

Agents and Agency in Japanese Daimyo Foreign Trade:
Kyushu in The First Half of The Seventeenth Century

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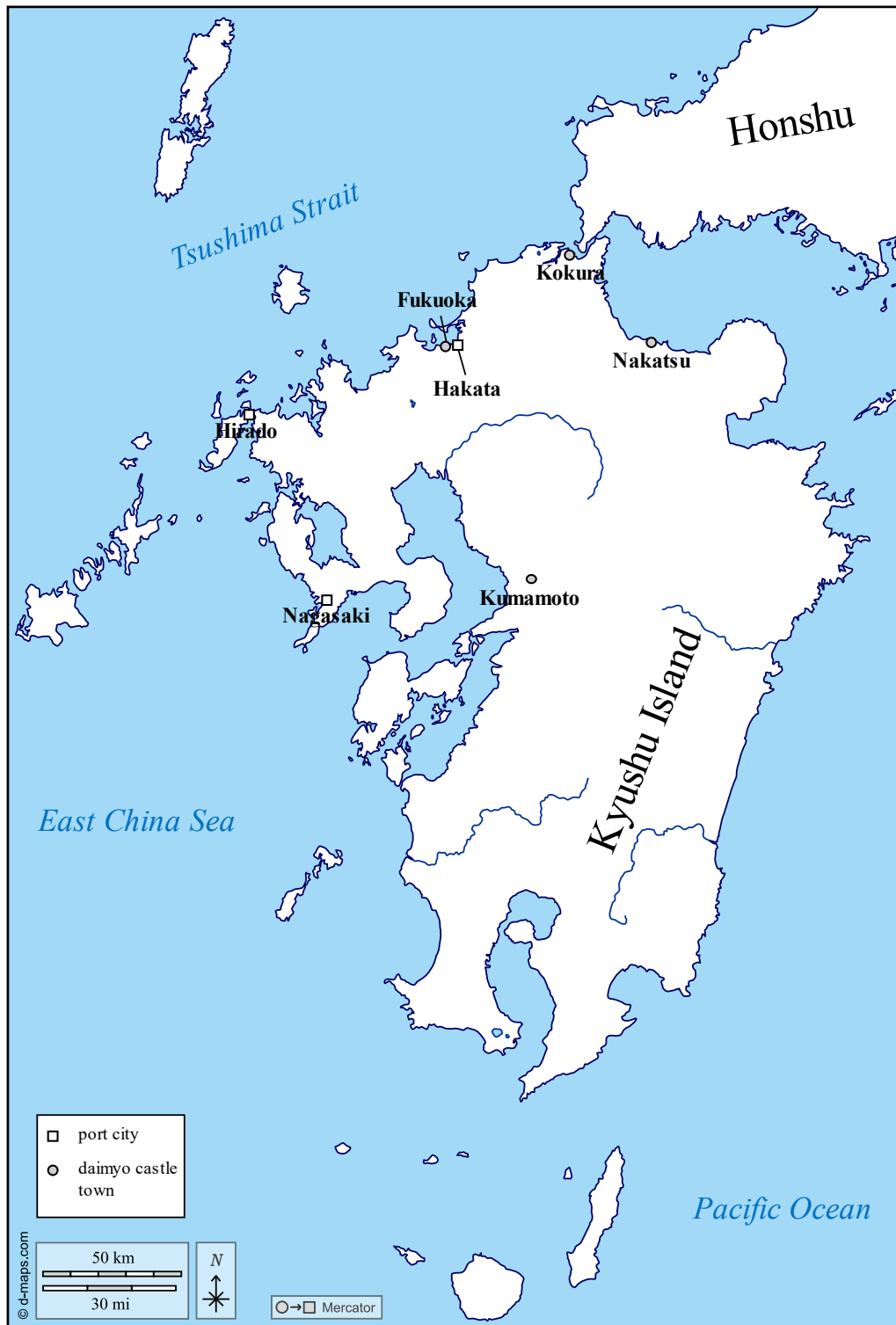
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A MAP OF KYUSHU



Source of the map outline: https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=115466&lang=ja

INTRODUCTION

Since the middle of sixteenth century, the southwestern island of Kyushu in Japan had become a point of convergence in Japan's foreign trade. Its geographical position as a crossing between the rest of the archipelago and Korea, China, and its convenience for the newly arrived Iberians, Dutch, and British, has made it a center for Japan's flourishing international commerce and helped globalize the Japanese domestic market and its resources. The feudal lords (*daimyo*) on the island exercised their power to facilitate access to the profit from places beyond sea, by establishing their own relationships with the foreigners, sometimes even devote themselves to Christian belief. With the start of the Tokugawa Period (1603-1867),¹ the first half of the seventeenth century marks a quick transition period in the history of Tokugawa state-building, as well as Japan's relation with the rest of the world. During this period, through franchising the right to conduct foreign trade and issuing governmental edicts which restricted the contacts between the Japanese and the foreigners, Tokugawa government consolidated its control over Japanese foreign relations, and the space for *daimyo*'s autonomy in foreign trade became diminished.

Under this broad context, this study concentrates on the issue of foreign trade relations during the early seventeenth century from the perspective of two strong but seemingly unremarkable feudal clans and the three domains under their control in Kyushu: the Fukuoka

¹ A Note on dates and units: All dates refer to the Japanese calendar with the closest Western year, unless otherwise stated. In early modern Japan and among those who traded in East Asia, the value of silver currency was measured by its weight: 1 *kan* = 100 taels/ *ryō* = 1000 maces/ *monme* = 3.75kg.

domain governed by the Kuroda clan and the Kokura domain, later the Kumamoto domain, under the rule of the Hosokawa clan. This study sees the foreign trade by the two daimyo clans happening continuously and accommodating with the growing Tokugawa restrictions, and was still resilient after the preliminary completion of the restriction in the 1640s. This study also discusses the daimyo's relations with the wealthy merchants and the foreign traders, and how making them into agents and retainers preserved the daimyo's participation in the foreign trade system.

A study of the subtle arrangements of trade and power at the pivotal location of Kyushu requires some clarification of its historical context: a history of how state power sought to regulate a once “chaotic” international trade. Japanese shogunal trade with Ming dynasty China dates earlier to the early fifteenth century, and lasted until the mid-sixteenth century, during this time the Muromachi shogunate conducted nineteen formal trade missions with the Ming dynasty under the form of tribute to China.² Japan and Korea also had trading relations under the Ming tributary system. This stable trading relation with the continent came to a decline after the Ōnin War (1467-1477) when Japan entered an era of warfare between daimyo amid an ever-declining Muromachi shogunal power.

The lack of central power gave the daimyo in Kyushu much more room for individual connection with foreign traders. Some daimyo participated as sponsors of pirates in international trade. For example, the Matsura daimyo at Hirado invited the Chinese pirate merchant Wang Zhi to establish a base at his domain and engaged in smuggling trade with him. And Japan's first

² Sasaki Ginya, “Higashiajia bōekiken no keisei to kokusai ninshiki,” from Asao Naohiro et al. eds, *Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), v.11, 112.

direct encounter with the Europeans traders also falls into this time of great daimyo autonomy. Shortly after the incidental arrival of a Portuguese ship at the island of Tanegashima at Satsuma in southern Kyushu in 1543, individual daimyo's trading relations with the Portuguese grew rapidly. The Portuguese was keen on spreading the Christian belief through the society of Jesus in Japan, and many individual daimyo converted to Christian partly to benefit from the trade with the Portuguese. In this way, they managed to establish long-term trading relations with the Portuguese merchants. The height of Portuguese trading and missionary activities in Kyushu was probably marked by the opening of the commercial port of Nagasaki to the Portuguese by the Christian daimyo Ōmura Sumitada in 1570, and ceded control of the port to the society of Jesus in 1580 when it became a self-governed community.³

The flow of silver was global. It is estimated that Japanese silver production accounted for 1/3 of the world's total silver production at this time. Silver came to be important capital for the seaborne trade of the Europeans, largely because the burgeoning Ming dynasty market was very hungry for silver to use as its currency. In Japan, the demand for silk was high, as well as porcelain, medicine, and other items from the East Asian continent and the European colonies. However, with the Ming maritime restriction in response to the long history of *wako* pirates (consisted of Japanese and Chinese pirates) assaulting Chinese coasts, and later Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea, it became difficult for Japanese merchants to trade in China and Korea in the late sixteenth century, so the Portuguese, with Macao and Nagasaki as their bases,

³ In 1580, Ōmura Sumitada took a step further to donate the port to the Society of Jesus. In 1588, following Toyotomi Hideyoshi's "Bateren Edict" issued in the previous year that prohibited all foreign missionaries in Japan, he confiscated Nagasaki and put it under the direct administration of his regime.

dominated the profitable route connecting the two cities through which the Portuguese brought Chinese silk to trade for Japanese silver.

In the seventeenth century, new European powers joined the commercial competition in Japan to challenge the Portuguese domination of the intermediary trade between Japan and China. The Dutch East India Company opened its factory at Hirado in 1609. Their objective was to acquire as much silver as possible for use as capital in the Asian market.⁴ The British also operated in Japan from 1613 until their retreat in 1623 due to the inability to make profit.

After Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Kyushu as his final step to unify Japan, he realized that the religious fervor of the Jesuit-converted hindered his march in Kyushu.⁵ Apart from anti-Christian edicts, Hideyoshi also sought to exert more control on foreign trade by putting Nagasaki directly under control. Despite some attempts by Hideyoshi to regulate foreign trade, the Tokugawa shogunate was the first government that had the ability to restrict foreign trade. Their regulatory moves started early: Starting in 1601, red-seal ships were chartered by Tokugawa government to Japanese merchants (including foreign merchants who resided in Japan, some of whom served as Tokugawa retainers), authorizing them to sail overseas and conduct trade with Tokugawa's state endorsement.⁶ The *itowappu* policy started in 1604 to restrict the amount of silk the Portuguese could sell to each port city, thereby strike their monopoly on silk

⁴ Suzuki Yasuko, *Kinsei Nichi-Ran bōekishi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2004), 39.

⁵ Jurgis Elisonas, "Christianity and The Daimyo," from *The Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), v.4, 362.

⁶ Such a system allowed Japanese merchants to trade abroad but at the same time elucidated the source of their privilege. The system worked only at the destinations where there were diplomatic ties with Japan, otherwise the state authority overseas would not recognize the red seal from the Tokugawa government. Due to this reason, No red-seal ship was bound to China and Korea because when the red seal system existed, neither country had diplomacy with Japan.

import, and they were only allowed to sell the silk to authorized Japanese merchants. Later, this silk share restriction also applied to the Dutch and Chinese merchants and was still officially in practice after the series of foreign trade restrictions later. In 1616, all foreign vessels except Chinese ones were limited to anchor at Hirado and Nagasaki. Additionally, two systems in the first half of the seventeenth century are crucial to the study of the domainal trade. The first is red-seal ships, or *shūin-sen* 朱印船, and the second is the policy of *itowappu* 糸割符 (silk share).

