

# European Trade Between Macao and Siam, from Its Beginnings to 1663

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## *Abstract*

This paper focuses on the trade between Portuguese Macao and Siamese Ayudhya. The topics covered are: first contacts with Siam and China; a tentative periodization; the structure of the trade between Macao and Siam; the role of other European traders in Ayudhya; the route used for shipping from Macao to Siam; the Portuguese trade system and the Chinese trade system; Chinese, Portuguese and Siamese taxes; and other notes on Siamese trade.

*I went to the city of Ayutthaya where the court of the King can be found, and I can state that it is the greatest affair that I saw in all those parts. This city is like Venice because one travels more by water than one does by land.*

Fernão Mendes Pinto, 1554<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Portuguese trade from Macao to Siam was part of the complex trade network that fed the European demand for Asiatic luxury goods.

The Portuguese arrived in India in 1498 by way of the Cape of Good Hope. They quickly understood that to enhance the volume and profitability of the Portuguese trade in India, and to benefit their triangular trade between Europe, Africa and Asia, they needed to expand further into Southeast Asia and the Far East. European products had no commercial advantage for trade in India or China; Portuguese traders had to buy the spices, silks and porcelains they wanted with gold or silver. To obtain gold from Monomotapa (via the Sofala

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port on the east coast of Africa) and spices from Southeast Asia, they needed to control the traditional cloth trade of India—woven cloths from Gujarat, the Coromandel Coast, and Bengal (Reid 1988, 90; Subrahmanyam 1990). The Portuguese understanding of the interregional Asiatic routes allowed them to take part in this trade as intermediaries. They carried silks from China (mainly by way of Macao) to Japan and the Philippines and took silver in return. In Manila the Portuguese also exchanged valuable Chinese products for gold from the Spanish mines of America. In these complex commercial maritime networks the Portuguese considered the inter-Asia trade as the most profitable (on the Portuguese expansion, see Godinho 1963–5; on the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, see Thomaz 1964, 1994; on Macao and Manila, see Lourido 1996). Later, in the seventeenth century, other European states seeking to control the Indian Ocean trade network followed the same model.

The Portuguese expansion and consolidation in the East, from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan, was undertaken in the framework of the political and military activities of the *Estado Português da Índia* centered in Goa.<sup>2</sup> This political entity was responsible for diplomatic and commercial expeditions to Siam and China organized from Malacca. But in practice the *Estado* interfered little. The Portuguese settlements and mercantile activities in the region were mostly in private hands and sometimes acted in defiance of Portuguese royal orders. G. Winius (1983) has characterized this as a *shadow empire* and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1990) as an *improvised empire*.

Since medieval times the interregional and long-distance traders in the Indian Ocean trade (mostly Arabs, Indian and Chinese prior to the arrival of the Portuguese) used certain emporia as safe havens for ships and goods waiting for the appropriate monsoon, and as a source of competitive market information and services.<sup>3</sup> Malacca was one of these ancient centers for the redistribution of the trade between India and Southeast Asia. After conquest by Portugal, Malacca continued to be an important base for the articulation and redistribution of merchandise between the Indian Ocean and the Chinese Sea (Meilink-Roelofs, 1962; Thomaz 1964, 1994).

Siam and Macao became two important centers on the Portuguese network of Asian trade. Macao was the gateway into China, while Ayudhya was already well established as one of the key ports of the international junk trade "dominated by China" long before the arrival of the Europeans (Lach 1965, III: 1168–1247). Ayudhya connected to routes in the Malay Archipelago and South China Sea, while the other Siamese port of Mergui connected to routes in the Bay of Bengal. A land route between Ayudhya and Mergui served as an alternative to the dangerous Straits of Malacca (Dhiravat 1990, 127–8). Traders arrived from regions as far away as Japan and Portugal, attracted by the possibility of buying Chinese merchandise. Tomé Pires (1944, 108) says that "most foreign merchants in Siam were Chinese because the Siamese have a large trade in China ... the merchandise they bring from China every year is also of value there."

The Siam–Macao trade had an important role in the profitability and strength of Portugal's Asian adventure.

## Diplomatic and Economic Relations

### First Contacts with Siam

Contacts between the Portuguese and Siamese are documented from the first decade of the sixteenth century. The first written mention of Siam can be found in a letter of 1510 from Rui de Araújo to Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese governor of Estado Português da Índia: "the King of Siam, who has many lands and sea ports and people, but they are said to be peaceful."<sup>4</sup>

The aim of Portuguese contacts with Siam was to establish trade relations. These contacts were generally cordial from the beginning. Before the conquest of Malacca, Afonso de Albuquerque sent a message to the king of Siam offering him suzerainty over Malacca as he knew that Malacca had been under the king's power until some thirty years before. The Siamese traders no longer frequented Malacca as their trade was now centered in the Bay of Bengal (Pires 1944, 108). Afonso de Albuquerque conquered Malacca in July 1511 without receiving a reply from the Siamese king.

The first Portuguese envoy, Duarte Fernandes, arrived in Siam in October 1511 aboard a Chinese ship. Earlier on 1 July, when the Portuguese fleet anchored off Malacca, Afonso de Albuquerque had discovered five Chinese junks there and commissioned two to convey the envoy to Siam. This was the first direct contact between Portuguese officials and the Chinese (Albuquerque 1923, III: 98, 113–114, 152). Duarte Fernandes was an officer in the Albuquerque fleet who had learned Malay when he was captive, together with Rui Araújo, in Malacca in 1509 (Correia 1975, II: 262). He was most courteously welcomed in Ayudhya by the Siamese king, Ramathibodi II (1491–1529) to whom he presented a sword with a jewelled hilt and a letter from Albuquerque written on behalf of King Manuel I of Portugal. Fernandes returned to Malacca in the same Chinese junks with a Siamese ambassador who carried jewels and other golden gifts for Albuquerque, a sealed letter for King Manuel, and a letter for Afonso de Albuquerque. In this last letter the Siamese king congratulated Albuquerque on his conquest of Malacca and offered "his person and his people in the service of the king of Portugal, as well as any supplies and merchandise he might need" (Castanheda 1542, III: 156–8; Villiers 1991, 63). The Portuguese recorded that the welcome ceremony was magnificent.

This first Portuguese mission to Siam was also the first cooperation with the Chinese. When the Chinese merchants returned, "they carried home a very favourable report of the character and the prowess of the Lusitanians" (Chang 1934, 34).

In early January 1512 another envoy, António Miranda de Azevedo, was sent to King Ramathibodi II, along with the Siamese ambassador. The main aim of this mission was to investigate the conditions for Portuguese trade. Albuquerque's instructions for this mission ran:

Tell him [the king of Siam] that the king of Portugal will be very pleased that the Siamese ships and people will trade again with Malacca and

that this was the main reason for which I took the city. And tell the king of Siam that if he needs the support of our fleet and our men to preserve his nation, I, as captain-general of the king of Portugal, will serve him in everything he will command. (Albuquerque 1923, III: xxxvi; English version in Embassy of Portugal 1987, 31)<sup>5</sup>

The relations between the Portuguese and Siam soon became stable. In 1514, Rui de Brito informed the king of Portugal that "King Ramathibodi II was a friend" and accepted both peace and commercial relations. In fact, he added, there were Portuguese ships and Malacca junks trading in Siam and "they have there lac, benzoin, brazil wood and much rice" (Albuquerque 1903, III: 91–92, 95).

