and set up a new political unit with some of the sons of the late Sultan Barahaman.⁴ Datu Bayan ul-Anwar, the eldest and in reality the next in line after Sultan Barahaman’s death, had opposed his uncle’s usurpation and refused to pay tribute to him. One of his wives being the daughter of the brother-in-law of the Sultan of Sulu and another wife the daughter of the raja of Buayan, Sultan Bayan ul-Anwar activated his connections to harass his uncle which eventually led to Sultan Kuda being krissed by the Sultan of Sulu.⁵

Through the external contacts, the Maguindanao datus had become significantly more pow-

erful. Inland Buayan and coastal Maguindanao had contrasting albeit complementary and symbiotic ecologies. Their families intermarried in every generation and as Sultan Kudarat once said, “the two kingdoms are like husband and wife.” When one or the other ruler died the succession often gave rise to strife. This had been the case in 1699, above and again in 1702. Sultan Kuda was unsure what the Company had been told. Whoever could control the bio-network of *sa-raya* (Buayan) and *sa-ilud* (Maguindanao) would be at the apex of a very powerful socio-economic political system.

Sultan Kuda was a smart and learned man who spoke Chinese and Spanish fluently and a little Dutch and English. As a Kapitan Laut he was in charge of all matters pertaining to the sea during Sultan Barahaman’s lifetime and in this function he was able to enrich himself. VOC Captain de Roy verified his bragging about having many

³ From Spanish *pase* and *cedula* (a piece of paper with authorization).

⁴ Laarhoven, Ruurdje, *Triumph of Moro Diplomacy*, p. 138.

⁵ Majul, Cesar Adib, *Muslims in the Philippines*, p. 185.



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brass cannons hidden in Zamboanga. The messenger that de Roy sent out had found seven iron cannons and one metal piece along the quay and in trenches along the river, altogether close to 100 more brass cannons.⁶ Obtaining hardware wherever they could, had always been a priority for the Maguindanao rulers. Hence the request for two more cannons and muskets in the document.

Mindanao as a Buffer Zone

Throughout the 17th century, Dutch officers and representatives of the VOC had visited Maguindanao rather frequently. The Dutch came to trade, but with a secondary motive to spy and evaluate the situation from a socio-political perspective. They did not trust the sultan and vice versa. Until 1663, the Spaniards occupied a fort in Zamboanga on the most western side of Mindanao. They vacated it when they were called back to Manila because the Spaniards were in danger of an attack by a fleet of the renowned Chinese pirate Coxinga. They returned in 1718. The Spanish presence had always been perceived as a threat and danger; A threat for the Maguindanaos that they would be subjugated like the people in the islands north of them; A danger in the eyes of the VOC who fought tooth and nail to guard its spice monopoly in the Moluccas.

It was in the interest of Maguindanao to keep the Dutch at bay in Ternate and protect their independence from any Spanish or Dutch incursions. For the Dutch, Mindanao functioned as a buffer between “Spanish” Manila and the “Dutch” Moluccas. It should therefore be stressed that Sultan Kudarat did his people and the generations

to come a great favor by having all the spice trees found in his domains extirpated and forbade his people to cultivate them.⁷ The Dutch regularly checked out the presence of nutmegs and cloves and under some pretense made excursions inland or rowed out on small boats while questioning the people. Their fears were ungrounded for it was confirmed that none were to be found.⁸

Dutch observations on Maguindanao

The Dutch Captain Cornelis Claasz Silver witnessed several events when he was moored before the Sultan’s house in the Simuoy River from June to November, 1699.⁹ He was invited to witness the installation of Sultan Kuda, a ceremony he described to be with much pomp and circumstance. To have this foreign captain attending must have given the event more prestige and hence the fondness by Sultan Kuda expressed for Capt. Cornelis Claasz in the letter to Batavia.

During a following visit by some VOC officials, Captain Paulus de Brieving and Ensign Jacob Cloeck, more observations were sent to Batavia. These two were in the Maguindanao harbor from 6 July 6 to 1 October 1700 and they thoroughly investigated the area. They listed 43 *datus* who paid tribute to the sultan or were beholden to him. They counted a force of 59,650 able bodied men that the sultan could draw from in times of need.¹⁰ Maguindanao also offered a safe haven to deserting soldiers and runaways from ships and tried to keep visitors from leaving. Foremost, the Chinese were subject to being enticed into marrying the local women which added to the increase of the population.