This foreign trade system during the transitional period was in constant flux. A series of shogunal edicts in the 1630s meant that Japanese overseas voyages were prohibited, all foreign vessels were allowed only to the port of Nagasaki, and additionally all vessels from China and those working for the VOC were allowed to engage in this Nagasaki trade. In addition to Tokugawa shogunate's direct control over foreign trade at Nagasaki, three daimyo had a monopoly of trade with three different foreign partners. The Ryūkyū kingdom maintained a tributary relationship with Satsuma domain. Japan's relationship with Korea was managed by Tsushima domain, and the Matsumae family situated in Northeast Japan managed a relationship with the people of Ezo, the indigenous people in the land of present-day Hokkaido.⁷ Since the Meiji period people in and outside Japan adhered to the idea of *sakoku* ("locking country") to describe the Tokugawa restrictions, that in historiography one could seclude most part of the Tokugawa Japan from the world history. Some revisionists of this idea prefer to call it *kaikin*

⁷ It is important to distinguish the countries with official diplomacy with Tokugawa Japan from those that only had trading relations. Korea and Ryukyu had official diplomatic ties with Japan, and both had special relationships with two Japanese domains. China and Dutch contact with Japan were mostly by their merchants and there were no official diplomatic relations, and these merchants therefore were put under Tokugawa control at Nagasaki.

(“sea ban”), a word also used to describe such similar restrictions in other East Asian states, and the word itself emphasizes this commonality.⁸ In this paper, I also use the word *kaikin* to refer to the restricted status of Japanese foreign relations after the end of 1630s.

Previous interpretation of the seventeenth century has largely centered on the idea that the Tokugawa maritime restrictions was an inseparable part of their construction of the *bakufu*-domain order and establishment of its legitimacy. In this process, the Tokugawa government constructed a self-centered diplomatic order that mimicked the Sinocentric order.⁹ Similarly, a more recent study from Adam Clulow traces the evolution of the Dutch East India Company's role in the Tokugawa relation as a process from representatives of colonial sovereignty to shogunal subjects.¹⁰ While the Tokugawa-centered narratives in the last decades are successful in rectifying the myth of “locked country,” they inevitably overlook the lower tier powers which were seemingly marginal to the Tokugawa post-*kaikin* diplomatic system. Most studies on the foreign trade at a domainal level focused exclusively on Tsushima and Satsuma domains for their special privilege and duty to manage the relation with Korea and Ryūkyū.¹¹ Although the early part of Noell Wilson's work on Tokugawa maritime defense system does place some Kyushu domains under the Tokugawa diplomatic system,¹² they are still widely considered marginal in

⁸ Maehira Fusaaki, “‘Sakoku’ Nihon no kaigai bōeki,” in Asao Naohiro. *Sekaishi no naka no kinsei* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1991), 142.

⁹ For research on this subject, see Asao Naohiro, *Sakoku* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1975), and Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991).

¹⁰ Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: the Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

¹¹ See Uehara Kenzen, *Sakoku to han bōeki: Satsuma-han no Ryūkyū mitsubōeki* (Tokyo: Yaedake Shobō, 1981), and Robert Hellyer, *Defining Engagement: Japan and Global Contexts, 1640-1868* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

¹² Noell Wilson, *Defensive Positions: the Politics of Maritime Security in Tokugawa Japan* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015).

the realm of Edo Period foreign relations. However, a close reading at the abundant early seventeenth century primary sources on the Kuroda and Hosokawa clans' domainal administration, the daimyo's letters, and even some foreign sources suggests that the Kuroda and Hosokawa daimyo engaged intensively in foreign trade, thus provides an additional perspective to study the transitional period of Japan's foreign relations.

Takeno Yōko has probably been the earliest, and so far, still the most prominent scholar of domainal foreign trade conducted by early Tokugawa Kyushu domains. Takeno studied four daimyo clans, including the Nabeshima, the Shimatsu, and the two subjects of this study, the Kuroda clan and the Hosokawa.¹³ Her detailed study of the general aspects of the two domain's foreign trade before *kaikin* is a major secondary reference for the current study. Other scholars have also studied these daimyo clans' foreign trade as part of broader research. Yao Keisuke, for example, devotes a section of his book on Dutch-Japanese trade to the Hosokawa clan's trading relations after the *kaikin*.¹⁴ Asao Naohiro wrote an article on the Hosokawa clan's relationship with the Kyoto-Osaka merchants and how that was related to the Hosokawa commercial enterprise overseas.¹⁵

Other research provides important knowledge that supports this study. C. R. Boxer, Takase Kōichirō, and Oka Mihoko have works on early modern Japan's trade with Portugal.¹⁶ In

¹³ Takeno Yōko, *Han bōeki shi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Mineruva Shobō, 1979).

¹⁴ Yao Keisuke, *Kinsei Oranda bōeki to sakoku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998).

¹⁵ Asao Naohiro, "Kamigata kara mita Genna-Kanei ki no Hosokawa-han" (*Bakuhatsu taisei kakuritsu no shomondai*. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1963), 212-13.

¹⁶ C. R. Boxer, *The Great Ship from Amacan: Annals of Macao and the Old Japan Trade* (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Históricos ultramarinos, 1959); Takase Kōichirō, *Kirishitan jidai no bōeki to gaikō* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2002); Oka Mihoko, *Shōnin to senkyōshi: Nanban bōeki no sekai* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2010).

particular, Oka's discussion on the nuance between silver lending and silver used for purchase is highly relevant to the Chapter I of this study. Takase's book, along with Nakada Yasunao's book are accomplished studies of the *itowappu* silk trading policy.¹⁷ Furthermore, Iwao Seiichi, Matsutake Hideo, and Nagasumi Yōko have works concerning the red-seal ships.¹⁸ Iwao has yet another book on Japanese settlements in Southeast Asia before *kaikin* which is related to one of my main subjects, the red-seal merchants.¹⁹ Finally, Suzuki Yasuko and Yao and Clulow's previously mentioned works study the Dutch-Japanese relationship in a holistic way.²⁰

For this current study, many aspects of foreign trade are discussed when they are related to the domains I study. In Chapter I, I discuss the daimyo's relationship with red-seal ship merchants in and outside their domain and how the daimyo participated in foreign trade through the proxy of these merchants. These relationships reveals that a large part of the foreign trade was not running under the cover of hierarchical daimyo-retainer relations, but instead the daimyo more or less immersed themselves into the existing merchant network, and shared a cooperative relation with these merchants— to the extent that the daimyo could also be considered as one of the merchants in this commercial world. This role formed a duality with their status as the Tokugawa's samurai retainers, which at the same time restricted their direct participation in foreign trade. In Chapter II, I look at the interesting phenomenon of Chinese doctor-merchants

¹⁷ Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankeishi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1984).

¹⁸ Iwao Seiichi, *Shuinsen bōekishi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1958); Matsutake Hideo, "Shuinsen jidai to sonogo no Nagasaki no kaigai bōeki (1)," *Keiei to keizai* 69, no. 2 (1989): 165–199; Matsutake Hideo, "Shuinsen jidai to sonogo no Nagasaki no kaigai bōeki (2)," *Keiei to keizai* 69, no. 3 (1989): 115–153; Nagasumi Yōko, *Shuinsen* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001).

¹⁹ Iwao Seiichi, *Nan'yo Nihonmachi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966).

²⁰ Suzuki, *Kinsei Nichi-Ran bōekishi no kenkyū*; Yao, *Kinsei Oranda bōeki to sakoku*; Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun*.

serving as retainers in the Hosokawa's Kokura domain and its Kumamoto domain after 1632. Mainly by discussing their monetary relations with the lords as well as the works they were assigned, I consider the Chinese a key resource for the Hosokawa that helped them overcome their disadvantaged position when compared to the resources of Hakata merchants that the Kuroda clan could easily access. In the final chapter, I study an essential group of people that worked with domainal foreign trade—the domains' administrative body stationed at Nagasaki. Without these officials as bridges, the domainal trade with the foreign merchants at Nagasaki would not be possible. Using them as an entry point, we could get a grasp of the domain's trade in this global commercial port for foreign goods and how it was sustained to post-*kaikin* era given the two domains' special position in the defense of Nagasaki. In the end, this study presents the domainal trade as multi-faceted, because the daimyo regularly deployed different methods to handle the trading relationship with foreign marketers. At the same time, the daimyo were placed in an interesting position where they subtly managed their relationship with the Tokugawa government and the merchants, in a way that the Tokugawa authority in the matter of foreign trade was recognized but still allowed these daimyo to practice great autonomy over the matter of trade. This relationship defined the basic characteristics of the domainal foreign trade during the transitional time of the first half of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER I: Japanese Merchants in Domainal Foreign Trade

The realm of foreign trade in Kyushu had been an arena for different merchants and local daimyos during the Warring State Period. Compared to the Kyushu merchants, both the Kuroda and Hosokawa clan were new comers to this enterprise when they both arrived as daimyo in 1600.²¹ Although the Kuroda and Hosokawa daimyo were all related to Christian belief before the Tokugawa Period, which certainly gave them an international outlook due to contacts with foreign missionaries, none of them were native to Kyushu and had little experience of foreign commerce. Upon entering their domains, the daimyo must manage their relations with the local wealthy merchants in order to gain economic success in their new territories. In this chapter, the daimyo's commercial relationships with the merchants in and out the domain is examined, and it shows the daimyo, despite of having some hierarchical superiority over the merchants, did not separate their own foreign trade from that of the merchants. Daimyo activities were well imbedded in a vast merchant network and with the merchants serving as agents, they abided by the customs that had developed among the merchants long trading relationship with the foreigners. The Japanese (especially Hakata) merchants' relationship with the Portuguese merchants is also discussed in this chapter to demonstrate how the daimyo's multiple levels of proxy passed the geographical boundary of Japan and extended to places overseas.

Fukuoka domain²² was enfeoffed to the Kuroda clan by Tokugawa Ieyasu due to Kuroda

²¹ Kuroda Nagamasa's father Kuroda Yoshitaka became baptized as a Christian Daimyo when he was 38 in 1584, and it is believed that Nagamasa was also baptized when he was young. Hosokawa Tadaoki's wife Akechi Gracia (daughter of Akechi Mitsuhide) was also converted to Christianity in 1586.

²² Also known as Chikuzen domain, because its territory almost overlaps with the boundary of Chikuzen Province. Many large domains were known by both castle town and province name, and for the same reason, Kumamoto Domain is also known as Higo Domain.