In 1518 the Portuguese were formally allowed to settle in Siam and to trade at Ayudhya, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Pattani and Mergui. These concessions were established by a treaty negotiated by a third Portuguese embassy headed by Duarte Coelho. In return, the Siamese were permitted to settle in Malacca. The Portuguese were expected to provide arms and ammunitions for the Siamese war against Chiang Mai.<sup>6</sup> The employment of Portuguese in Southeast Asian armies and particularly in the Siamese bodyguard is well known. Due to the military skill shown by the Portuguese in the frequent conflicts between Siam and other states in the region, the Portuguese were very well considered. For example, after the victory against Chiang Mai in 1628, the king of Siam loaded his Portuguese bodyguard with rewards and privileges, including exemption for three years from the payment of all duties in any port in Siam. In this period the Portuguese were private traders, sailors and soldiers. Several married and settled in the country (Faria e Sousa 1666–74, 3: IV, 311).

### First Contacts with China

The trade between Macao and Siam during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was part of the broader network of European trade in east Asia. The principal aim of the Europeans in Asia was control of the China–Japan trade. Prior to the foundation of the Portuguese emporium at Macao in 1554,<sup>7</sup> the Portuguese were already trading in other ports on the Southern China coast, including Shuangyugang near Ningbo in Zhejiang coast; Chincheo (the Portuguese name for some Fujian ports including Yuegang near Zhangzhou and Quanzhou in the Amoy region);<sup>8</sup> Guangdong province and the Pearl river delta; Langbaigang (Lampacau in the Portuguese chronicles); and Shangchuan (known by the Portuguese as S. João or Sanchoão).

The Portuguese and Spanish trading in China adopted a Malay or Siamese identity in order to be accepted officially in the Chinese trade system by Cantonese mandarins. How did this happen?

The Chinese classified maritime trade into two main types: first, governmental or official tribute trade, called in Chinese *Gong Mao*; second, the private trade, called *Si Mao*, which could be legal or clandestine. Until 1567, the Chinese imperial authorities considered all private trade as smuggling.

Thereafter, the process of legalization began in Fujian province (Chang 1983, 165).

Thus according to the official Chinese rules, the only way to trade with China was in the framework of the official tribute trade. Moreover, the imperial administration only accepted tribute trade from countries already inscribed on the list of those that traditionally paid tribute to the Chinese emperor. The profits of trade were so large that the Portuguese, and after them other Europeans, found a way to trade with China.

Maritime trade between Siam and China had started in the thirteenth century (Viraphol 1977, 7–8). During the ban on foreign trade at Canton, the Portuguese presented themselves not as Portuguese or Feringis,<sup>9</sup> but "disguised themselves as Siamese or Malay traders" (Chang 1934, 71). In 1554 Leonel de Sousa made the first Portuguese formal agreement with the regional Chinese authorities. The Portuguese were officially accepted by Cantonese mandarins and made comparable to Siamese for the payment of tax duty (of 20 percent) (Leonel de Sousa's letter to Infante D. Luís in *As Gavetas* 1966, 910–5; Lourido 1996, 18; Braga 1949, 202–14). Subsequently the Spanish also asked the Cantonese mandarins to give them a place in China (the Pinhal port) and to be admitted to tributary trade on the same basis as Siamese.<sup>10</sup>

### Periodization of Macao–Siam Trade

The Macao–Siam trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be divided into three periods.

**The first period** (c. 1510 to c. 1610/20) was characterized by the establishment and development of contacts between the Portuguese and Siam. We have already seen that both diplomatic and commercial relations began in 1511–2. This relationship continued until the Dutch gained a dominant position in Siam in the second decade of the seventeenth century.

The Portuguese monopolized European trade with east Asia until the rise of Manila in 1565. The importance of Siam for Europeans in China was stressed by Gaspar Lopes in a letter from China in 1551. Lopes presented Siam and Japan as the only friends of Portugal in the region, being places where "we can come and go and conduct trade if we pay the tolls on arrival" (Gaspar Lopes to his brother, António Lopes de Bobadilha, October 1551, in Schurhammer 1982, IV: 311).

After the foundation of Macao (1554–7), in 1563 a large junk from Siam commanded by Gonçalo Vaz de Carvalho made the journey to Macao and Japan. This junk visited Yokoseura together with two other Portuguese ships—a galleon of Francisco Castão and the great *nao* from Macao under the command of Captain-major Dom Pêro da Guerra.

After Ayudhya fell to the Burmese in 1569, Naresuan (r. 1590–1605) led Siam to independence from the suzerainty of Burma and proclaimed himself king at Ayudhya in 1590. Naresuan maintained good diplomatic relations with China (Viraphol 1977, 7–8), and also expanded commercial relations with Asian

and European traders by signing a treaty with the Spanish Philippines in 1598 (Wyatt 1984, 100–5).

A 1601 Spanish description of Ayudhya speaks of the Siam–Macao–China trade:

... very rich and abundant in all merchandise, for many ships of Chinese and Portuguese from Macao and Malacca and Muslims of Pattani and Brunei and other parts carry it there. From that Kingdom they take cotton thread, brazil wood, much silver and lead ... benzoin and deer skins ... tigers, ounces, rhinoceroses and other animals and sell the hides to merchants ... Because there are so many elephants, there is a great abundance of ivory with which the merchants load their ships ... There are few important people in Siam who do not have very large ships which they send to China and other Kingdoms to trade. (Ribadeneira 1601, II: 171)

In the context of the open diplomatic and trade policy of King Ekathotsarot (r. 1605–11), Japanese traders settled in Siam after Ayudhya gained independence from Burma. Many were Christian refugees from the anti-Catholic policy of the Shogun Iyeyasu. Shipping from Japanese ports to Ayudhya averaged thirty-six ships a year from 1604 to 1616, and fell to twenty ships a year from 1617 to 1635 (Subrahmanyam 1993, 170).

The role of Siam in regional trade embroiled the country in the European struggle to dominate the trade routes. The Dutch visited Siam for the first time in 1603. During the reign of Ekathotsarot, the Dutch attempted to undermine the Portuguese influence in Siam. They sent an ambassador to Siam in 1604 and opened factories at Pattani in 1602 and at Ayudhya in 1608. The rulers of both Ayudhya and Pattani welcomed the Dutch as a counter to Portuguese influence (Hall 1968, 357; Lach 1965, III: 1168–1247).

According to Schouten's account of 1636, before the arrival of the Dutch the Portuguese had "great correspondence and amity" with the Siamese king to whom they sent several envoys with rich presents. They were welcomed in Siam as the "only and chief merchants of the whole Kingdom," and many Portuguese who settled in Siam "advanced to great office and preferment." They were granted complete freedom to practice their religion and "their chief priest also had a monthly pension allowed him for a more splendid subsistence" (Schouten 1663, 148 as translated in Boxer 1935).

According to the Chinese scholar, T'ien-Tsê Chang (1934, 107), the Portuguese in Siam were the most favored foreigners:

The trade between China and Siam was largely if not exclusively in their [Portuguese] hands. The Siamese merchants, trading with Chinese as individuals, offered but very feeble competition to the well organised government factories of the Portuguese. Here, more than anywhere else, they knew how to strengthen their tie of friendship with the native

population. It was due to their influence that for some time the Siamese were unwilling to allow the Dutch to settle among them.

**The second period** began with the Dutch rise to commercial prominence in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia in the second decade of the seventeenth century and continued until the Portuguese regained their independence from the Spanish Crown in 1640. This period was characterized by gradually increasing Dutch interference in Portuguese trade routes. During the period of Spanish dominion of Portugal (1580–1640), the Dutch repeatedly attacked the Portuguese in East Asia, particularly the Macao trade. Although the Dutch did not succeed in conquering Macao, they frequently isolated Macao from India, Siam and other Southeast Asian ports (Boxer 1991). Portugal's former superiority in the east was yielded to the Dutch and English.