⁶ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1483, No. M. de Roy, 25-26.

⁷ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1437, 196.

⁸ Laarhoven, Ruurdje, *Triumph of Moro Diplomacy*, 158.

⁹ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1637, 96-126 is a daily record of Captain Claasz Silver’s stay.

¹⁰ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1641, fol. 76ov-776v.



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The best informants for the Dutch were indeed the Chinese who lived in Maguindanao. They often complained that they were subject to strict rules and regulations and not permitted to trade with the Dutch. However the Chinese were risk takers and disobeyed the rules. Illicit trade by the Chinese was very common. They came to trade in secret at dusk. When they were suspicious of a person hailing from Maguindanao aboard ship who could tell on them, they insisted to exchange the wax for the cloths through the cabin ports.¹¹

Harbour and Trade

The harbor principality of Maguindanao was ideally situated at the mouth and tributaries of the largest river of Mindanao, the Pulangi River. It allowed for shipping and shipbuilding, fishing and many water resources. Products from the rich Pulangi agricultural valley inland, which consisted predominantly of rice, tobacco, wax, and victuals were brought down by small and large traders. From the mountain areas south of the river and foremost from the Davao Gulf region thousands of pounds of wax and bundles of tobacco were collected annually through tribute payments or exchanged for imported cloth and other foreign objects obtained through trade. For a large part of the 17th century annual trading expeditions were undertaken by the sultan himself and with his permission, the members of the royal family and datu clans sent their junks on missions to as far as India, Malacca, Siam, Johore, Java, Sumatra,

Borneo, and Sulawesi. Many smaller vessels sailed annually to Manila and Ternate as well, often with the assistance of nakodas, ship captains, from the Chinese community.

The shipments from Maguindanao to the larger regional trade centers included, besides wax and rice in large quantities, thousands of bundles of tobacco, second grade cinnamon, coconut oil, clove bark, tortoise shell, sea cucumbers, seaweed, bird's nests, and slaves¹². They brought back predominantly all sorts of Indian cloths such as guinees lywaet, bafta, salempuri, muri, chintz, betille, chelas,¹³ etc. Iron objects, brass, scrap metal, cannons and weapons were sought after and often included. Junks from China brought silks and earthen wares.¹⁴ There was heavy traffic between China (Ch'uan Chou, Hokkien), Manila and Maguindanao every year.¹⁵ By 1700, the Chinese community at Maguindanao had grown considerably after the Dutch had started to enforce the monopoly on spices in the Moluccas. Many Chinese had left Ternate for Mindanao.¹⁶

The wax monopoly and Chinese traders

Sarangani was a central trading place in beeswax where the Sultan of Maguindanao had imposed strict rules and regulations. No outsiders were allowed to go there to trade. Since the 1660s the Maguindanao sultanate had exerted a monopoly on wax, which was still in effect in 1699.¹⁷ Only the Chinese, who were known to the sultan and the Saranganies, were allowed to trade 500 kati¹⁸

¹¹ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1554, No 12, Logbook Alsteyn and Haak, fol. 123.

¹² Laarhoven, Ruurdje, *Triumph of Moro Diplomacy*, pp. 213-221.

¹³ Laarhoven, Ruurdje, "A Passion for Plaids", in: Roy W. Hamilton (ed.), *From the Rainbow's Varied Hue*, pp. 138-144

¹⁴ Fox, Robert B., "A consideration of Theories Concerning Possible Affiliations of Mindanao Cultures with Borneo, the Celebes, and Other Regions of the Philippines", in: *Philippine Sociological Review*, January 1957, pp. 2-12;

¹⁵ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1483, No. M, de Roy, 60; VOC 1641, Brieving and Cloeck, fol. 724, 765v-766.

¹⁶ Laarhoven, Ruurdje, "The Chinese at Maguindanao in the Seventeenth Century", in: *Philippine Studies*, vol. 35 (1987): pp. 31-50. This article has a complete story of the Chinese in Maguindanao and a follow up on Tuwanko alias Loanko after he left Maguindanao, never to return [Letter].

¹⁷ Dagregisters van het Kasteel Batavia, vol. 14, p. 247.