Nagamasa's exploits in the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, a decisive battle that secured the Tokugawa superiority in the samurai class. The port city of Hakata was included in the realm of Chikuzen domain, and from long before Kuroda rule of over the city, it had been a significant spot over a thousand years of Japanese interaction with the East Asian continent. Since the seventh century it was the port from which many Japanese missions to Sui and Tang dynasty China departed. Starting in late Heian period when such missions were abandoned, The port of Hakata then became a hub for Japanese trade with the Song dynasty, and later for trade with the Ming dynasty. During Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea at the end of the sixteenth century, Hakata was an important logistical port for the transportation of troops and supplies across the Tsushima Strait to the Korean battlefields. After the Kuroda clan entered Chikuzen domain in 1600, the daimyo Nagamasa ordered the construction of his castle on a hill to the west of Hakata, across the Naka River. The castle town was named Fukuoka, and with the old Hakata they became twin cities under the governance of the Fukuoka domain. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Kuroda clan owned a geographically and historically advantageous place to carry out trade with foreigners. The Kuroda daimyo were aware of the strategic position of their domain. In Kuroda Nagamasa's testimony before his death in 1623, he emphasized to his descendants that "Chikuzen is the place of crossing to China (筑前は大唐之渡口)." Along with the fact that Chikuzen was where the shogunal deputy supervising the entire island of Kyushu (*Kyūshū tandai* 九州探題) was stationed during the rule of the previous Muromachi shogunate (1336-1573), Nagamasa believed that his domain was equivalent to more than the sum of two

other more ordinary domains.²³ He believed that Ieyasu granted him the domain because it was the frontier that faced China, so the unsaid statement was that he felt greatly honored for his clan's loyalty to the Tokugawa within *tozama daimyō*, that they were trusted to govern this strategically crucial place.²⁴ In addition to this extra burden of defense, however, we can also appreciate how the wealth generated by the Hakata merchants through foreign trade made Fukuoka domain twice as good as other domains in Nagamasa's mind.

Naturally Kuroda policies on foreign trade in the early seventeenth century was influenced by connections with Hakata port and Hakata merchants who, with a self-governing tradition from the medieval era, almost monopolized the resources for foreign trade and expanded their power to the new port of Nagasaki. Takeno Yōko has drawn several conclusions in her book with regard to this issue. First, the Kuroda relied on Hakata merchants, especially Suetsugu Heizō, as the clans' proxy in the Tokugawa-controlled port of Nagasaki to trade in foreign goods.²⁵ Following this, Takeno sees an alternation of family fortunes under Kuroda rule, that the older merchant families that flourished under Toyotomi Hideyoshi such as Kanya and Shimai were superseded by newer merchant families entrusted by the Kuroda clan such as Suetsugu and Ōga.²⁶ This partly has to do with how the Suetsugu had greater powers at Nagasaki compared to the older merchant families, in addition to the Tokugawa politics of loyalty. Some of these merchants were red-seal merchants who were allowed to dispatch their own vessels for overseas voyages, and the Kuroda clan participated the red-seal ship trade through these merchants instead of sending red-

²³ *Fukuoka kenshi: Kinsei shiryō hen, Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2 (Fukuoka-shi: Fukuoka-ken, 1982), 328.

²⁴ *Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2, 328.

²⁵ Takeno, *Han bōeki shi no kenkyū*, 223. Also according to 234, the Ōga family also served the Kuroda clan for foreign trade at Nagasaki.

²⁶ Takeno, *Han bōeki shi no kenkyū*, 235.

seal voyages on their own behalf like many other daimyo in Kyūshū had once done.²⁷ Similarly, although the other clan discussed in this paper, the Hosokawa clan, had once requested a license for red-seal voyages on their own, they also normally indirectly participated in trade via merchant-arranged voyages. However, it is important to notice many differences in how the two domains tailored their relationships with the merchants differently as a result of the different scale and power of their local merchants. If we compare solely the red-seal merchants in service of the two domains, the Kuroda's patronage of the Hakata red-seal merchants was less vital for the merchants compared to the Hosokawa clan's patronage of its red-seal merchants. Even though the red-seal merchants were numerous, many domainal merchants did not send voyages themselves. In Fukuoka domain, although there is evidence that the older merchant forces declined in financial power during the early seventeenth century, they still participated rather independently, by silver lending and purchasing goods through red-seal merchants and the Portuguese merchants at Macao. Although the merchants in the Hosokawa domain of Kumamoto were not as wealthy or well connected, they too had business relationships with red-seal merchants, and after the red-seal trade was abolished 1633, they continued to purchase foreign goods through Nagasaki. The Hosokawa clan did not have connections with such powerful base of internationally engaged merchants, yet the merchants in Kumamoto still took on the responsibility of purchasing goods from Nagasaki after red-seal voyages became outlawed. One important similarity with the Kuroda was that the domainal merchants not only took charge of the transportation of silver from the domain to overseas and foreign goods back to the domain, or

²⁷ Takeno, *Han bōeki shi no kenkyū*, 223.

acquire these goods at Nagasaki, but they were also partially responsible for sending the goods to the markets in the region around Osaka and the emperor's capital Kyoto.

Hakata Merchants' Investment in Red-Seal Ships and Macao Merchants

The major means that Hakata merchants participated in foreign trade was investing their money in the community of overseas Japanese merchants as well as Portuguese merchants in Macao. Often times the money was not specifically used for acquiring foreign goods for the Hakata merchants themselves, but the merchants just benefited from collecting interest from moneylending. This behavior followed the established business norm of the merchants, and the Kuroda daimyo's overseas silver was not only handled through the Hakata merchant's network with the red-seal ships and Macao merchants, but the daimyo also followed their norm once the business was entrusted to them.

Ample examples of the overseas silver loan and investment survived to us from one of the older merchant clans that flourished during the Toyotomi reign, the Shimai 島井 family. Although not dispatching red-seal ships themselves in the Tokugawa Period, the Shimai provided loans to multiple Japanese merchants overseas and transported the silver for the loan overseas via the red-seal ships of other merchants. A list of their loans from 1617 to 1633 based on sources available is shown in Table 1. The interest rate on these loans was at least 35%, and could be as high as 50%. This made significant profit for the creditor if all went well, but the sea transportation of the silver also meant a high risk of loss due to the random, sinister climate on the sea and the limit of ship-building and nautical technology at that time. To compensate this

high risk of loss, a system of usury was practiced by both Japanese and Portuguese merchants. In Japanese sources this loan is called *kaijōgin* 海上銀 and in Portuguese sources it is called *respondência*.²⁸ This form of silver lending is to make sure that the risk of the silver being shipwrecked is minimized in the very precarious early modern nautical technology. According to Oka Mihoko's summary, *kaijōgin* / *respondência* refers specifically to loans of silver transferred in ships via the sea from Japan to Macao, and contracts involving *kaijōgin* / *respondência* possessed several distinctive characteristics relevant to this study. First, when the trading vessel carrying the silver did not safely return, the debt would be written off. Thus, following the risk, the interest rate charged was higher than normal loans. This was a fair rate in regard to the creditors' risk of losing all of the silver in the very precarious early modern nautical technology [shipwreck rate?]. When Portuguese or Chinese borrowed the silver directly from the Japanese merchants, the contract would be translated and written up in versions of both languages, and usually guarantors were required to sign these contracts.²⁹

We can also see a strong correlation between the amount of the loan and the associated interest. Out of the nine transactions, five of them involved 200 taels of silver each. And among these five transactions, four had a rate of 35% and one had a rate of 38%. For other loan values, two around 100 taels had a rate of 50% and two of 500 taels had rates of 40-45%. This trend shows that for the Shimai's merchant house, the optimum amount to loan was 200 taels, and for

²⁸ Although the two terms can be considered as having interchangeable meaning in most cases, subtle difference existed among the two terms: *kaijōgin* emphasized more on the risk accompanied in the transportation of the silver, while *respondência* emphasized more on the high interest rate. Under certain contexts, *respondência* could just mean the interest part of the silver to be returned. See Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 141-42 for a detailed discussion of the nuance in the language.

²⁹ Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 132-33.

values either lower or higher than 200 taels, greater interest rates were collected. This was probably because the value of 200 taels balanced risk and profitability well for the Shimai clan: 100 taels were just too low in base value to be profitable compared to the cost for the Shimai family to arrange its transportation, and 500 taels, apart from the risk of perishing all at once in shipwrecks, also had the problem of repayment. Therefore, both values were less desirable than 200 taels and needed greater interest rates. This optimum loan value for the Shimai house suggests that the Shimai merchants' overseas investments, whether to Japanese merchants overseas or Europeans, is a reflection of the family's general amount of wealth, or the amount of capital they were willing to devote into foreign trade.

Previous scholars had generally proposed that the value of interest rates depended on the credit one ethnical group of merchants had.³⁰ My argument on the existence of an "optimum value" for a given merchant family based on the study of the Shimai family documents, however, provides another factor in addition to the debtor's ethnicity and the corresponding credibility associated with that identity. Because the debtors were almost all Japanese merchants in the sample from the documents, the lack of horizontal comparison across the debtors' country of origin in this study means that it possesses no challenge to the theory of ethnicity-based credit at play in the interest rate patterns. However, the subtle variation of interest rate in correlation to the value of principal balance among this same group of debtors shows another factor that could affect the final interest rate in each single loan.

³⁰ For example, according to Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 136, the Chinese merchant used to pay an interest rate as high as 80% during the end of the Kan'ei era (1624-1644), while the average interest rate for the Chinese debtors was 35%-40% in earlier times.

TABLE 1. The Shimai's loans to Japanese merchants overseas through red-seal ships.³¹

Date	Debtor	Transport Agency	Destination	Loan (taels)	Rate
1617.2.11	Bungoya Shōjirō 豊後屋庄次郎	(Chinese) ship of Siguan 四官 of Higo	Vietnam	110	50%
1621.1.25	Nicolao	(Dutch) ship of Yayōsu ³²	Vietnam	200	35%
1623.2.15	Takao Ichizaemon 高 尾市左衛門	red-seal ship of Araki Sōemon 荒木惣右衛 門	Unkown	500	45%
1625.10.11	Tadaemon 忠右衛門	red-seal ship of Kohama Meibu 小濱 民部 ³³	Siam	200	35%
1628.11.23	Maki Jinbei 牧甚兵衛	red-seal ship of Chaya 茶屋	Vietnam	200	35%
1631.10.13	Motoyama Suke'emon 本山助右衛門	red-seal ship of Hashimoto Jūzaemon 橋本十左衛門	Cambodia	100	50%
1632.2.9	Rikimaru Jibei 力丸次 兵衛	red-seal ship of Hirano Tōjirō 平野藤次郎	Vietnam	500	40%

³¹ This table is based on *Shimai bunsho* 嶋井文書 from *Fukuoka kenshi: kinsei shiryō hen*, *Fukuoka han machi kata*, v.1.