In 1612 the English East India Company obtained permission to open factories at Pattani and Ayudhya. But they soon discovered these factories were not profitable in the face of Dutch competition and closed them in 1622. Thirty-seven years elapsed without regular trade between the English and Siam. The Dutch also closed their factory at Pattani in order to concentrate their trade in Ayudhya where "they become stronger than ever" (Hall 1968, 360; Lach 1965, III: 1172).

Concerned about the expansion of the kingdom of Ava on the northern borders, the king of Siam sent an ambassador to Portuguese Goa and granted Martaban port to the Portuguese to build a fortress and a factory. This port was, however, also being claimed by the king of Ava. To resolve this problem, Father Francisco da Anunciação (a Dominican), was sent to Siam in 1616 as the representative of the Portuguese viceroy in Goa, Jerónimo de Azevedo (Bocarro 1876, 518–21). He asked the king of Siam to stop receiving the Dutch because "they were both rebels and pirates attacking and destroying the Portuguese and Spanish ships."<sup>11</sup> The Siamese king answered that he had no motive to banish the Dutch from his kingdom, but he was interested in strengthening relations between Siam and Portugal. The Siamese king also asked for military help in the form of both men and artillery.

Montalto de Jesus noted that there were several Portuguese soldiers in the Ayudhya royal bodyguard who married local women and founded a Portuguese settlement in which Macao traders and missionaries had a leading role (Montalto de Jesus 1926, 80; Bramanti 1970, 480). However they lost all influence at court largely because Dutch attacks made it impossible for them to maintain regular trading between Siam and the Indian Ocean or South China Sea. In 1631 some Portuguese were imprisoned at Ayudhya.

In 1632 the Japanese in Ayudhya, who had been caught up in Siamese power struggles, were massacred and the survivors were expelled from Siam (Hall 1968, 360; Satow 1885, 139–210; Ishii 1971, 161–74). The Dutch took advantage of this event to establish closer relations with the new king, Prasat Thong (r. 1629–56). This king implemented a strong political and commercial policy to expand the royal trade and the crown's monopolies (Dhiravat 1990).

The Portuguese were banned from trading in Ayudhya due to their support of the Pattani rebellion. The queen of Pattani refused to recognize the Prasat Thong usurpation of the throne and was attacked without success by the royal army in 1632, and again in 1634.<sup>12</sup> The Portuguese gave their help to Pattani's queen in order to defend their commercial interest in Pattani and to diminish the influence of the Dutch with Prasat Thong in Ayudhya. However, the Spanish from Manila were also losing their connections with Siam because of their attacks on shipping in the Gulf of Siam (Lach 1965, III: 1173, 1180). In that period the Dutch increased their influence at Ayudhya, and in 1634 Prasat Thong gave permission to the Dutch to "build a stone lodge, with fit pack-houses, pleasant apartments and a commodious landing place" at Ayudhya (Schouten 1663, 151–2). According to Jeremias van Vliet's *Short History of the Kings of Siam* (1640) "this king was greatly inclined towards strangers and foreign nations."

In spite of this difficult situation, Macao continued to trade with Siam, Cochinchina and other ports of Southeast Asia.

A short boost in Macao trade occurred from 1636 to 1639. The Portuguese of Macao were always looking for an opportunity to develop their trade within Southeast Asia. They took advantage of the edict promulgated by the Bakufu in June 1636 prohibiting any Japanese from trade and residence overseas (Boxer 1988, 330–1). The Portuguese *administrador*, Manuel Ramos, wrote that "as this year the Japanese do not navigate to Cambodia, Sião, Champa, Tonquim and Cochim China, [Macao] hopes for great profits from shipping to those places" (Boxer 1988, 146–7). However, the increase in Dutch piracy kept Macao from bigger profits. The Macao Senate on 11 December 1637 deliberated using war ships to convoy trade vessels, but did not have the funds for building war ships (Teixeira 1960, 938–9). Security was a perpetual problem to the Portuguese authorities. One way to improve security was to trade in smaller and thus quicker vessels.

**The third period** of the Macao–Siam trade began in 1639–44 and lasted until 1663. It was characterized by an attempt to overcome the critical economic and social situation caused by the expulsion of Portuguese from Japan, the interruption of the Macao–Manila trade, and the instability of the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty.

The Macao Senate met on 9 November 1639 to analyze the expulsion of Portuguese from Japan. The Dutch had promised to capture Portuguese ships sailing in the South China Sea and to hand the captured merchandise over to Japan. The aldermen (*vereadores*) took the decision to forbid navigation to Siam, Cambodia, Tongking, Cochinchina and Champa in order to prevent the Dutch capturing Portuguese ships. One month later on 6 December 1639, the Macao Senate approved the departure of two ships from Macao. One belonging to the Jesus Society was headed for Tongking, and the other bound for Cambodia. Both were expressly forbidden to carry Japanese products (*Arquivos de Macau*, 1st. series, III: 3–7).

Siam intensified its relations with Macao using the Portuguese traders in Ayudhya as mediators. A message from the viceroy of Siam reached Macao in 1639, and in return the governor, Sebastião Lobo da Silveira (1638–1644) sent Francisco de Aguiar Evangelho as his personal representative (Silva Rego 1952, 462–3).



In 1640 sixty-one members of the Macao mission to Japan were massacred in Nagasaki. The Japanese market was now definitively closed for everyone except the Chinese and Dutch (Boxer 1988, 156–66). The Macao Senate met on 12 November 1640 to analyze the serious situation for the survival of *Cidade do Nome de Deus na China*. The Senate approved the proposal by Fernão Barreto de Almeida, the *vereador do meio* (alderman), that Macao must develop her trade with other ports such as Macassar, Cambodia, Tongking, Cochinchina and Siam ("Termo de fretamento que se fas para o Macasar, Cambodja, Tonquim, Cochinchina, e mais partes." *Arquivos de Macau*, 1st. series, III: 61–63; Manguin 1972, 199–200).

During this period the official letters from Macao to the king and to Portuguese authorities in Goa are full of references to the city's decadence and ruin. Yet Macao overcame the difficult situation created by the expulsion from Japan. The commercial and political pragmatism of Macao society was the basis of the city's survival. C. R. Boxer (1968, 144) wrote:

The colony was indubitably prosperous, [in spite of] the loss of its mainstay in the shape of Japan trade. Commerce with Manila was still flourishing, in spite of repeated official bans, and a profitable if less lucrative business was carried on with the warring states of the Indo-chinese peninsula, with the Moslem Sultan of Macassar, and with the petty pagan chieftains of Timor, Solor and Flores in the Lesser Sunda islands.

The Portuguese official correspondence has little data on the Macao trade to Siam and Southeast Asia in this period, but other sources indicate the trade was active. According to Dutch sources, Portuguese ships sailed to Southeast Asia in 1642 and 1644 (Buch 1936, 171, 191). Pierre-Yves Manguin (1972, 201) mentioned regular commercial navigation between Macao and Cochinchina in the 1640s. This was, however, a difficult period for Macao trade. Malacca was conquered by a joint attack of the Dutch and Malays in 1641. Dutch aggression against Portuguese vessels in the Indian Ocean did not diminish in spite of the peace treaty signed between Portugal and Holland in 1642.