¹⁸ One kati is equivalent to 1/100 picul or 1.25 pound.



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of beeswax and no more.¹⁹ Trading without the sultan's permission would be punishable by death, that is beheading. Sarangani was the Sultan's granary and a warehouse for his trade goods.

In Maguindanao it was also customary for all nakodas, ships' captains, to pass by the sultan before leaving and receive instructions to run errands for him or other members of the household such as delivering letters or messages and bringing gifts. If that was neglected, one could expect to be killed, which luckily did not happen to the Chinese mestizo Loanko, mentioned in our document, who was forgiven.

Adventures of a peranakan Chinese

Despite all regulations imposed by the Minguindanao sultans, incidents appeared at a frequent basis. According to our document, an incident happened in July or early August 1688. By the time the sultan wrote his letter to Batavia in 1699, it was still remembered and not solved yet. A *peranakan* Chinese from Jepara named Tuwanko (Loanko in the letter) had left in a *gonting*, a small Javanese cargo vessel, with a pascedule from the Company in Semarang to sail to Pasir, Southeast Borneo to collect wax. The vessel belonged to the Chinese captains Pinco from Jepara and Kohanco (Concua in the letter) from Semarang. The crew consisted of eight Chinese: Saowanko, Ompo, Tsjonko, Tjeiwko, Tiepko, Inko, Hayko, and Tsjin and two Javanese: Aowangsa and Marompang. Strong contrary winds and a possible lack of a sense directions, Saowanko, the navigator, brought them ashore in Manguindanao after more than two months.

When the Sultan Barahaman learned about the trespass, he ordered the crew of the *gonting* to come to Simuay and asked them for their pas-

cedule, but theirs was for Pasir, so Hayko, who could write, prepared a different one that applied to Sarangani. The sultan accepted it and this guaranteed the safety of the Chinese. In the meantime Tuwanko had already collected 100 pikul of wax, and 3 pikul of tortoise shell. He invested half his capital of approximately 15-1600 rixdollars in this purchase. The sultan took possession of all the Indian types of cloths that were left at a value of 727 1/4 rixdollars. His brother the later Sultan Kuda borrowed the wax that Tuwanko had brought and lent him a boat, a *korakora*, for Tuwanko to go to Manila where he had to sell the wax. The price of a pikul wax in Sarangani was much lower than in Manila, so the sultan pocketed the profit. He told Tuwanko to collect some debts for him in Manila which were to pay for the wax that Tuwanko had initially paid for in Sarangani. Tuwanko left for Manila, but refused to say farewell to the sultan who was offended and angry about that. He confiscated all Tuwanko's tradegoods. Tuwanko stayed for one month in Manila where he bought leather, gold and reals-of-eight from the Spanish from Sultan Kuda's money and some leather for himself.

While Tuwanko was gone, five of his crew, Tsjonko, Tjeiwko, Tiepko, Inko, and Hayko had married. Saowanko, Tsjin and the two Javanese: Aowangsa and Marompang died at Maguindanao. Tuwanko settled down and began to ingratiate himself with the Maguindanaos. He married and inspired the trust of the sultan. He is known to have said to the Sultan "we have no other faith except in the Sultan, and whatever the Sultan wishes to command we shall obey".²⁰ Thus in 1691 Tuwanko managed to leave with permission from the Sultan. Ompo, another crew member who never married went with him. The crew also

¹⁹ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1637, fol. 91.

²⁰ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1516, fol. 505.



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included a Ternatan Chinese, named Hieuwko, his slave, and two Muslims from the Coromandel coast in India. All were debt free, otherwise one could not receive permission to leave Maguindanao. The five married surviving Chinese were “kept by the sultan”.²¹

The information provided in the sultan’s letter shows how existing trading networks, from Mindanao to Java, functioned only with the support and interference of a local ruler. It also shows how individual participants, like the *peranakan* Chinese Tuwanko from Jepara, operated in those networks. Only these concrete stories bring us closer to the fascinating world of Southeast Asia, in this case the southern Philippines.

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²¹ NA 1.04.02, VOC 1503, III, Interview Notes, fol. 563.



2 Transcription of the Dutch text

Ruurdje Laarhoven, “Letter from Sultan Kuda of Manguindanao (r. 1699-1702) concerning the trading activities of Chinese nakhoda and the need for military support, 21 July 1700”.