³² The Japanese name of the Dutch merchant Jan Joosten van Lodensteyn who was a trusted advisor to Tokugawa Ieyasu.

³³ Ohama Yoshitaka (1600-1644).

1633.2.23	Takagi Gorōemon Masatsugu 高木五郎 右衛門正次	red-seal ship of Suetsugu Heizō 末次 平藏	Tonkin, Vietnam	200	35%
1633.2.23	Takagi Gorōemon Masatsugu 高木五郎 右衛門正次	red-seal ship of Kadokura 角倉	Tonkin, Vietnam	200	38%

The large number of receipts of loan and merchants' letter exchanges that survive today in this single merchant house informs us the extensive connection the Hakata merchants had with red-seal voyages. In this case, even when the Shimai family did not send red-seal ships themselves, they participated in the voyages by monetary investment. The Hakata merchants connected the trade between Japan and other countries with the domestic Japanese market, and when they assisted the Kuroda clan with its foreign trade, the Hakata merchants also resell the domainal imports for the daimyo. In a letter with unknown year, Kuroda Nagamasa wrote to his retainer to pick an eloquent townsman (so that he could better persuade his costumers) from Hakata to sell the white silk bought by the domain to merchant houses at the emperor's capital.³⁴ The Kuroda clan relied on an established network of the Hakata merchants both connected to foreign countries and the domestic market, and it was convenient for them to become just another player in this network by injecting the capital they have.

Some of the receipts and letters in the Shimai documents record their relationships with the merchants at Macao, showing that the merchants at Hakata served as investors through loans to Portuguese commercial activities based at Macao. For the majority of the Kan'ei era (1624-1643)

³⁴ *Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2, 425.

these loans of silver bars are well documented in the many surviving contracts between Japanese creditors and Portuguese debtors. Analysis on these contracts gives us a sense of the overall volume of these transactions. In the 1630s, merchants including the Shimai, the Suetsugu, Itō Kosaemon and Itō Hikobei were investors in Portuguese commerce. Table 2 shows the basic information contained in each contract. One significant discovery made in the course of reviewing these contracts is that loans extended by the Shimai were far smaller in amount than the loans extended by the Suetsugu and the Itō, which were both powerful merchant families after the Tokugawa rose to power and the Kuroda clan came to govern Hakata. The Shimai, who served the Toyotomi regime in late sixteenth century, gradually became sidelined by the new-comer Kuroda daimyo at Fukuoka Domain. We can see their financial power markedly declined in the 1630s compared to the burgeoning family fortune of not just the Suetsugu who had served as Nagasaki *daikan* 代官 (governor with equal power as the magistrate) for four generations, but also Itō Kosaemon who became the Kuroda daimyo's new favorite merchant for foreign trade.³⁵

In addition to the high interest rate, another distinctive feature of these contracts was that an additional penalty calculated at a constant rate of 10% was imposed for every delayed year of repayment.

³⁵ As a matter of fact, Itō Kosaemon was a son-in-law of Suetsugu Heizō.

TABLE 2. Four cases of Hakata merchants' loan to Portuguese merchants.³⁶

Date (in western calendar)	7.20.1631	10.16.1633	11.06.1637	10.06.1638
Creditor	Shimai Genpei	Shimai Genpei	Itō Kozaemon and Hikobei	Suetsugu Sotoku
Debtor	Paullos Dias	Francisco Carualho	Tristão Tavares	Pero Fernandez de Carvalho
Loan (taels)	500	700	5000	4000
Interest Rate	unkown	unkown	31%	25%
Additional Annual Rate	unkown	unkown	10%	10%

Apart from recording the number and volume of these loans, the contracts also contain valuable information on how transactions across the China Sea were carried out. The silver was transported aboard on multiple Portuguese vessels that, after being dispatched overseas, returned to Japan. Silver borrowed by Tristão Tavares from Itō Kozaemon and Hikobei was transported to Macao by means of six ships, and was planned to be returned via at least two ships. Suetsugu Sōtoku sent silver to Pero Fernandez de Carvalho in 1638 via two ships, and the return would be divided equally among the ships that would return to Nagasaki the following year (although we will likely never know whether the silver actually was returned as in 1639 the Portuguese were permanently prohibited from coming to Japan).³⁷ Using multiple vessels to transport the silver was apparently a strategy to minimize the risk of losing all the silver in cases of shipwreck; In no

³⁶ Based on the table from Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 139.

³⁷ Boxer, *Great Ship from Amacon*, 307-08.

case was it planned that a single vessel would carry all the silver for one creditor.

It is also interesting how Hakata merchants maintained their commercial influence overseas in Macao even after the climax of Red-seal ship commerce in the 1610s and 20s. We see the Japanese exerting their influence by moneylending to foreign traders and also by participating in red-seal voyages. However, in the 1630s they did so by appointing and empowering Portuguese to act as their agents in Macao. The authority of their Portuguese agents extended even to opting to cut their clients' losses and negotiating new agreements. For example, Gaspar Barbosa Pereira served as Shimai Genpei's agent in Macao, empowered to demand repayment of loans from the Portuguese debtors. In 1631 Pereira attempted to use legal means to retrieve the debts by suing the debtors in Macao, but his individual action was deterred by other Portuguese who also served as agents of other Japanese merchants. Knowing that there was no hope to recollect all the debts, he decided to cut his client's losses by collecting only half of the amount due (250 out of 500 taels) from one of the debtors, Paullos Dias, and gave him a document indicating that the debt was paid off.³⁸ Clearly, Pereira had been authorized to act as he saw fit. Among the 250 taels of recollected silver, 150 taels were returned to Shimai Genpei as *respondência*, while the rest of 100 taels were kept in Canton and were invested in the purchase of white silk fabrics.³⁹ These fabrics, once purchased, were probably going to be shipped to Nagasaki by Portuguese vessels and were destined for Japan's domestic markets. The profit made by the resale of the silk fabrics was probably shared between both Shimai Genpei and his Portuguese agent, for Shimai Genpai

³⁸ *Fukuoka kenshi: kinsei shiryō hen, Fukuoka han machi kata*, vol.1 (Fukuoka-shi: Fukuoka-ken, 1982), 201-202.

³⁹ *Fukuoka han machi kata*, v.1, 202.

provided capital and the Portuguese provided transportation. While the Hakata merchants served as agents for the daimyo's domainal trade, the Portuguese merchants also acted as the Hakata merchants' agents. This created a structure of multiple layers of proxy in domainal trade.

Although no evidence exists for obvious Kuroda monetary investments in the above cases, one primary source does reveal the Kuroda daimyo's investment in Portuguese merchants at Macao through this layered structure of proxy. In the sixth month of 1621, Suetsugu Heizō sent a letter to a house elder of Fukuoka domain, Ogawa Yukinao 小河之直. The letter contained a catalog of the twenty-one Chinese classic books the lord wanted to buy from China which was planned to be sent to Japan by Portuguese merchants at Macao, and the books cost a total of 668 *monme* of silver. According to the letter, one *kan* of silver was given to the Portuguese from which 668 *monme* was used as the payment for the books, and the remaining 332 *monme* served as loan the Portuguese borrowed.⁴⁰ The prescribed interest rate was 40%, a high rate which matches with the interest rates of the loans from the Hakata merchants.⁴¹ The total amount the Portuguese needed to return was 464.8 *monme*, which was already given to Heizō earlier in the spring at Nagasaki, and by the time the letter was written, Heizō was planning to hand the silver over to Fukuoka domain on his way to the Ōsaka region, and asked Fukuoka domain for a bill to be returned to Nagasaki after the domain received the silver.⁴² This letter first demonstrates that the Kuroda daimyo used the Suetsugu family as his agent to help him through the *Nanban* trade, and the domainal investment behavior looks like an imitation of what the other Hakata merchants

⁴⁰ *Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2, 421.

⁴¹ *Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2, 421.

⁴² *Fukuoka-han shoki*, v.2, 421.

were doing, because the interest rate is consistent with what the conventional interest for Portuguese loans.⁴³ Although I could not find any previous documents that tells us why one *kan* of silver was sent to Nagasaki to Heizō by the domain, a reasonable speculation could be that the silver was already entrusted to him and then the Portuguese before the exact price of the books were known. The domain probably has given Heizō a list of books the lord wanted and a budget of one *kan* of silver (it was indeed a convenient integer number), and told Heizō to use whatever amount that were left as a loan to the Portuguese, which could bring the domain some extra income incidentally. This case offers an interesting comparison to the Hakata merchants: While Shimai Genpei used part of the refund he received to purchase Chinese goods at Macao, the Kuroda daimyo reversely chose to use part of his payment as loan. Oka Mihoko makes a clear demarcation in the definition of *kaijōgin*, the previously mentioned form of usury for the risky transportation of silver across the sea, and *gendengin* 言伝銀, the silver entrusted to merchants to purchase commodities.⁴⁴ Yet, for both the Hakata merchants and the lord of Fukuoka domain, the two functions could transfer flexibly into one another for the same physical quantity of silver. During the time when the transportation of money and transmission of information took a much longer time, such flexible transformation added much efficiency to overseas trade. This common practice among Hakata merchants and the Portuguese merchants is made apparent by a close inspection of foreign trade at the level of domain, and this practice became adopted by the lord of Fukuoka to process his flow of capital.

⁴³ See Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 139, for a list of several loans to Portuguese merchants at Macao which has an average of 30% of interest rate, which is close to the 40% here.

⁴⁴ Oka, *Nanban boeki no sekai*, 132, 156..

This established network for the Hakata merchants, and thereby the Fukuoka domain, with the Japan-Macao trade, however, would face its gravest challenges in the course of the seventeenth century. In 1623, the shogunate expelled all Portuguese from Japan after a series of events that deepened the *bakufu* distrust on the activities of Iberian merchants who were believed to have smuggling missionaries into Japan.⁴⁵ Diplomatic ties with Portugal were severed further in 1628, with the trading connection break off temporarily, until two years later when trade on Portuguese vessels between Japan and Portuguese-controlled Macao (the then-called *Nanban* trade) was reopened after a Portuguese envoy requested the reestablishment of diplomatic relations.⁴⁶ This turbulence revealed the Tokugawa deep distrust in the Portuguese already happening before the seventh month of 1639 when all Portuguese vessels were once again, this time permanently, prohibited from coming to Japan. There are many theories for the reason why the Portuguese were expelled from Japan permanently, but in general that had to with the continuous problem of Portuguese secretly disembarking Jesuit missionaries to Japanese soil, which caused great concern for the Tokugawa government. In 1638, the Portuguese already had a strong sense that they were no longer welcomed in the country, even though the trading volume was as great as two million taels.⁴⁷ When another Portuguese ship carrying envoys, came to Nagasaki in 1640 to request reopening the trade, they were already considered by the Tokugawa as state enemies. 57 crew members and 4 envoys were executed, except several people who were deliberately kept alive to inform Macao of the incident, and the ship itself was publicly burnt in

⁴⁵ The Hirayama Jyōchi event in 1620, and the Genna martyrdom in 1622.