In 1650–1 official correspondence<sup>13</sup> tells us that there was a very good level of profit from Macao's trade with Cochinchina, Cambodia and Siam. In 1651 Macao made good profits both in silver and in merchandise, but not as good as in the previous year. Three *patachos* and one *chó* arrived from Cochinchina, three ships from Cambodia and two ships from Siam.<sup>14</sup>

In 1652 Macao sent two ships carrying João Vieira as ambassador to the king of Cochinchina, Nguyễn Phuoc Tan (Ferreira 1700, 144–6; Manguin 1972, 203). The aims of this mission were, as usual, commercial, political and religious. King Nguyễn welcomed the ambassador in a friendly manner. He also ordered a stop to the persecution of Christians, which had begun recently after an incident with the Moors. According to a Portuguese account of this mission, the commerce with Cochinchina had to be maintained not only for the direct profits generated, but also because Cochinchina was strategic for Macao's trade with Southeast Asia and India (*Biblioteca da Ajuda [BA], Jesuitas na Ásia*, 49–IV–

61, *Missão da Cochinchina*, fol. 200). In 1655 the Senate of Macao sent another ambassador to the king of Cochinchina with presents and letters carried by the Fr. Marques. The latter arrived in Siam in 1658, and returned to Macao in the same year.<sup>15</sup>

According to Montalto de Jesus (1926, 122), in 1660

The King of Siam, who maintained cordial relations with the Senate of Macao ... sent relief in the form of a loan in silver and in various Siamese products [to Macao], which not long before, when the Japanese trade had been flourishing, was so wealthy that in the words of a traveller, the streets could have been paved with silver.<sup>16</sup>

Repayment of this debt took a long time. On 30 January 1687, the Macao Senate decided to reserve one percent of the city profits for the repayments to the king of Siam.

In 1659, King Narai (r. 1656–88) gave a warm welcome at Ayudhya to the English factors from the East India Company in Cambodia. The English reopened their factory at Ayudhya in 1661. French missionaries arrived in 1622 (Launay 1921). From 1662 to 1668, the French achieved influence at Ayudhya through the support of the Greek, Constantine Phaulkon, who served as the prime minister of Narai. As a consequence, Portuguese influence in Siam declined from 1662 (Silva Rego 1952, 12).

The peace treaty between Portugal and Holland signed in Europe in 1661 was accepted by the Dutch at Batavia in 1663 (Buch 1936, 159). This date is commonly accepted as a watershed for Portuguese trade in the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese commercial difficulties were exacerbated by military setbacks. Malacca fell to the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in 1641, followed by Ceylon in 1658, Graganor in 1662, and the holdings on the pepper-rich Malabar coast of India (Cochin, Cannanore) in 1663. The loss of Cochin marked the decline of Portuguese power in Asia, and the predominance of the Dutch and English (Boxer 1965; Israel 1989; Chaudhuri 1978, 1985; Bayly 1988, 1989). However, the Dutch influence in Siam was threatened by the increasing trade of other Europeans, particularly the French. The Jesuits returned to Siam in 1656. The English maintained a factory from 1674 to 1684. The Dutch factory in Ayudhya was closed down in 1663 but reopened a year later under a new treaty which granted the VOC extraterritorial rights and a virtual monopoly on the export of hides (Lach 1965, 185; Smith 1977, app. 6).

## **The Structure of the Macao–Siam Trade**

### **Maritime Routes from Macao to Ayudhya**

On their ocean voyages the Portuguese carefully compiled road-books or pilots of new sea lanes. Francisco Rodrigues wrote the first Portuguese road-book of

the China Sea, based on Malay–Chinese sources (Manguin 1972, 52) on the pioneering voyage by Fernão Peres de Andrade to the island of Tamão (Tunmen in Pinyin, possibly Lintin) in Canton province in 1513 and back to Malacca in 1514 (Keil 1933; Kammerer 1944; Ljungstedt 1836; Chang 1934).

For a description of the route between Macao and Siam we follow the "Road–book from Portugal to India by Vicente Rodrigues."<sup>17</sup> The vessels left Macao sailing in the direction of Sanchoão. After passing to the east of Hainan Island in the direction of Pulo (Malay: island) Cantão on the Vietnamese coast, they came to the João Preto islands and Pulo Cambim. Here they could take water on board if they arrived with the south monsoon. They were warned to avoid the many small rocky islands near the coast by sailing to the east of them. The next stop was Varella where there was good water. Sailing from there in the direction of the Champa coast, they came to Pandeirão and then Pulo Cecir and Pulo Condor. From here they either took the south–southwest route to Malacca or sailed via Pulo Hube to Siam. The return route had the same reference points and ports (on routes see also Bramanti 1970, 478–80).

Some small Portuguese trade communities were established along the Siamese coast, for example at Pattani, Ligor (Nakhon Si Thammarat), Tenasserim and Ayudhya. The Portuguese private trade to Siam had different ports of origin such as Macao, Malacca, the Coromandel Coast, the Bengal Gulf and other eastern ports. Even in the period of the Portuguese official trade concessions, when private trade was forbidden, the profits of non–official private shipping continued due to evasion of payment of the concession (Flores 1991).

Much later, many of the Chinese ships trading to Siam originated from ports in Guangdong (in the nineteenth century mainly Chaozhou and Hainan) and southern Fujian. Siam's trade vessels passed Hainan on their way to trade at many ports on the China coast (Cushman 1975, 31).

These routes could be changed for safety reasons or external factors, either natural ones such as tempests, or human ones such as pirates. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, Portuguese vessels sailing between Macao and Siam were attacked by other Europeans including the Dutch, English and French.

### **The Portuguese Maritime Trade System**

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Portuguese maritime trade in Asia developed in accordance with changes taking place in the political and economic context. During the years 1550–1560 trade moved from a system of royal monopoly to free trade and then in the 1560s and 1570s changed to a system of voyage "concessions" granted to individuals or institutions (Thomaz, 1979, 108–109; Subrahmanyam 1993, 97–100).

There were three different types of voyage concession (Lobato, 1993, 248). In the most common form, the *provido* (the person, trader or not, who received the voyage concession) had to prepare and equip a ship at his own cost, with an initial subsidy from the royal treasury of three thousand cruzados. Under the

second form, the *provido* rented a voyage concession for an agreed sum. The aim was to guarantee a stable amount of profit annually for the government of the Estado Português da Índia. This system did not have much success due to the opposition of the nobility which was used to controlling the post of captain-major of voyages and reaping important economic benefits. The third system represented a compromise between the other two. The *provido* could use his own ship or rent one from the state and incurred an obligation to carry some goods for the royal treasury rather than having to pay a certain sum of money.

In the beginning the concession system faced opposition from the nobility. Under the prior royal system they had been awarded voyage rights as a royal recognition of their services to the crown. These voyage rights were registered as a royal mercy in the official book of "Doações" (donations) and conveyed both social status as well as important economic benefits. Under the new system the voyage concessions were available to whoever would pay, without great concern for the social status of the *provido*.

Even Portuguese authorities were two-minded about the concession system ("Carta do Governador Francisco Barreto ao rei", Baçaim, 6-I-1557, *As Gavetas* IV: 233-235; Lobato 1993, 246). The Jesuits and the nobility feared that the liberalization and privatization of maritime trade would deprive them of their traditional income, privileges and political influence. Under the concession system, the *provido* got the post of *capitão* (captain) for that voyage and the respective economic benefits from mercantile rights and from his civil authority (among others, to be *provedor dos defuntos*, custodian of the propriety of people who died). The nobles were looking to defend and increase their social status and wealth. On top of their income from trade, the captains-major, many of whom were part of the colonial nobility, received (as salary and various financial compensations) approximately twenty-four *contos de reis* per year from the royal treasury in the last part of the 1580s. This corresponded to 9 percent of the public income of the Estado da Índia.<sup>18</sup> The concession system would reduce these payments. Possibly the Jesuits, who were among the major financiers of the Portuguese trade in Estado da Índia, also feared they would lose trading profits and political influence, because they would not receive any more voyages from the king as direct recognition of their evangelic work in Japan and China Sea. In 1567 the Goa ecclesiastic assembly condemned the government grant of exclusive trading rights to captains.<sup>19</sup>

The aim of the crown's system of voyage concessions was to create some stability in the incomes received by the state. With the competition of private trade and with the increase of Dutch and English attacks on Portuguese ships, the income from voyages had decreased. The time delay between the concession and realization probably led to voyage concessions being given to members of lower social classes.