UIT: DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, 21 JULI 1700 [BEGINNEND BIJ FOL. 381]

Translaat Spaanse missive van den Coning van Mangindanao aan zijn Edelheyt den Heere gouverneur generaal Willem van Outhoorn geschreven.

Dese brief schrijft den Siry Sultan Amirol Amra Zhumra Alam Abnu, Sultan Sayaso Drascha Abnu, Sultan Zala Ima Nasirodin, tot Fuhul Lahu Bihie Val musulimin, Conink van de coninkrijcken en landen van Mangindanao, en gaet aan mijn vrund en broeder de heer generaal van Batavia. Naer voorgaande compliment stondt:

Mijn Heer ik geef U Edele kennis dat op den 6 July deses jaers 1699 overleden is mijn oudste broeder Carnal Groot Sarry Snu Jamodsa Brahama Abnu Sultan Sayefo Drascha.

Soodat al de saecken van 't rijck in mijn handen zijn vervallen, en besid nu de plaets van Sarry Sultan van dit rijck als de landen van Mindano, 'twelck niet heb connen naerlaten U Edele te communiceren om de grote liefde die aan ons volck werd gethoondt, 'twelck mij soo veel te meer verpligting daertoe geeft. [382]

Van al welke saken mijn gemelte oudste broeder in zijn testament kennisse heeft gegeven behelsende ook wel te observeren de vrindschap en goede correspondentie die tusschen ons en de Ed. Hollandse Compagnie was gehouden, ten tijde van mijn grootvader, als mijn vader, dewelcke nog soo vast en volstandig sullen blijven als den dagh van heeden, sonder dat bevonden sal werden iets aan te ontbreken, daerom of er iemant anders 't contrary wilde aan U Edele seggen is niet waer, en gelieft sulx geen geloof te geven, want onse vrundschap Uw Edele Hollandse Compagnie sal soo vast en volstandig duuren als son en man.

Ik geef Uw Edele ook kennis dat in de maand juny op strande van dit coninkrijk is gearriveert een galjoot genaamt Lasdragh waerop schipper was Cornelis Claesz. Selver en stuurman Pieter Bolarte, comende uyt de havenen van Molucos om naar Manados haer reys te nemen, dog door 't harde weer

en contrarie winden zijn in dit rijck vervallen sonder brief of pas van d'E. Compagnie naer dit mijn rijck. Ik heb aanstonts belast dat se maer binnen soude komen omdat het in de wintertijd was, en dat se anders mogelijk een ongemak soude comen te lijden, soo datse in deese revier van Sumuay zijn binnen gekomen, sijnde veel aan mijn huys geweest, haer wel getracteert en gehandelt, gelijk aen U Ed. self sullen konnen seggen.

Gemelte schipper en stuurman met haer volck hebben wij wel geholpen en dienst gedaan, blijvende U Ed. hertelijck dankbaer voor soo veel ontfange beleeftheden.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

En versoeck bijaldien den gouverneur van de stad Moluco met de aanstaande goede mousson een vaertuyg naer dit mijn rijck mogt komen te senden, U Ed. geliefde te ordonneren gemelte schipper Cornelis Claasz. en stuurman Pieter Bolarte daermede quame, waermede mij grote vrundschap sou geschieden, sijnde haer seer genegen omdat sij mij soo veel geholpen hebben.

Waerom nogmael versoeck en bidt aan U Ed. dat gemelte schipper mag verhoogt werden, dewijl 't een man van eer en wackerheyt is.

De reden dat voornoemde galjoot soo lang agter gebleven en niet eerder t'zee gestoken sij, is veroorsaekt dat de contrarie en variabele winden en weer soo lang geduurt, en dewijl meer bevinding van ongelucken daerdoor in zee veroorsaekt, waer 't beter, sij soo lange hier vertoefde, sijn nu in de maand september vertrocken, wanneer de vaste doorgaande winden wayen en de rechten tijd is geweest, 'twelck soo 't beste heb geoordeelt omdat de saeken van de E. Compagnie als mijn eigen estimeer.

Ik bidde Uw Ed. mede dat geordoneert mag werden aan den gouverneur van de stad Maluco dat hij mij één hondert goede musquetten om voor mijn paggers te dienen verkoopt voor sijn waerde, sodanig als aan den Conink van Ternaten sijn verkogt, sullende 't bedragen van gemelte musquetten aanstaande jaer met alle puntualiteyt werden voldaan.