⁴⁶ Asao, *Sakoku*, 399.

⁴⁷ Boxer, *Great Ship from Amacon*, 154.

the Nagasaki harbor. The loss of Japanese silver supply inflicted heavy losses on Portuguese trade in East Asia, and seven years later, another importunate envoy ship sailed to Nagasaki to request reopening the trade, probably knowing that bloodshed like that from 1640 would likely to occur again. This time the daimyo in Kyushu played an important role in dealing with the uninvited guests, and in Chapter III I will show how this incident provided a chance for the daimyo to reform their foreign trade strategies.

Itowappu: Silk Import Sharing Among the Domainal Merchants

Earlier in 1604, the Tokugawa order creating what is called the *Itowappu* system stipulated the share of silk for each commercial city: “One hundred *maru* for *miyako* (“the capital,” present day Kyoto), one hundred and twenty *maru* for Sakai (a port city in Izumi Province, and in present day Osaka Prefecture), and one hundred *maru* for Nagasaki. In total the three places were allocated three hundred and twenty *maru*. One *maru* is consisted of fifty *kin*, and one *kin* is consisted of one hundred and sixty *monme*.”⁴⁸ From this account we know that one *maru*, a unit used specifically for the measure of imported silk, equals to 8,000 *monme*, which is equal to 30 kg. It turned out that merchants from other domains had to pay a margin to the merchants in these cities to buy in the imported silk. In response to discontent from domainal merchants on having to pay margin to merchants from other cities, in 1633 the Tokugawa government issued new allocation of silk shares to several domains in Kyūshū, and merchants from each domain then got their portion within the share granted to the domain.⁴⁹ In a 1634 source we could see the

⁴⁸ Kasahara Kazuo and Inoue Mitsusada, *Seisen Nihonshi shiryō shū* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1968).

⁴⁹ Takeno, *Hakata no Gōshō* (Fukuoka-shi: Ashishobō, 1980), 126-27.

result of this extension of shares compared to the 1604 order. Edo and Ōsaka were included, some shares belonged to six wealthy merchant houses, and five additional places in Kyūshū each got their shares: Hakata got the most which was 20.5 *maru*, Chikugo and Hizen province each got 5 *maru*, Kokura had 1.5 *maru* and Tsushima got 2.5 *maru*.⁵⁰ The amount of silk granted to Hakata that year was considerable especially by comparison with other Kyūshū cities and provinces.

One memorandum signed by the Hakata merchants with the Tokugawa authorities at Nagasaki in 1644 shows that they had to request silk shares from Nagasaki after the *kaikin* edicts which only allowed foreign trade in one port, so that Chinese and VOC merchants had to import the silk brought through Nagasaki. The memorandum specified that on *hassaku* 八朔⁵¹ (first day of the eighth month) every year, those merchants who did not appear to pay their respect at the Nagasaki magistrate's office would not get any share of silk. Even if some merchants left Hakata for Nagasaki but came back midway for some reason, no share would be granted to them. If some merchants could not come to Nagasaki for attendance because of disease or service of their lords (this could refer to the daimyo), then they could still get half of the normal share by dispatching a *myōdai* 名代, that is someone who came on behalf of the merchants, to fulfill the required ritual.⁵² Apart from performing obedience to the Tokugawa order by paying respect to the Nagasaki magistrate, a realistic function of this rule was probably assuring a smooth and fair division of silk shares by gathering the Hakata merchants together to meet personally. This

⁵⁰ *Fukuoka han machi kata*, v.1, 207-08.

⁵¹ On this day, samurai presented their tributary gifts to their overlords. This practice started in medieval Japan among samurai and gradually became fixed by early modern era. See Sakurai Eiji, *Zōyo no rekishigaku: girei to keizai no aida* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2011).

⁵² *Fukuoka han machi kata*, v.1, 208-209.

intention is evident in the same memorandum that no merchants were allowed to leave Nagasaki before the division of shares was sorted out.⁵³

A 1652 memorandum gives us a specific example on how the imported silk was distributed among Hakata merchants. First, the memorandum notes that in this year the total silk share (*daiwappu* 大割符) for Hakata was still 20.5 *maru*, an amount exactly the same as in 1634. The amount of silk purchased by each merchant was recorded by the price they paid in silver. Among the nine merchants who bought the silk, three of them each bought an amount equivalent to 1 *kan* and 511 *monme* of silver, two of them each bought an amount equivalent to 755.5 *monme* of silver. Next two, had *myōdai* negotiating the shares for them, both got silk worth 377.75 *monme* of silver, which is exactly the half of the amount for the previous two merchants, proving that the 1644 rule was carried out strictly. The last two merchants got 466.5 and 272.5 *monme* each. From the fixed amount of total silk share for Hakata and the strict implementation of fixed rules, it can be inferred that the *itowappu* system stayed rigid for Hakata after the *kaikin* edicts, and there were no changes on the imported volume despite that the place where the merchants obtained their silk has changed, and that the procedure to purchase silk became more troublesome for the merchants. Furthermore, the ritual required for the merchants to perform was also a reminder of the Tokugawa authority that came into play in the foreign trade.

Red-Seal Ship Merchants in Hosokawa-governed Kokura Domain

The Toi family, a red-seal merchant group which included Toi Shōhō 問紹甫 and Toi

⁵³ *Fukuoka han machi kata*, v.1, 209.

Tarōbei 問太郎兵衛, Toi Kozaemon 問小左衛門, and Toi Tarōsuke 問太郎介,⁵⁴ served as the Hosokawa's official merchants (*goyō shōnin* 御用商人) for overseas trade. Their voyages started as early as 1622 in domainal accounts,⁵⁵ but they suddenly became disfavored by the Hosokawa lord in 1628,⁵⁶ a few years before the Hosokawa clan was re-enfeoffed to Kumamoto (Higo) Domain in 1632. The reason for the end of their participation in domainal foreign trade is discussed in Iwao Seiichi's study of red-seal ship merchants. In 1628, Tokugawa secret agents compiled a report of an investigation they carried out around Kyūshū and Shikoku, and recorded a merchant named "Toi no Jōhō 土井の浄甫," who is unquestionably the Toi Shōhō in domainal accounts. According to the report, Shōhō's vessel sailed to Vietnam by red-seal certificates, and exported fans used for noh performance, a kind of teacup named *gōki*, and copper.⁵⁷ Yet, at the end of this entry the report writes that the Tokugawa government did not grant this vessel a red seal. It turned out that the red seal was secretly given by the Nagasaki magistrate Takenaka Shigeyoshi 竹中重義, and as a daimyo himself, Shigeyoshi's behavior was certainly unlawful and was a great insult to Tokugawa authority.⁵⁸ The disclosure of Toi Shōhō's involvement in Shigeyoshi's secret trade explains why the Hosokawa clan feared to appoint the Toi family ever again for overseas trade because of the trouble they had already caused. Besides, the Hosokawa clan had maintained a good relationship with Mizuno Morinobu (Nagasaki magistrate from 1626

⁵⁴ The exact kinship relations between the four persons remains unclear.

⁵⁵ *Fukuoka kenshi: Kinsei shiryō hen, Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1 (Fukuoka-shi: Fukuoka-ken, 1982), 8.

⁵⁶ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 184.

⁵⁷ Iwao, *Shuin sen boekishi no kenkyu*, 87. Koga Yasushi in "Kinsei shoki Hosokawa Kokura-han no jusen jigyo" (*Shigaku shigaku zasshi* 125, no. 1, 2016) interprets this piece of material as copper used to make *gōki* or even copper in the shape of *gōki*. I do not agree with this interpretation, because in this source, the term "*gōki*" was specifically explained in the original text. To combine "*gōki*" and "copper 銅" in the sentence breaking is not well justified.

⁵⁸ Iwao, *Shuin sen boekishi no kenkyu*, 87-88.

to) and Suetsugu Heizō (Nagasaki steward 長崎代官) who were both political rivals of Shigeyoshi at Nagasaki, so from the Hosokawa perspective there was no reason to still maintain this suspicious connection. Kokura domain's quick withdraw from red-seal trade proved wise: Takenaka Shigeyoshi and his son were forced to commit seppuku on 1634/2/22 and his fiefs were confiscated after investigation at Edo. According to Dutch intelligence from a record made in Batavia, it was Suetsugu Heizō who reported to the shogun Shigeyoshi's corruption and secret trade.⁵⁹

The Hosokawa clan only applied for a red-seal certificate on their own behalf once, but for a while the Toi family acted as the Hosokawa's agents for overseas trade by dispatching their own red-seal ships.⁶⁰ At least during the five-year period of time that the Toi family was entrusted completely with sending red-seal ships for the domain and many other related affairs: even in 1628 right before the Toi became disfavored, the lord asked his retainers to consult with Shōhō regarding the pros and cons of constructing a domainal warehouse at Nagasaki.⁶¹ The main trading destination of the Toi family was Southeast Asia, in particular Cochin (middle Vietnam). They likely have stayed in the Japanese settlements, established in the 16th century, at Southeast Asia during the time they had arrived at Vietnam, and they probably partially shared the autonomous power the Japanese had at their settlements.⁶² According to an official Vietnamese

⁵⁹ Nagasumi Yōko, *Shūin sen* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001), 91.

⁶⁰ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 184.

⁶¹ *Hosokawa Kokura han*, v.2, 57.

⁶² See Iwao, *Nanyo Nihon machi no kenkyu*.

TABLE 3. Daimyo investments to the Toi family merchants per voyage.⁶³

Year	Merchant	Daimyo Investment (<i>gendengin</i>)	Destination
1622	Shōhō	unkown	unkown
1625	Tarōbei	10 <i>kan</i>	Siam
1626	Tarōsuke	unkown	Cochin (Vietnam)
1626	Shōhō	10 <i>kan</i>	Cochin (Vietnam)
1627	Shōhō	10 <i>kan</i>	Cochin (Vietnam)
1627	Shōhō	20 <i>kan</i>	Cochin (Vietnam)

document issued in 1628 recorded in *Tsūkō Ichiran* 通航一覽, a spear of Toi Kozaemon permitted by the Vietnamese authorities was mistakenly confiscated by their officials and was then returned to Kozaemon after further investigation.⁶⁴ Having a right to carry such a weapon gives us a glimpse of the Toi family's power in Vietnam where Japanese merchants established their own settlements. The Toi's multiple overseas voyages are listed in Table 3. Takeno's research already calls attention to the domain's regular participation in foreign trade during this

⁶³ This table is largely based on a list compiled in Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 183. Information on the destinations, the 1625 voyage by Toi Tarōbei, and the 1626 voyage by Toi Tarōsuke are added based on *Fukuoka kenshi: kinsei shiryō hen, Hosokawa Kokura han*.