The gradual withdrawal of the Estado da Índia from direct involvement in maritime trade in favor of voyage concessions enhanced the "monopolist" character of trade due to the privileges granted to the captains-major. Among these privileges was the exercise of Portuguese jurisdiction over other ships and

merchants. Until the first Macao governor, D. Francisco de Mascarenhas, was nominated in 1623, Portuguese jurisdiction was exercised by the captain-major of the voyage to China and Japan. He also had priority in loading and unloading his merchandise, which gave him a substantial advantage in fixing the prices and selecting the better merchandise. He could also levy freight fees from other ships escorted in the voyage. From the side of the Jesuits, Padre Francisco Rodrigues condemned the monopolistic system in the light of canonical law and commented that the captains-major were ready to sell their own souls in exchange for a good freight.<sup>20</sup>

The captains-major gained greater control over trade on the concession routes. This led to the growth of parallel trade on these routes and to the development of alternative routes on which Portuguese merchants could evade the customs, high freight costs, and other obligations due to captains-major. Subrahmanyam (1984, 448) argues the Coromandel-Aceh route was used to escape the control of Malacca's captains. As we know from Martin Afonso de Melo de Castro (letter to the king of Portugal 12 December 1565 in Silva Rego 1952, 539), in 1565 there were over two thousand Portuguese living in China, Pegu (Southern Burma), Bengal, Orissa and Siam. Fernão Mendes Pinto, who traded with Siam between the years 1540 and 1545, says that there were three hundred Portuguese trading in Pattani (Pinto 1945, ch. clxxxii).

The *Livro das Cidades e Fortalezas que a Coroa de Portugal tem nas partes da Índia* (Mendes da Luz, 1953) presents the average profit of the voyages in the Gulf of Bengal, the China sea and the Archipelago around 1580. The route from Macao to Siam and Japan generated a revenue of 1,500 cruzados, which after deduction of 500 cruzados for the cost of the commission, yielded a net profit of 1,000 cruzados, corresponding to 3.3 percent of the total profits of the Portuguese voyages in the Chinese seas. The routes of Macao-Pattani and Macao-Timor, where the concessions cost 300-400 cruzados, yielded a net profit of 1,000 cruzados, corresponding to 2.2 percent of the profits of the Chinese sea voyages, or 0.6 percent of the total profits from the Chinese seas, the Gulf of Bengal, and Insulindia voyages according to calculations made by Luís F. Thomaz. From Goa to Malacca, Macao and Japan, the commission cost an average of 20,000 cruzados, and the profit yield was 35,000 cruzados, which represented 77.7 percent of the profit of the Chinese sea voyages and 20.4 percent of the profit of the Gulf of Bengal, Chinese seas, and Insulindia trade. The Macao-Sunda route gave a profit of 6-7,000 cruzados, corresponding to 14.4 percent of the profits of the Chinese sea voyages, and to 3.8 percent of Portuguese Bengal, China and Insulindia trade. For comparison, the captain-major on the Lisbon-Goa route round the Cape received 10-12,000 cruzados and the ship captains around 4,000 cruzados (Thomaz 1994, 567-90).

In sum, under the theoretical jurisdiction of the Estado da Índia, a complex trade system developed. Profit levels varied greatly depending on the type of concession and the privileges granted. In spite of their higher price, it was the longer voyages (such as those from Macao to Japan, the Philippines or Goa or from Malacca to Molucas) that raised higher profits (Thomaz 1994, 586).

## The Chinese Trade System

Chinese and Siamese trade shared some similar characteristics. Each had an official and a private sector. In both there was interference by the state. The great difference between the Chinese and Siamese trade systems was perhaps that Ming and Qing China were marked by a permanent suspicion of foreigners, discontinuity of trade, and periods of total ban on maritime trade, while the Siamese maintained an open attitude to foreign traders. The Siam–China trade was complementary, but with the balance of advantage on the Chinese side. Siam exported raw products to China and imported manufactured products in return.

Portuguese trade with China and Siam increased as the Ming dynasty gradually opened up its maritime commerce. Chinese private trade was legalized from 1567 in Fujian. During the reigns of Jia Jing and Mu Zong, however, Japanese pirates plagued the Chinese coast. After they were quashed, the mandarin responsible for the province of Fujian (Du Ze–Min) requested that his region be opened to maritime trade with eastern and western countries. Chinese traders were allowed to travel freely overseas if they were provided with a proper licence (Chang 1934). Eighty–eight licences were given in 1589 and another 110 in the following years. In 1597, 137 licences were requested for ships from the Zhangzhou (Fujian, Chincheo) region. Half of the licences were given for trade in the eastern ocean and the other half for trade in the western ocean, with a different tax charged for each region (Chang 1989, 3). The formerly clandestine trade flourished with this new freedom.

In 1656, however, maritime trade in China was prohibited once again. This was to prevent the provisioning of the raids by Coxinga (Cheng Ch'eng–Kung) and the anti–Manchu activities (Revolt of the Three Feudatories) by maritime merchants. Almost thirty years later, in 1684, maritime trade was reopened and maritime customs were established in Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang (Cushman 1975, 178 uses the term "Kiangnan").

The Chinese divided the outside world into the western and eastern oceans. Siam was seen as the western limit of the Chinese maritime system through which, during the Qing Dynasty, Chinese junks passed only rarely. Jennifer Cushman describes the western ocean (or Nan Yang) as a circle encompassing the mainland Southeast Asian countries bordering the South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam including Vietnam, Cambodia, Siam, Southern Burma, the Malay peninsula, Sumatra, western Java and the northeast coast of Borneo. The eastern ocean (or Tung–nan) included Japan, Liu–ch'ius, the Philippines, Celebes and other lands east of Brunei (Cushman 1975, 6; Mills 1970, 227–9).

### Chinese Taxes

The Macao–Siam trade was a source of profit not only for the traders themselves, but also for the Macao and Siam authorities in the form of taxes. The Chinese authorities also imposed taxes on the Portuguese and other foreign ships which

arrived in Macao or in Guangzhou. Two kinds of taxes were demanded of the Portuguese—a trade tax on ships and a rent for the right to live in the territory of Macao.

Foreign and private trade with South China, particularly with Fujian province, was officially allowed in 1567 after long discussions between the Chinese authorities (imperial and regional) about the advantages and disadvantages. Until 1567 only official tribute trade was allowed in China, except at Macao. A report of 1535 by the Cantonese Governor (Bu Zheng Shi, called Lin Fu) cited the Chinese demand for silver as the reason for the Chinese acceptance of the Portuguese trade along the South China coast (Chang 1983, 165; Fok 1978, 33–64 and 1991, 13–30; Gomes 1979, 103). However, border security often dictated commercial policy, particularly during the period before the southeastern coast was brought firmly under Manchu control. Often trade and piracy were so closely linked that in periods of disorder trade was quickly prohibited as a first step for re-establishing order (Cushman 1975, 177).

Customs taxes were the responsibility of the Department of Foreign Commercial Ships (*Shi Bo Si*) which the Chinese authorities transferred to Xiang Shan (the district where the future Macao was built) in 1535. The method of calculating these taxes changed over this period. Between 1535 and 1571 under the *Chou Fen* method, taxes were calculated as 20 percent of the value of the goods. From 1571 under the *Zhang Chou é* system, taxes were levied according to ship tonnage. The reason for this change was that there was some difficulty in calculating the specific value of each of the goods (Huang, 1986).