Nog versoeck soo 't U Ed. mogt gelieven mij te verkopen twee stuckjes metael canon van vijf â 600 ponden yder eguael en wat lang, opdat van goet effect mogen sijn en soo 't met U Ed. goetheyd waer, mij dese vrundschap te bewijzen, connen aan den gouverneur der stad Maluco gesonden om [383] verder aan mijn geadresseert te werden, sullende de waerde aanstaande jaer mede promptelijk overgemaekt werden.

Ik senden U Ed. twee picols wax welke beuseling versoeck gelieft aan te nemen en de vrijpostigheyt pardonneren dewijl soo gering en van weynig waerde sijnde alleen om een teken van liefde te thonen en dankbaerheyt van soo veel weldaden alreets genoten hebbe en nog sal ontfangen.

En dewijl anders niet offereer, soo wil ons Heer U Ed. nog lange jaren sparen in vrede en gewenste gerustheyd, 'twelke van harte ben wenschende.

(Onder stont) Semuay den 16 november 1699, vrund en broeder van Uw Hoogheyt heel vaste, trouwe, en toegeneghe dienaar (was geteekent) Humxra Alam en Dayyo (ter zijde stond 's Conings schiap).

Ik geef U Edele mede kennis dat in den jaare 1688 in de havenen van Sarangam gecomen is een vaertuyg waervan den schipper was een Chinees masties van Japara genaamt Loanko waervan mijn broeder den Heere Keyser kennisse gekregen hebbende, sond vier van sijn volck derwaert om haer af te vragen wat se quamen doen, gaven tot antwoord dat het vaertuygh was toekomende de Capitains der Chinesen Pinco en Concua, comende met een pas van de Compagnie naer dit mijn rijck van Mindanao om te handelen en negotie te doen, connende door de contrarie winden hare rijse niet volbrengen, waarop het volk van mijn broeder haer seyden dat niet mogte handelen, copen of vercopen met het volk van Sarangam. En bijaldien haer goederen wilde verkopen, sulx aan ons volck souden doen, soodat het volck van gemelte mijn broeder



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de goederen en coopmanschappen daeruyt gelost en ontfangen hebben ten bedrage van sevenhondertsevenentwintigh rxs en een quart. En soo sijn se weder hier terugh gecomen met den schrijver van gemelte vaertuygh van Loanko. En naer drie maanden quam gemelte vaertuygh geladen met wax waervan se over de hondert picol gecogt hadden en drie picol *tartaruga* soodat het quaed haer eygen schult is, want het is een gewoonte onder ons dat de Chinese vaertuygen die in de havenen van Sarangame comen geen wax mogen copen als vijffhondert catty. Haer nu gevraegt hebbende of se geen brieven van de Capitans Pinco en Concua hadden, antwoorden van 'neen'. En de pas van de E. Comp. dicteerden niet naer mijn rijk maer na Passick. Daerna is Lieanko met vijf van sijn confraters naar de Manilhas vertrocken, hebbende daer al haer wax verkogt voor goud, realen van agten, en leer, comende soo weder naar dit rijk en is Leanko binnengekomen en getrouwt, blijvende schuldig volgens huwelijxcontract vier thijlen goudt en een slaef, waervoor ik borg ben gebleven, soodat mijn broeder haer pardonneerden van de begane misslag en overtreding van 't wax tot Sarangam gecogt.

Maer tot de 727 $\frac{1}{4}$ rds te vereffenen waer 't noodsaeckelijk brieven van de E. Comp. Capitans Pinco en Concua gerechtvaardigt door de Justitie en de E. Comp. want als recht redelijck en gepermitteert hebben se bovengemelte penningen ontfangen, waermede Leanko is vertrocken met een brief van mijn broeder den Keyser aan Uw Ed., hebbende hem sedert hier niet meer vernomen.