⁶⁴ *Tsūkō Ichiran*, v.4 (Japan: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1912-1913), 513.

period based on the voyages.⁶⁵ Looking at one well documented voyage can clarify how red-seal ship worked for Kokura domain.

Toi Tarōbei's 1625 voyage is best documented as it was discussed in Hosokawa Tadatoshi's letters. As this paper will analyze later, the arrangement of this voyage even involved a Chinese merchant. For now, we focus on the result of the voyage in our discussion. In the summer of 1626 the ship came back to Nagasaki. Agarwood was the main commodity brought back by the ship. It was a rare species of wood used for making incense which was used in traditional fragrance ceremony and tea ceremony, and was essential in the graceful living-style of the samurai and aristocratic elites, hence agarwood was highly demanded by the market at Kyoto-Osaka region as well as many wealthy domains. One big chunk of agarwood was brought back in Tarōbei's vessel, and after receiving this report, Tadatoshi decided to present it to his Tokugawa overlord:

[...] Although Tarōbei brought the agarwood for us, such agarwood is not for us to take. This absolutely must be presented to the lord, and is not for us. Also, you must tell our officials in Nagasaki to inform lord Kawachi (Mizuno Morinobu) and Heizō (Suetsugu Heizō) of this.

I hear Tarōbei died while in the ship. Therefore we should have Shōhō finish up things at Nagasaki and then go [to Kyoto] to offer thanks and gifts for receiving the red-seal certificate. Furthermore, tell him that this is also for having earlier received the lord's red-seal as well. It seems the lord⁶⁶ will return to Edo in the middle of the ninth month, so tell [Shōhō] to go [to Kyoto] before that time.

These two items can be interpreted together. Tadatoshi wished to present the agarwood to the

⁶⁵ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 183.

⁶⁶ This refers to the Tokugawa lord, however, it is not sure whether this refers specifically to the shogun or the retired shogun (*ōgosho*) from the wording because both the shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu and the *ōgosho* Tokugawa Hidetada were living at the time.

shogun for certain purposes. In Iwao's research, he noted that according to a 1611/8/24 entry in *Sunpuki* 駿府記, a Tokugawa record primarily of Ieyasu, Hosokawa Tadaoki (the later Sansai) presented white silk fabric, ivory, and rare animals like a peacock and a leopard to the *bakufu* after that only red-seal trading vessel dispatched on his own behalf to Siam had returned to Japan. Iwao considers this action to be a return of favor for the *bakufu*-issued overseas trading permission of the vessel earlier that year.⁶⁷ Although around this time in 1626, the red-seal certificate was no longer issued directly to the Hosokawa clan, it would still be vital for Hosokawa Tadatoshi to donate a portion of foreign imports as a gift to the shogun, if he still wanted more future overseas voyages to get permitted. Of course, on the surface it *should* be Toi Tarōbei who perform this gift-presentation ritual as the receiver of the red-seal certificate, but under the surface as seen from this letter, the Hosokawa lord was the one who directed the entire overseas trading. As Toi Tarōbei has died in the voyage, Toi Shōhō was expected to subsequently replace him to finish up all the required rituals of completing a voyage by a red-seal ship. Although the source states it rather ambiguously, Shōhō might have presented gifts to the Shogunal administration at Nagasaki and also to the Tokugawa lord, whoever that may be, at the capital, also as part of the process to apply for new red-seal certificates, as indicated by Tadatoshi's order that Shōhō should visit the capital before the lord returns. It can be inferred from Shōhō's duty to personally do these things on Tarōbei's behalf that Tarōbei, the official holder of the shogunal permission for overseas trade, would have had to perform the required rituals personally if he were still alive. The red-seal ship merchants personally presenting gifts to

⁶⁷ Iwao, *Shuin sen boekishi no kenkyu*, 64.

the Nagasaki authorities and applying for new certificates from the shogun has a similar underpinning logic to the previously discussed annual gathering of merchants at Nagasaki for the *itowappu* silk portion division among them, when the merchants were obliged to personally visit and offer thanks to the Nagasaki magistrate. Such obligations, in both cases, reminded the merchants that shogunal power granted the possibility to profit from foreign trade, and this privilege could be taken back at any time if they otherwise failed to submit to that order. Such a message, needless to say, was also conveyed to the daimyo for whom the merchants served as proxies and the *de facto* manipulator of their foreign trade, as a reminder for them to abide by the broader political order that required the daimyo to be samurai subjects of the shogun in the realm of foreign trade. This was a change from the previous century when the daimyo lords of Kyūshū established these ties of foreign trade at will, but still offered more freedom to the daimyo compared to post-*kaikin* era when daimyo even lost their rights to have Japanese merchants trade overseas for them—this period (1620-30s) of red-seal merchants serving as proxies has the characteristics only specific to a transition from a decentralized to a centralized form of state power in Japan.

Except the one large chunk of agarwood given to the Tokugawa as a present, other smaller pieces of agarwood brought back by the vessel were purchased by the Hosokawa clan. In particular, Hosokawa Sansai sent one *kan* of silver to purchase agarwood from Vietnam, so Tadatoshi commanded to have a portion of the wood equivalent to the silver value sent to Sansai, and then Sansai's own officials would manage the wood.⁶⁸ Tadatoshi bought the rest of the

⁶⁸ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2012), 236.

agarwood, but he wished to have Toi Shōhō to bring the wood with him up to the Kyoto-Osaka area. Tadatoshi also told his retainers that if Shōhō by himself could not sell the agarwood to the merchants there, the domainal officials at Nagasaki should buy the agarwood and ship it to Kyoto and Osaka.⁶⁹ The lord was keen on the resale of the agarwood to this region because a huge domestic demand for incense provided a promising source of profit. Of course, as a practitioner of tea ceremony, Hosokawa Sansai and his clan had their own demand for agarwood, but the resale of redundant quantities demonstrates the domain's flexibility in its foreign trade which Takeno characterizes as of a consumptive nature.⁷⁰ Takeno argues for the domain's capacity to shift easily to the resale of the goods that were purchased for the lord's own use and gift giving, and agarwood, according to Takeno, was a high-profit commodity that could quickly regenerate capital for further investments in overseas trade.⁷¹ Although Takeno's argument was mainly deduced from the observation that the Hosokawa clan had a constant annual import that far exceeds their capability to consume it, the episode presented here justifies this point by more direct archival evidence. The result of this voyage further suggest that not only were the red-seal merchants serving the domain went between Nagasaki and the East Asian continent, but they were also expected to be at least partially responsible for the domestic resale of the goods.

However, just the resale could not fully explain why Tadatoshi was so keen on shipping the agarwood to Kyoto-Osaka region for this purpose. Asao Naohiro's research on Kokura domain's silver loan from Kyoto-Osaka area offers a suggestion for answering this question. In 1624, the

⁶⁹ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 236.

⁷⁰ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 207.

⁷¹ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 208.

domain borrowed 30 kan of silver from an Osaka merchant named Nakano Gonsuke 中野権佐 for purchasing goods from Nagasaki. The interest rate was a monthly fifteen percent, and the domain stressed that the return would be handed to him at somewhere in Kyoto-Osaka region. Asao's explanation to the high interest rate and the domain's strategy to repay it elsewhere was that the domain's profit from the market price difference between Kyoto-Osaka and Nagasaki of the luxurious exotic goods was high enough to compensate the high interest rate.⁷² This analysis offers a parallel to the situation discussed in our case, because the profit of the agarwood could be used as well to repay these debts, but this time the commodity was not simply just bought from Nagasaki but the Hosokawa were also involved in the trading voyage. Asao did not deny the possibility that in 1624 the domain's strategy to repay the debt at Kyoto-Osaka region might just be because the lord wanted to repay this debt with silver borrowed from other merchants in that same region.⁷³ This uncertainty arose because he did not see more direct evidence of goods being shipped to Osaka from the domain for profit. Although our case does not deny the possibility of the later, it further strengthens the correctness of Asao's first assertion by providing a direct piece of evidence.

After the Toi familial group of merchants had their service to the lord ended in 1628 due to the disclosure of their collusion with Takenaka Shigeyoshi, the Hosokawa did not manage to find merchants to replace their roles. Probably they tried to find some other red-seal merchants instead but by chance, the era of red-seal ship soon ended almost simultaneously with the

⁷² Asao Naohiro, "Kamigata kara mita Genna-Kanei ki no Hosokawa-han" (*Bakuhon taisei kakuritsu no shomondai*. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1963), 212-13.

⁷³ Asao, "Kamigata kara mita Hosokawa-han," 213.

Hosokawa rule of Kokura. In the sixth month of 1631, just one year before the Hosokawa clan were moved by the Tokugawa to replace the Katō clan to rule Kumamoto domain, the Tokugawa government amended the red-seal ship system and required a separate letter of endorsement from the senior councilors (*rōjū* 老中) of the shogunate, and in practice only those who were deeply entrusted by the Tokugawa government could have the chance to acquire the more restricted permission; only seven people got the permission, including Suetsugu Heizō and Joseph Adams, the son of the English samurai William Adams.⁷⁴ This amendment really left no place for the Hosokawa to dispatch red-seal merchants that were loyal to them (as more dignitary red-seal merchants would not serve under the Hosokawa clan). The Hosokawa clan and the Toi family somewhat planted this bitter fruit themselves, as part of the reason that the more restrictive new system was imposed was because of the widespread falsification of red-seal certificates.⁷⁵ Four years later in 1635, all Japanese were strictly prohibited from any overseas travel.⁷⁶ Although new merchant houses served as Kumamoto domain's proxy at Nagasaki after the *kaikin* as this paper will later discuss, domain-involved red-seal ship voyages naturally never revived.

However this doesn't mean that the Hosokawa clan stopped using domainal, non-red-seal merchants as their agents. An interesting incident might best suggest the form of the lord's trade in Nagasaki through merchants as intermediaries after the end of red-seal ship policy. In 1638, a merchant named Tokusai 徳斎 of the merchant house Komonoya 小物屋 was responsible for buying silk fabric in scrolls for lord Hosokawa Tadatoshi. In his letter in the eighth month,

⁷⁴ Nakada Yasunao, *Kinsei taigai kankeishi no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1984), 373, 376.

⁷⁵ Nakada, *Kinsei taigai kankeishi no kenkyu*, 373, 376.