These customs taxes were not applied equally to all foreign ships in China. The Portuguese received privileged treatment, paying less than other European and even other Asiatic ships coming from the Indian Ocean. Portuguese ships of up to 200 tons paid 1,800 taels of silver on their first voyage to China, and 600 taels on subsequent voyages. Other foreign ships paid 5,400 taels on any voyage.

Various Chinese sources (e.g. *Guangdong Fu yi Quan Shu*, *Yue Hai Guan Zhi*, *Guangdong Fu Yi Quan Shu*) mention the customs taxes charged in Macao as well as the manner in which they were charged (see also Zhu 1927, 6, 27). On the arrival of foreign ships in Macao, the mandarin in charge would inform the district of Xiang Shan and await instructions from Bu Zheng Shi (the provincial governor during the Ming Dynasty) and from Hai Dao Fu Shi (admiral of the command station of Guangdong province). The Department of Foreign Mercantile Ships (*Shi Bo Si*) and the chief of the Xiang Shan district would send officials to assess the ships and establish the tax according to the regulations. The ship would then be registered and the money handed over to the Chinese authorities.

There were two other ways in which Portuguese ships were privileged. First, the military ships which escorted the Portuguese ships paid no taxes. Second, a Portuguese ship involved in an accident would be rescued by the Chinese without payment being asked, whereas other foreign ships would be charged for the rescue service. Commerce with Portugal was clearly favored.

Zhang Ru Lin and Yin Guang Ren (authors of *Ao Men Ji Lue*, the *Monograph of Macao*) recorded that twenty-five Portuguese *fan bo* (ships smaller than ocean

ships) from Macao were authorized to sail in the China sea and be classified as *xiang*. After 1745, when these two authors successively held the mayorship of Xiang Shan (the district with administrative jurisdiction over Portuguese Macao), they mentioned there were sixteen *xiang* ships in Macao. Over the next twenty years, typhoons reduced the number of ships by half (Gomes 1979, 227).

### Taxes in Portuguese Macao

The city council of Macao charged a half percent on the goods that entered the city. In 1606 the Viceroy, Bishop D. Pedro de Castilho, wrote to the king that the inhabitants of the city of Macao had requested a tax of half a percent of Portuguese income from Macao's "Alfandega" (customs) to strengthen the walls of the city and pay for a captain. The king agreed on 10 January 1607 (*Biblioteca da Ajuda [BA], Jesuítas na Ásia*, Cod. 51–VIII–18, n° 199, 17 December 1606; Cod. 51–VIII–6, n° 620, royal letter to the bishop, D. Pedro de Castilho).

To respond to the attacks by the Dutch and English navies, the Senate of Macao raised the taxes on goods in foreign ships, according to their quality: 1 percent on lower quality goods, 1.5 percent on those of medium quality, and 2 percent on those of high quality (Gomes 1979, 227). In 1623 the Macao custom rate was raised to 10 percent to pay for the fortification of the city (Boxer 1988, 241–244).

According to the Macao representatives in Goa (Manuel Pereira, João Simões de Carvalho e Lourenço de Carvalho) in 1623 the expenses of the city council of Macao were broken down as follows: 10 percent for paying the taxes to the Chinese customs, another 10 percent to pay for the captain–major of the Macao–Japan route, 6–7 percent for the ordinary expenses of Macao, and the remaining 73–74 percent for military salaries and the fortification of the city. They explained that the city was indebted as follows: 12,000 xerafins for military salaries (*presidio*); 59,850 xerafins borrowed from the people of Macao (by way of *Misericórdia* of Macao); 156,000 xerafins for the fortification of Macao; and more than 16,000 xerafins for ammunition (Boxer 1988, 243–4).

After the ban on Portuguese trade in Japan, on 12 October 1640 the Senate decreed that Macao must develop trade with all the other neighboring ports such as Macassar, Cambodia, Tongking, Cochinchina and Siam. The merchandise was so different in kind, quality and provenance that they decided to create a new freight protocol between the ship owners and the traders in order to avoid financial loss (*Arquivos de Macau*, 1st. series, III vol. pp. 61–63 *Termo de fretamento que se fas para o Macasar, Cambodja, Tonquim, Cochinchina, e mais partes*; Manguin 1972, 199–200). The freight dues for shipping to Southeast Asia were set as follows:

- Silk, *pessarias* (silk pieces), *escomilhas* (a very gauzy silk), quicksilver, and vermilion at 6 percent.<sup>21</sup>
- China-root<sup>22</sup> at 16 percent.
- *Totunaga* (Tamil: zinc) at 5 percent.



- Tapestry, *cangas* (cotton piece-goods) and *nunos* (flax cloth) at 9 percent.
- Pieces of chinaware and casserole at 14 percent.
- Ranquel of chinaware at 4 *pardaos* each half ranquel.<sup>23</sup>

The freight dues for ships entering Macao harbor were set as follows:

- Benzoin, lac, *rom*, and dragon's blood (a resin) at 6 percent.
- Aquila (variety of aloe wood, inferior to calambac) at 10 percent.
- Calambac, camphor, and rhinoceros horn at 3 percent.
- Piper at 12 percent.

In some Southeast Asian countries Portuguese traders from Macao were privileged to pay lower dues than other Europeans. According to the regulations of the Lord Nguyễn of Conchinchine (Manguin 1972, 189–90 quoting Nguyễn 1970, 39), during the first twenty–five years of the seventeenth century, western merchandise was charged customs duty of 8,000 (of an unspecified currency) on arrival and 400 on departure. The Macao traders, however, were treated like traders coming from Japan, which meant they paid half of that amount (4,000 for arrival and 200 for departure). Vessels coming to Vietnam from Siam and Luzon paid less than others (2,000–200).

### Some Notes on Siamese Taxes and Trade

Tomé Pires (1944, 104–5) described Siamese trade in the early sixteenth century:

Foreign merchants in Siam pay two on every nine, and the Chinese pay two on every twelve. The bahar weighs the same as it does in China, neither more nor less. The Siamese gold and silver *cate* is equivalent to a Malacca *cate* and a half. Cowries, like those current in Pegu are current throughout the country for small money, and gold and silver for the larger coins ... And there seems to be no doubt that they pay one in fifteen on the goods going out, because the truth is that they pay duties of two in ten on everything in Siam.

Pires noted that the Portuguese and other foreigners had to pay a higher customs tax than the Chinese on import–export at Siam. While the Portuguese paid 22.2 percent, the Chinese paid only 16.7 percent. Other foreigners paid 6.6 percent for export, and 20 percent on everything else. According to Jacques de Bourges (ca. 1630–1714), in 1662 the Siamese collected 8 percent ad valorem on import and export merchandise at Mergui (Lach 1965, 1186).

Siam had a privileged relationship with China due to the official and ideological integration of Siam into the Chinese tributary system. "In spite of all his grandeur, the Siamese King each year sends to the Chinese Emperor an embassy as a sign of his subjection," wrote F. M. Pinto in a letter from Malacca

in 1554 (Aires 1904, 65). According to Dhiravat Na Pombejra, the tribute missions sent from Siam to China were very much trading ventures. To the Siamese, the act of submitting tribute in nominal recognition of Chinese suzerainty was less important than the prospect of commercial gain (Dhiravat 1990, 129).

However, tribute missions must not be confused with the native trade. Because they came with Siamese envoys as a token of their ruler's fealty to the Chinese emperor, tribute missions were allowed to trade in Beijing and in Guangzhou without paying any duty. However, they were only allowed to come to China during prefixed periods, usually triennial, according to their country of origin. Pires said that Siam sent six or seven junks a year to China (Pires 1944, 110).