Daernaer in den jare 1695 heeft mijn broeder den Keyser een vaertuygh afgesonden met een schipper sonder ambassadeur, alleen brieven voor [384] Batavia aan de Ed. Compagnie dog door horibele sterke tegenwinden is gemelte vaertuyg vervallen in de havenen van Caily en willende den schipper sijn reyse weder vervolge naer Batavia, soo wasser een Chinees tot Caily genaamt Luanco die hem tegenhield met drijgement soo hij 't deed, dat hem eenig ongemak soude overcomen om een schuld van een mas-ties Chinees in mijn land genaamt Najoda Sandit, aan een vendrig op Malacca, ik weet niet van hoeveel rxs soodat den schipper in die haven bleef, en cogt den Chinees al haer effecten die mede hadde ter waerde van éenduysentvijfhondert rxs. Als nu den schipper wilde vertrecken en met sijn vaertuygh herwaart aankomen, eyschende sijn uytstaande penningen, heeft gemelte Cuancko maer betaelt vijfhondert rxs onder sig behoudende duysent rxs dewelcke hij weygerde te betalen om de schult van meergemelde Leanko die in mijn rijk was gebleven.

'Twelck bekend maeck, opdat U Ed. soude weten met wat bedriegerijen en chinistre streecken de Chinesen omgaan, sullende den schipper Cornelis Claasz. en stuurman Pieter Bolarte, mondeling beeter en breeder connen rapporteren, want heb haer de papieren en brief van den Chinees Cuancko laeten sien.



3 English translation

Ruurdje Laarhoven, “Letter from Sultan Kuda of Manguindanao (r. 1699-1702) concerning the trading activities of Chinese nakhoda and the need for military support, 21 July 1700”.

FROM: DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA CASTLE, 21 JULY 1700 [BEGINNING WITH FOL. 381]

Translation of a letter in Spanish addressed to His Excellency the Lord Governor-General Willem van Outhoorn by the King of Manguindanao

This letter is from Sri Sultan Amirol Amra Zhumra Alam Abnu, Sultan Drascha Abnu, Sultan Zala Ima Nairodin, to Fuhul Labu Bibie Val Musilmin, Kings of the realms and lands of Manguindanao, and is addressed to my friend and brother the Lord [Governor-]General of Batavia.

The above exordium is followed by:

My Lord I inform you that on the 6 July of this year 1699 my eldest brother, Carnal Groot Sarry Snu Jamodsa Brahaman Abnu Sultan Sayefo Drasha passed away.

As all the business of the realm has devolved into my hands, and I have now acceded to the position of Sri Sultan of this kingdom and of the lands of Mindano, it behoves me to inform your Excellency of the great goodwill shown to our people which only augments my [sense of] obligation [382].

In his testament my said eldest brother acknowledged such matters, not least that the friendship and correspondence which was current at the time of my grandfather and of my father should be kept up, and that it shall continue to be as steadfast and as regular as it is at that moment, and that there should not be any interruptions. Therefore should anyone else who wishes to deny this say to Your Excellency that this is not true, you should attach no credence to this, as our amity shall be as fixed and constant as the Sun and the Moon.

I also inform Your Excellency that in the month of June a galiot called the *Lasdragh* arrived here on the shores of this kingdom. Her skipper was Cornelis Calesz. Sekver and the first mate Pieter Bolarte. She came from the harbour of the Moluccas on her way to Menado, but heavy weather and contrary winds stranded her in this kingdom without any letter or pass from the Honourable Company [addressed] to this my kingdom. I immediately gave orders that they should come in because here it was winter, and otherwise they might possibly have found themselves in difficulties. Hence they sailed into this Sumuay River and often frequented my house, where I entertained and treated them as I would have done Your Excellency yourself.

We have helped and assisted the said skipper, his first mate and their crew, as we remain indebted to Your Excellency for the many courtesies we have received.

And, in the event of the Governor of the town of Molucca (Ambon) sending a ship



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

to my realm in the forthcoming good season, we would prefer that Your Excellency to order said skipper Cornelis Calsesz. and First Mate Pieter Bolarte to sail on her, this would be a [gesture] of great friendship to me, as I have great affection for them as they were a great help.

For this reason I entreat and prevail upon Your Excellency that the said skipper may be promoted, as he is a man of honour and astute.

The reason the afore-mentioned galiot tarried here so long and did not put to sea earlier was that, as the variable and contrary winds persisted so long and there were more reports of disasters at sea, it seemed more sensible to wait. Now in the month of September he has departed as the prevailing winds are blowing and the right season has arrived. I arranged matters so as the affairs of the Honourable Company are as dear to me as my own.