⁷⁶ This was not the case, though, for the previously mentioned domains which were given permission by the *bakufu* to maintain special foreign relations.

probably to some Kumamoto Domain officials, he expressed his concern. “For example, if the lord orders a hundred scrolls, but there is no box with a hundred. Then box with a hundred and thirty or a hundred and fifty is bought as it is, a hundred will be sent to the lord, and the rest will go to others. It is here that difficulties arise.” He further explained that, since his own business was conducted together with the daimyo’s business, and the daimyo’s silver was mixed with his, this inevitably would draw on rumors from others (that suspect Tokusai’s probity). Here Tokusai was a plenipotentiary commercial deputy of the Hosokawa lord at Nagasaki, because in the same letter he said that three merchants, including himself, was purchasing for the lord without the participation of Kumamoto domain’s *bugyō* (magistrate) or *yokome* (inspector) of silver. The lord likely wanted to minimize the direct participation of domainal officials in the affair of foreign trade. The revocation of Kumamoto domain from the previous Katō clan was a political earthquake for all the daimyo in Kyūshū, and plus the factor that 1638 was already after the Christian rebellion at Shimabara and Amakusa in 1635 and was the timepoint when the bakufu was already starting to persecute the Portuguese, the Hosokawa daimyo who replaced the previous daimyo at Kumamoto would no doubt feel a pressure under the watching of Tokugawa authorities at Nagasaki, which pushed them to use merchants to conceal their participation in the trade at Nagasaki, at least not publicly announce it to anyone.

CHAPTER II: Chinese Merchants as Retainers of the Hosokawa Clan

This chapter looks at a specific group of foreign merchants active under the Hosokawa daimyo. In addition to their well accepted posts as daimyos' doctors, their close relationship with the daimyo made them pragmatic retainers of the daimyo who were responsible for some part of the domainal foreign trade. As a return of their services, the Chinese doctor-merchants also used their crucial role in the trade to seek aegis from the daimyo in their independent money-lending and businesses.

The Chinese's most apparent role was serving as the lord's personal doctor using their knowledge of Chinese medicine. A few Chinese names appear frequently in Hosokawa sources, such as Meikan 明寰, Gokui 極印, Sankan 三官,⁷⁷ and Xue Shaofeng 薛少峯. Their role as the daimyo's doctors is well discussed by other scholars. The Chinese doctors prescribed medications according to the domain's needs, and could purchase imported herbs from Nagasaki; they were regularly hired by the domain to replace the role of domainal merchants or the domain's purchasing administrators in terms of importing foreign herbs.⁷⁸ They almost exclusively became the daimyo's most trusted doctors, whose object of service ranged from the retired lord Hosokawa Sansai to dying prisoners.⁷⁹ Sansai, in particular, had demonstrated great

⁷⁷ Many of these names were actually generic nicknames the Chinese at that time used and the Japanese liked to refer to them by their nicknames, one famous example being Koxinga's father, Zheng Zhilong, whose nickname was "Iquan 一官." In the case of this paper, the Chinese's real names remain unclear, creating much difficulty to trace them in sources written in Chinese.

⁷⁸ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 185.

⁷⁹ In domainal sources, there are many occasions when the Chinese doctors were sent to Nakatsu, the town in the domain where Sansai lived; needlessly to say, they were there to treat Sansai. Once Meikan was specifically asked to cure a prisoner, and this process goes all the way from 1624/8/7 until 8/20 when Meikan refused to continue the treatment. The prisoner died on 8/24 and his body was then abandoned. On 10/15, Meikan diagnosed another prisoner who was later expelled from the domain. See *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 7; 19; 22; 27; 30; 81.

appreciation of the Chinese's high level of leechcraft, and even sent them occasionally to other domains to treat other superstratum samurai.⁸⁰ These incoming Chinese in addition to bringing with them medical knowledges for the lord, also brought with them technologies on pottery making and mining.⁸¹ Their technological contribution could possibly be something as small as reforming the production of maltose at Kokura which bears the name *Sankan-ame*, although there is no direct proof that it is named after this particular Sankan discussed here.⁸² While these aspects of their role at Kokura all point to their importance in the domain's economical contact with foreign countries, their more direct monetary interaction with the lord and his retainers is not specifically discussed in the previous literature. A closer look at the monetary relations with the Chinese and their direct involvement in Kokura domain's foreign trade makes their status within the domain and their relationship with the Hosokawa daimyo even more clear.

When the Chinese served Kokura domain with their skills and connections, they of course received pay from the domain. Records about these payments shows that not only were the Chinese individually paid for their single services to the lord, but the domain also hired some of them on a continuous basis to ensure their service to the domain even when they were in Nagasaki. As example of individual service and pay, in the middle of 1630, Sankan and another Chinese named Maozhi 茂芝 were hired with two large gold coins (*ōban* 大判).⁸³ In the end of 1627, five silver bullions were given to a Chinese named Nikan 二官.⁸⁴ Xue Shaofeng was hired

⁸⁰ Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 185-186.

⁸¹ For example, some of the Chinese served as advisors for Kokura's Yobuno gold mine. See Takeno, *Han boekishi no kenkyu*, 208.

⁸² Yao Keisuke, "Kinsei ni okeru ame no seihō to Sankan-Ame" (*Journal of the Faculty of Humanities, the University of Kita-Kyushu*, no. 74, 2008), 43.

⁸³ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 86.

⁸⁴ *Kumamoto-ken shiryo: Kinsei-hen*, v.2 (Kumamoto-shi: Kumamoto-ken, 1965), 358.

on a single-timed basis for several times. In 1628, Shaofeng came to Kokura from 1/7 to 2/5, and he was given ten pieces of silver for his one month stay.⁸⁵ On 1629/5/23, Shaofeng was called to Kokura to treat one of Sansai's concubine named "Matsu no Maru 松ノ丸."⁸⁶ On Shaofeng's cost to travel to Kokura, Nakaoka Shikibu no Shōsuke 長岡式部少輔, a Hosokawa house elder, ordered that "although [Shaofeng] must pay his own cost when he visits the lord on his own behalf, since this time he comes for the lord's use, it is appropriate that this cost comes from his lordship..."⁸⁷ Matsu no Maru initially had signs of recovery upon receiving Shaofeng's treatment, but she still died on 6/19 before dawn.⁸⁸ Maybe for this reason, Shaofeng did not receive the rich reward like the previous time.

In addition to various payments for brief services some Chinese seemed to have received annual salaries. On 1630/1/9, Shaofeng was again given ten pieces of silver and a short-sleeved garment (*kosode* 小袖).⁸⁹ The ten pieces of silver could be his yearly income, but the sample of sources is too little for us to know definitely, yet because samurai were given clothes annually by their lords, Shaofeng being given *kosode* could follow a similar logic. There is clear evidence that Meikan, who was probably the single most important Chinese agent employed by the domain as he appeared in domainal accounts most frequently, was paid by the domain on a monthly basis. In a letter of inquiry submitted from Sakazaki Seizaemon 坂崎清左衛門 and

⁸⁵ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 358-86. Silver here probably refers to *chōgin* 丁銀, which weighs approximately 43 *monme* each piece, so ten pieces of *chōgin* weighs 430 *monme*. This is not a small number.

⁸⁶ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 261, 285. Matsu no Maru was also the mother of Matsui Okinaga 松井興長's (Nakaoka Shikibu no Shōsuke) concubine.

⁸⁷ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 259.

⁸⁸ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 267, 285.

⁸⁹ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 403.

other officials to the lord Hosokawa Tadatoshi on 3/24 with its year unknown,⁹⁰ it was described that every month Meikan could get two *oku* of stipendiary rice and thirty *monme* of silver granules (*komagane* 小間金). According to the letter, Meikan wished to have additional stipends given to him when he come to Kokura, because the normal amount was given in the condition that he stayed at Nagasaki. Domain administrators (specific posts not clear in the letter) and Kunitō Michinori also wished that Tadatoshi himself would pay Meikan separately from his normal stipend when Meikan visited Kokura, and hence asked for Tadatoshi's decision. In a response written on that letter, Tadatoshi agreed to pay Meikan personally when he came to Kokura, and ordered the retainers to inform Meikan of his decision “with warm regards (*nengoroni* 懇に).”⁹¹ Since the domain administrators mentioned that the lord could pay Meikan separately, Meikan's basic stipends when he stayed at Nagasaki were likely to be paid by the domain administration. When Meikan was called to Kokura, which happened in case when the daimyo needs his personal service, the daimyo would personally award Meikan with a bonus. The two sources of stipend disbursement to Meikan shows his service had both the nature of public service to the domain and personal service to the daimyo. Hereby it can be distinguished that the job he did at Nagasaki, which certainly involved looking out for suitable foreign commodities the daimyo wanted to purchase, falls into the category of domain administration, while the job he did at Kokura which was mainly about medical services, had a much stronger private color. The way that Tadatoshi accommodated to Meikan's request for additional pay and

⁹⁰ Although the year is unknown, it is probably between 1623 and 1624. See *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 209.

⁹¹ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 209.

his warm attitude towards him all demonstrates Tadatoshi's appreciation of Meikan's service to himself and recognition of his importance to the domain.

Another record further confirms the fact that Meikan obtained his basic stipends even when he was not fulfilling his job at Nagasaki. In the seventh month of 1623, he was dispatched to Satsuma domain by the Hosokawa for unknown reasons.⁹² How to process his stipends when he was not at Nagasaki became a problem, and the administrator's office tried to consult with Kunitō Michinori on whether they would withhold (*osaeoki* 押置) the stipends from the seventh month on or send the stipends to Meikan anyway.⁹³ Although we do not know the final decision, the word "retain" they used shows that the stipends during these months were just temporarily held by the domain but would still be given to Meikan after he came back from Satsuma. Regardless of what decision they eventually made, Meikan would get his stipend even when not being in Nagasaki. Therefore, the stipend for being in Nagasaki more or less served as a guaranteed salary for Meikan. The unsuspended payment could be the domain's strategy to ensure that Meikan could serve the domain's need whenever he was needed, and thereby maintain a relationship of long-term patronage. Meikan became a trustworthy agent for the daimyo through this process.

There is abundant evidence that the Chinese made various loan relationships in Japan with their Chinese counterparts as well as Japanese, which was probably required for the turnover of their capital. Inevitably disputes could develop around these loans and interestingly, the way most of these cases were resolved just shows how highly the Chinese were valued by the

⁹² *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 199.

⁹³ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 200.