Siamese maritime trade also connected Siam with a large number of other countries in Southeast Asia, the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Siam exported its products annually "loaded on over one hundred junks leaving for China, Ainam, Lequios, Cambodia and Champa" (Pinto 1945, ch. clxxxix). Pires referred to other locations such as Sunda, Palembang and other islands, Cochinchina and Burma and Jamgoma (Chiang Mai). From the Tenasserim side Siam also traded with Pase, Pedir, Kedah, Pegu, Bengal. Pires (1978, 243) also states that Gujaratis came to the Siamese port every year.

The Portuguese from Macao also traded with a large number of ports of the Southeast Asian mainland countries such as Cochinchina, Pegu, and Burma. In Vietnam in 1584 the Portuguese settlement was large enough to expel a Spanish Franciscan delegation (Bartolomeu Ruiz and Francisco de Montilla) (Teixeira 1960, 631). In 1617 Fernando da Costa, captain, diplomat and active Portuguese merchant was sent as an ambassador from Macao to the king of Cochinchina to establish a commercial agreement. Macao wanted to buy Chinese silks in Cochinchina in order to reduce the dependence on China and exert leverage for the Chinese to lower prices (Manguin 1972, 307).

Trade in Siam was free to all who had enough resources to invest. According to Fr. Marcelo de Ribadeneira (1601, II: 171): "There are few important people in Siam who do not have very large ships which they send to China and other kingdoms to trade." The king himself was the most important merchant in the realm because some monopolies were reserved for the crown. However, the royal prerogative on trade was only established effectively in 1630 by a decree of King Prasat Thong. According to Joost Schouten's description (1663, 148; see also Villiers 1991, 63) based on first-hand experience, the king had his own junks and factors trading in such places as the Coromandel Coast, China, Pegu, Ava, Chiang Mai, and Luang Prabang "all of which brought him incredible profit and no small disturbance to private merchants." The king forbade others from buying from foreign traders before he had bought what he wanted at prices fixed by himself. Nobody was allowed to sell rice or other staple merchandise until the king's supplies, which were collected as a tax in kind from his subjects, had all been purchased at a price fixed by the king. Local products for export were sold by royal factors under the crown monopoly for foreign trade (Viraphol 1977, 19).

Nevertheless, in Schouten's opinion the trade in Ayudhya was "very good and free in its course." This was a natural opinion for a Dutch author appointed director of the VOC office in Ayudhya in 1633. In that period the Dutch were the only Europeans on good relations with Ayudhya. The Portuguese were banned due to their support of Pattani against the Dutch and Ayudhya. The VOC became much more actively involved in military support during the Siamese wars (Lach 1965, III: 1173–4).

### Merchandise Traded in Siam

China's trade with Siam was the largest part of its trade with Southeast Asia (*Nan Yang*). Trade between China and Siam was similar to China's trade with other Southeast Asia countries. Most Chinese exports to Siam were manufactured items (usually not very sophisticated) such as fans, silk and other textiles, preserves and crockery. Siam exported mainly raw materials and unprocessed foodstuffs, of which rice was the most important. Animal skins, sappan wood, lead, tin, and some exotic products such as rhinoceros horn and birds' nests were important sources of Ayudhya's wealth. In the 1510s Siam exported a large amount of rice, salt, dried fish, and oraquas vegetables, loaded on over thirty junks which sailed annually to Malacca. Other exports such as lac, benzoin, brazilwood, gold, silver, ivory and diamonds were shipped to China, Malacca, Bengal and India. Imports into Siam were mainly quicksilver, vermilion, white and black cloth, velvets, brocades and cambrics (Albuquerque 1903, 91–92, 95). Siamese products were exchanged for silver, copper, and luxury goods from Japan. Siam was also a center for the redistribution of Straits' produce (the general term for Chinese imports from Southeast Asia) which arrived in Ayudhya partly as tribute from neighboring regions, partly bought by Siamese vessels, for shipment onwards to China (Greenberg 1951; Cushman 1975, 95–6, 200–13).

The Chinese junk trade "was carried in Chinese-style craft, the officers and crews were Chinese, and the vessels and goods shipped in them were subject to a body of regulations designed to apply only to Chinese trade." Fujian and Guangdong style junks were the vessels used for the trade to and from the South China coast. China's junk trade with Siam was included under the rubric of native trade in "native craft." Siam's state trade (from the Siamese king and nobility) was a form of native trade because it was shipped in Chinese vessels under the supervision of Chinese merchants (Cushman 1975; Chang 1989).

Dom João Ribeiro Gaio, the bishop of Malacca from 1581 to 1601, wrote in 1584 of "this Kingdom of Siam, which contains everything that is needed to sustain human life, and in such abundance" (quoted in Boxer 1985, 127–9). Siam was the rice granary for neighboring countries, with the exception of Cambodia. More than three hundred junks from Malacca and Indonesian ports entered the river Menam annually. There was also a flourishing trade with China, mainly in gold and sappan wood. The kingdom abounded in cattle and deer, and some thirty or forty thousand hides were exported yearly "to Japan and other parts."

All provisions were exceedingly cheap, and a large cow cost only about one cruzado. There was a large export trade in indigo (twenty thousand *tinajas* or large earthen jars per annum), benzoin, coarse cloth, and sappan wood "which is the brazilwood wherewith the whole of India, China, and Japan are supplied." Siam was said to be more abundant in timber suitable for shipbuilding than any other country "at the present time" (Boxer 1985, 128).

According to Schouten (1663, 148; see also Villiers 1991, 64), the revenue of the crown trade amounted yearly to "many Millions," mainly due to the export of rice, sappan wood, tin, lead, saltpetre, and gold. These products were only available from the king's factors. Crown profits also came from maritime customs on imported goods and tribute from the lords, governors and princes. Revenues from the trade with China and the Coromandel Coast made the Siamese king one of "the richest Princes of India."

### Some Concluding Notes

The Siamese kings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries aimed at enriching the royal treasury by attracting foreign traders and instituting trade monopolies.

According to Schouten, the Ayudhya kings (as well as some members of the Siamese elite) engaged in maritime and inland trade. The Siamese royal trade system (monopolies and warehouses) was highly profitable for the crown at the expense of the foreign traders. To control the excessive influence of any single foreign power in the economy, the Siamese kings tried to attract traders of many foreign countries. Trade in contraband goods was a way of undermining monopolies. European documents attest to the smuggling of tin and ivory during the reign of Prasat Thong. The use of foreigners in the conduct of crown trade was generalized by Narai, with the employment of Persians and Europeans as governors, traders, artisans, military experts and even courtiers. These foreigners could be easily disposed of when they ceased to be useful.

Siam and Macao were major centers of Asian trade. Both were places where Chinese products could be bought by Asian and European merchants. Macao trade was open to the Portuguese and to other foreign traders sailing in Portuguese ships or paying the Portuguese licence (the *cartaz*). Siam was at the periphery of the Chinese trade, but at the center of its own economic region, the Gulf of Siam, with all the countries that recognized Siam's economic-political dominance in some way.

Macao was a pivotal center for the Portuguese maritime network in Asia. It was a strategic objective for other Europeans to destroy the Macao trade. Military attacks, mainly by the Dutch, and the banishment of Portuguese from Japan and Manila, caused both revenues and population to decrease substantially. Nevertheless, the small city of Macao found a way to survive by opening up the direct route from Macao to Lisbon, by concentrating its trade on places such as Macassar, Timor, and Bantan, by intensifying trade with Siam, and by smuggling. Macao traders used the services of Chinese, Siamese, English and other agents

for equipping and despatching ships. Portuguese missionaries continued working, albeit with limited success, and Portuguese "soldiers of fortune" continued to fight for successive kings of Siam.