I also entreat Your Excellency that orders may be given to me at the price for which they were sold to the King of Ternate. Payment of said muskets will be handed over punctually next year.

I also request that Your Excellency sell me two metal 500 or 600 pounder cannon of equal size with a rather long barrel so that they might be used effectively and should it please Your Excellency to demonstrate your friendship, they can be dispatched to the Governor of Molucco [383] and from there be sent on to my address. Their value will be promptly recompensed. I send Your Excellency two piculs of wax, entreating that you graciously accept this and will pardon the impertinence that they are so few and of such little value, being no more than a token of the affection and gratitude of the many benefactions we have already enjoyed and shall still [continue] to receive.

And though I offer nothing else, I wish that the future will still bring Your Excellency long years of peace and beneficial law and order, which I wish from the bottom of my heart.

(Dated) Semuai 16 November 1699, most faithful friend and brother of Your Highness, [your] affectionate servant (was signed) Humrxa Alam and Dayyo (the royal seal affixed to the side).

I inform Your Excellency that in the year 1688 a vessel arrived in the harbour of Sarangam [Island] whose skipper was a mestizo Chinese from Japara named Loanko. My brother informed the Lord Emperor of this and the latter sent four of his people there to discover what they had come to do. They answered that the vessel was the property of the Chinese Captains Pinco and Concua, sailing to my realm of Mindanao with a pass from the Company to trade and do business as contrary winds had meant that they were unable to make their destination. Whereupon my brother's people told them that they were forbidden to trade or buy or sell with the people of Sarangam. Should they wish to dispose of their goods they should do this to our people. Consequently the people of my afore-mentioned brother unloaded and took possession of goods and wares to the value of 727¼ rix-dollars. Thereafter we returned here with the clerk of the afore-said vessel of Loanko. Three months later the vessel put in here laden with wax of which they had purchased more than 100 *picul* as well as 3 *picul tartaru-*



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

ga (tortoiseshell), therefore they have brought their troubles on themselves, because it is our convention that Chinese vessels which put in at the harbour of Sarangam may purchase no more than 500 *catties* wax. When they were asked if they were carrying letters from Captains Pinco and Concua, they answered 'No'. Moreover, the Company pass did not specify my realm but [that of] Passick. Later Lianko and five of his associates departed for Manila where they sold all their wax for gold pieces-of-eight (gold reals) and leather and, upon returning to this kingdom Leanko settled down and married, under the terms of his marriage contract incurring a debt to the tune of 4 gold thalers and one slave, for which I stood guarantor, until my brother pardoned him for his offence and infringement of the [allowed amount of] wax bought at Sarangam.

However, to settle up the 727¹/₄ rix-dollars, it was necessary to have the letters from the Honourable Company Captains Pinco and Concua, authorized by [the department of] Justice and the Honourable Company because, [designating them] qualified and sanctioned [to do so], it was they who were the recipients of the money with which Leanko departed with a letter from my brother to the Emperor to Your Excellency, and nothing more has been heard of him since then.

Afterwards, in the year 1695, my brother the Emperor dispatched a vessel to Batavia with a skipper but no ambassador only letters for [384] the Honourable Company, but on account of terribly strong contrary winds said vessel fell apart in the harbour of Cailly. The skipper wanted to continue his journey to Batavia but there was a Chinese in Cailly whose name was Luanco who obstructed him with threats, declaring that should he do so he would run into considerable difficulties on account of the debt of a mestizo Chinese in my country by the name of Najoda Sandit who owed a subaltern in Malacca I do not know how many rix-dollars. Hence the skipper remained in the harbour and sold the Chinese all the effects he had with him, which were worth 1,500 rix-dollars. Since the skipper has departed and arrived here in his vessel demanding his outstanding dues as said Chinese has paid only 500 rix-dollars, retaining 1,000 rix-dollars for himself and refusing to pay them on account of the debt of oft-mentioned Leanko who had settled in my realm.

This information has been passed on so that Your Excellency will be aware of the threats and sinister tricks the Chinese employ. Skipper Cornelis Claasz and First Mate Pieter Bolarte will supply you with better and more detailed oral reports, as I have shown them the papers and the letter of the Chinese Cuanc[k]o.



4 Colophon

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