The Macao–Siam route had an active influence on the remarkable economic development of Ayudhya in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Macao supplied the Siamese market with Chinese and Japanese merchandise as well as Indian and other Southeast Asia products.

### Notes

1. Extract from a letter written in Malacca in 1554, addressed to the Society of Jesus (Aires 1904, 63–5). Soldier, merchant and traveler, Fernão M. Pinto (1514–1583) went twice to Siam during his long sojourn in the Far East.
2. Estado Português da Índia was the Portuguese denomination for the maritime and territorial Portuguese network from the east coast of Africa to Macao and Pacific settlements. It was officially instituted in 1505 under the governor D. Francisco de Almeida. With the chronicle *Asia* (first edition 1552–63) of João de Barros, the use of the name *Estado Português da Índia* was generalized. On the characteristics and models of the Estado Português da Índia, see Thomaz 1960, and Disney 1995.
3. The first Portuguese description and global perception of Indian Ocean emporia trading can be found in *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires, an account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, written in Malacca and India in 1512–1515*, first edition by Hakluyt Society, London, 1944, Portuguese edition by Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra, 1978. For an analysis of the Indian Ocean emporia system see Chaudhuri (1978, 1985).

4. Rui de Araújo writing from Malacca prison to Afonso de Albuquerque, second governor of the Estado (1509–15), 6 February, 1510 (Albuquerque 1903, III: 6; English translation in Matos 1987, 28–57).
5. Manuel Fragoso, another of the six members of that embassy, had the duty to write on "products, dress and the costumes of Siam and the depth of the harbours." The name of the ambassador does not correspond with that given by Gaspar Correia. Correia (1975, 263) gives the name of the ambassador as Simão de Miranda de Azevedo and not António but this must be a mistake, because the ambassador's name was confirmed by other documents such as Rui de Brito's letter to the King of Portugal, from Malacca, 6 January 1514 stating "As captain-major I sent António de Miranda who had been to Siam" (Albuquerque 1903, III: 91–92, 95).
6. Duarte Coelho who led a large retinue gave the Siamese sovereign letters from King Manuel. He was skilful in Siamese matters since he had been twice in Siam, first in António Miranda de Azevedo's retinue and the second time when forced by a sea storm in the Gulf of Siam to take refuge in the Chao Phraya estuary (Barros 1777, II: 151–2).
7. Oral agreement, as says Leonel de Sousa's letter to Infante D. Luís, 15 January 1556, in *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (ANTT)*, «Gaveta» 2ª, maço 10, nº 15, transcribed in book 6º of *Reforma*, fl.–160 (published by Freitas, 1910, VIII).
8. Quanzhou was one of the most important ports for Chinese trade in the Indian Ocean during the 11th–14th centuries (surpassing Canton). Westerners including Marco Polo called it Zaitun (Chen and Lombard 1988, 21–29; Salmon and Lombard 1979, 57–67).
9. Fo Lang Shi or Franks was the name by which the Portuguese were called in South Asia and in the Far East for many years (Pelliot 1934, 58ff.; 1949, 81–292; Chang 1934, 35).
10. "Despacho que o Aitão deu aos Castelhanos à petição que lhe fizeram contra os Portugueses em que lhe pedião porto no Pinhal como Siameses" in *ANTT*, Colección «*Convento da Graça*», box: 16d, Vol. VI, ff. 133–34. Lourido (1996, 18, 33) discusses the location of Pinhal (on the east side of the Pearl River delta) and the Portuguese reaction.
11. Father Francisco da Anunciação shipped out of Goa on 3 March 1616, taking with him the Siamese ambassador (Bocarro 1876, 519–20). Another archival source on the Dutch presence in Siam, the report of the Captain André Coelho: "Discursos feitos pello Capitam André Coelho pera Gaspar de Mello de Sampaio tratar no Conselho de Madrid e em Lisboa feitos em 24 de Fevereiro 1621," (Goa), confirms that the Dutch established themselves and traded without problems with "Siam, Camboja, Patane" ("... tem estes rebeldes contratos e feytorias. Finalmente portados às ilhas das Selebes e Mindanao navegam con desusada izensam e liberdade nam temendo a armada de Manilla ..."). *ANTT*, «*Miscelaneas Manuscritas do Convento da Graça*», Tomo vi, F, (mic. film. 1327), "*Rellassam de todo o Estado da India Oriental*", page 78vº.
12. On the queens of Pattani (they were known by the Thai term *Phrao-cao* indicating that they recognized the overlordship of Ayudhya), see Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, I: 13–14.
13. From the king of Cochinchina to the clergy (Padre Vizitador) and secular authorities of Macao (Captain-major João de Sousa Pereira), in *Biblioteca da Ajuda, Jesuítas na Ásia*, 49–IV–61, from the year 1651, respectively fols. 29–30, and 30–30v.) asking for military help from Macao.
14. Letter from João de Sousa Pereira, Captain-Major of Macao, to the Count of Óbidos and Viceroy of Inde, Macao, 2 December 1651. In *Livro das Monções*, nº 22–A, doc. 84, f. 184.

Also in *Filmoteca Ultramarina Portuguesa*: fich. 2, gav.3, div.10; *Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina Portuguesa*, n° 21, p. 403.

15. On the way to Macao, Fr. Marques was imprisoned by the king of Cochinchina. He was not freed until 1659 when a Macao ship arrived with cannons which the king had ordered and paid for long before (Manguin 1972, 208).
16. This traveler was the Italian, Gemelli Carreri, who in 1695 wrote his adventures in the book *Giro del Mondo*.
17. See route n° 3 "Derrota de Macao pera Sião" and n° 4 "Derrota de Siam pera a China" in *Roteiro de Portugal pera a India por Vicente Rodrigues, & pillotos modernos*, 2nd edition, in Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, Res. 1197. The first edition was from 1608. The original Portuguese texts (from Sanchão to Pulo Hube) are published by Manguin (1972, 300–5).
18. "Receipt of the Revenues of the State of India: as also the Expenses publike therein" in "Don Duart De Meneses the Vice-roy, his tractate of the Portugall Indies, containing the Lawes, Costumes, Revenues, Expenses and other matters remarkable therein: heere abbreviated" (Purchas 1950, 165; see also Lobato 1993, 246).
19. "A navegação do mar e comércio delle he livre e desembargado a todos ... por direito natural e civil comum." F. Gomes Vaz in "Tratado breve" [c. 1600], *ANTT*, «Ms. da Livraria», n° 805, cap.3, "se podem os capitães prohibir aos outros que não comprem nem vendão", fls. 166v.–168v. See Lobato (1993, 246).
20. "Cazos Diversos e varios que correm pelas partes Daindia com suas resoluções pelo padre francisco Rodrigues da Companhia dejesu", *ANTT*, «Ms. da Livraria», n° 805, fl. 100.
21. Dues paid for shipping out, as well as for entering the Macao harbor.
22. China-root is another name used for the tuber of different species of *Smilax* and particularly the *Smilax China* Lin. Boxer said that it was used in the same way as sarsaparilla, and much prized as a cure for syphilis (Dalgado 1988, II: 196; Mundy 1919, III: 212; Pételot 1952–4, III: 219).
23. *Ranquel* was the unit of measure for earthenware, usually ten plates or dishes. See "Memorandum of the merchandise which the great Ships of the Portuguese usually take from China to Japan, (c. 1600)," in *AGI*, 1–2–1/13, p. 31 (Boxer 1988, 179–84).

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