Hosokawa daimyo. On 12/25, at the end of 1626, three Chinese submitted a complaint about the silver Meikan had borrowed from them,⁹⁴ it seems likely that there had been a long time since the originally planned time of return of the funds. Upon receiving the complaint, the lord Hosokawa Tadatoshi quickly responded by ordering Kunitō Michinori at Nagasaki to transfer the 600 *monme* of the loan to himself by paying the Chinese creditors the same amount of silver.⁹⁵ Similar transfer of loan also happened in a case when Meikan borrowed silver from Japanese retainers. In 1623, Meikan's younger brother borrowed a total two *kan* of silver from Hasegawa Kenroku 長谷川権六's⁹⁶ retainers Suga Kubei 菅九兵衛 and Nakagawa Yasuemon 中川安右衛門. Meikan's father Daikan 大官 and cousin Rikkan 六官 also sailed to Nagasaki that year, and Rikkan made a written promise that the Chinese would not leave Nagasaki (i.e. sail back to China) without returning the silver they had borrowed. By the fifth month of 1624, the silver had still not been returned, and the Chinese were therefore not allowed to leave Nagasaki. Meikan managed to return one *kan* and 500 *monme* himself but was not able to return the remaining 500 *monme*, so a merchant named Shirai Tazaemon 白井太左衛門 was ordered by the magistrate's office of Kokura to repay the 500 *monme* of silver for Meikan as Tazaemon's service to the lord.⁹⁷ Although the silver came directly from Tazaemon, it was called "the lord's silver (御銀)," indicating that this silver was originally supposed to be used for the daimyo's purposes, or the lord had taken on the loan. Hence, despite the seemingly complex relationship involved, this case

⁹⁴ Hosokawa Kokura-han, v.1, 246.

⁹⁵ Hosokawa Kokura-han, v.1, 258.

⁹⁶ Hasegawa Kenroku served as Nagasaki Magistrate from 1618 to 1625. His other names included Fujimasa 藤正 and morinao 守尚. As a samurai, he sent four red-seal voyages to Siam and Luzon (the largest island of the Philippines). See Iwao, *Shūin sen boekishi no kenkyū*, 81, 169, *184, 225.

⁹⁷ Hosokawa Kokura-han, v.3, 317.

is still an example of the daimyo helping Meikan to repay his debt. It is important to recognize that in both cases the daimyo was not originally meant to cover the debt for Meikan but was just transferring the loan to be under his name, so Meikan in the end became indebted to the daimyo, and thereby resolve Meikan's personal crisis in a timely manner. From his perspective, there were a few reasons to do so: First, he exerted his grace to the Chinese, and the Chinese was expected to repay this favor when necessary. And since the Chinese was a valuable resource for the domain to access foreign trade, the daimyo also tended to grant the Chinese's request. Most importantly, the daimyo ensured that the Chinese under his employment do not cause trouble, in this case debt disputes, and certainly he would not want situation to escalate and draw attention from the Tokugawa government. The fact that in the latter case the creditors were retainers of the Nagasaki magistrate meant that the dispute must be handled with extra care. Kokura domain also directly release loans to those Chinese working for the daimyo. On the third month in 1624, Xue Shaofeng borrowed rice from the domain with a fixed interest rate of 25%.⁹⁸ On 10/29/1630, Meikan borrowed silver from domain for building his house at Nagasaki.⁹⁹ Whether these borrowings were as prominent for the Chinese in terms of relevance with trade compared to their loan from other Chinese merchants and samurai at Nagasaki, however, may require some further investigation.

Chinese Merchants Arranging Overseas Voyage for the Domain

Some Chinese were crucial figures for the domain's investment in foreign trade and helped

⁹⁸ Hosokawa Kokura-han, v.3, 296.

⁹⁹ Hosokawa Kokura-han, v.3, 59.

arrange commercial voyages. On 1624/8/8, the Japanese merchant Toi Shōho came to Kokura and brought him with a letter from Toi Tarōbei and the Chinese merchant Gokui, stating that they were unable to send ships to China that autumn.¹⁰⁰ Gokui probably had a partnership with the Toi family and also arranged foreign trade vessels for the Hosokawa. However, the arrangement of an overseas voyage did not proceed smoothly for Gokui that year. In response, Hosokawa Tadatoshi expressed his strong desire to send foreign trade vessels that year:

For the ship that goes to Siam, I have heard that Gokui could not arrange this. In any way, this ship must be sent, no matter how much gold and silver are invested the ship must be arranged from here, and be sent no matter what. [...] If Gokui needs to stay at mister capitan's place, it does not matter if he does not come [to Kokura]. Something must be done to make sure that the ship is arranged and depart early in the second month [next year], and it does not matter how much money it will cost.¹⁰¹

We can see from this passage that Gokui was responsible for contacting European captains (as seen from the word “capitan”) to arrange vessels that could go to Siam. Normally one would assume that Chinese merchants at Nagasaki would arrange with Chinese vessels, but we actually see foreign vessels from multiple countries involved in the daimyo's foreign trade. And Gokui did not just stay at Nagasaki to arrange the voyage for Tadatoshi, but instead he must sometimes have come to Kokura to report on the situation, and that is why the lord ordered that Gokui no longer needed to come.

We do not know if the ship to Siam was successfully arranged or not due to the absence of

¹⁰⁰ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 8.

¹⁰¹ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 228.

sources for the year of 1625. However, in another letter on 6/19 but with an unknown year,¹⁰² Tadatoshi mentioned that someone reported to him about how Toi Tarōbei and Gokui were preparing red-seal trading licenses.¹⁰³ Gokui was probably arranging another ship for Tadatoshi aiming for Southeast Asia because two *kan* of silver were given to Toi Tarōbei for purchasing agarwood on this voyage. Still, Tadatoshi felt disquiet about whether the ship could be arranged successfully, and specifically added the following comments after he finished writing the letter:

Even if Gokui suddenly dies, we must arrange the ship and send it out no matter how much gold and silver we will invest. Because otherwise, [the terms prescribed in] the red-seal permission will be performed poorly, and you must consider carefully the consequences. Of course, if Gokui arranges the ship without obstacles, what I have just said will not be a problem.¹⁰⁴

Gokui's role in arranging vessels had been so prominent that the lord was concerned with the possibility that Gokui might suddenly die. And we also could know that the certificate granted to license a red-seal ship had to be fulfilled genuinely. Otherwise it would be a serious insult to the Tokugawa government and certainly affect the domain's future applications for red-seal certificates. It is clear that the Chinese Gokui was central to the application of the red-seal certificate, and the domain relied on his position during the early Kan'ei era. In the end, the Toi family—red-seal ship merchants who served Kokura domain exclusively, also cooperated with the Chinese merchant, so sometimes we must not see the domain's methods to carry out foreign

¹⁰² Probably the letter is in 1625, because that year Toi Tarōbei got 10 *kan* of silver from Kokura domain and set sail for the continent, and the vessel arranged by Gokui this time is probably the

¹⁰³ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 234.

¹⁰⁴ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 234.

trade as disrelated, separate matters.

Not all Chinese ran such large enterprise for the domain like Gokui did. In many more occasions they received piecemeal orders from the daimyo and purchased goods from various foreign vessels anchored at Nagasaki, or from other commercial cities, just like the domain's purchasing officials. For example, a record on 1630/1/16 indicates a delay of 197 *monme* of silver sent to Edo for Meikan (who was at Edo) to purchase drugs.¹⁰⁵ On 1629/11/17, two purchasing officials brought with them one *maru* of silk and two bottles of lard purchased for Hosokawa Sansai by Xue Shaofeng and Kikuhara Joan 菊原如庵.¹⁰⁶ The Chinese's role in domainal foreign trade overlapped with those of Japanese red-seal ship merchants and the domain's purchasing officials at Nagasaki, yet the Chinese's network and knowledge supplemented the jobs of the latter two categories of people. The Chinese could not be simply understood as doctors but even among this group there were various roles played by each individual. In general, the employment of Chinese could be understood as the domainal purchase of foreign skills and knowledge, which in a broader sense is an important sector of domainal foreign trade for the Hosokawa clan. Finally, it is important to recognize that the existence of Chinese agents is not merely a Hosokawa feature. According to Hosokawa records, Matsudaira Tadamasa 松平忠昌, the daimyo of Fukui domain in Echizen Province, a place very far from Nagasaki, also employed his own Chinese agent, Daikan 大官.¹⁰⁷ During the Hosokawa rule of Kokura domain which lasted until 1632, shortly before the 1633 Tokugawa Edicts that started the

¹⁰⁵ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 408.

¹⁰⁶ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 377.

¹⁰⁷ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 262. There is no evidence that this Daikan was the same person as Meikan's father.

process of foreign relation restrictions in Japan, the existence of “Chinese retainers” was not something to be tightly concealed from Tokugawa eyes. From 8/23 to 11/12 in 1624, two Chinese went with Toi Tarōsuke to Edo, probably for business related purposes, and it seemed that the domain did not think they would catch much attention at Edo.¹⁰⁸ Besides, the Tokugawa officials at Nagasaki also must knew how Chinese were working for Kokura domain.

The Chinese agents in the Hosokawa's Kumamoto Era

Because the Chinese who served under the Hosokawa clan were based at Nagasaki and commuted to Kokura for duty, the move of the Hosokawa clan to the wealthier Kumamoto domain in late 1632 had little effect with their relationship with the Chinese who, unlike Japanese merchants who were subordinates of feudal territories, were not bounded to any pieces of land, thus could easily follow the Hosokawa clan to their new place. In a letter from Hosokawa Sansai to his son Tadatoshi on 1633/1/23, shortly after their transition to Kumamoto, Sansai mentioned that he originally was going to hold a ceremony for the Chinese Shaofeng's first entry to Kumamoto, but because some Chinese trading vessel was about to leave, Shaofeng came back to Nagasaki for the commerce without attending the planned ceremony.¹⁰⁹ With or without a ritual, for the domain, especially for Hosokawa Sansai who relied on the Chinese doctors, the Chinese retainers luckily remained in service. Meikan also continually served the domain, as his record appears in a letter written by the daimyo on 1634/7/3.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 29, 98.

¹⁰⁹ *Kumamoto-ken shiryō: Kinsei-hen*, v.1, 318.

¹¹⁰ *Dai Nihon kinsei shiryō: Hosokawa-ke shiryō* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1969), 205.

CHAPTER III: Domainal Foreign Trade at Nagasaki

To smoothly conduct trade at Nagasaki and communicate with the trading partners, domainal administrative bodies stationed at Nagasaki played a great role, and have caught little scholarly attention before. But as behind-scene as these officials seem, their report to the daimyo, the orders they received from, and the authorization they received, all suggest their primary representativeness of the domain. Their another level of importance lies in the fact that Nagasaki eventually became the only preserved port for foreign merchants. Therefore, the domainal institutions at Nagasaki becomes a clue that connects the pre-*kaikin* past with post-*kaikin* new norms. This chapter starts by generally discussing the everyday duties of the domainal institutions at Nagasaki, including transportation between the domain and Nagasaki. Then, to briefly discuss the purchasing magistrates' entanglement with the political struggle at Nagasaki. Finally, the time is shifted to years immediately after *kaikin* and both Fukuoka and Kumamoto domain managed to establish close ties with the foreigners, especially the Dutch at Nagasaki, utilizing their privileged position as defenders of Nagasaki.

Purchasing Magistrates

The title of the highest domainal official at Nagasaki, *Nagasaki kaimono bugyō* 長崎買物奉行(Nagasaki purchasing magistrate), best suggests the primary task of their work. Comparing to the arrangement of overseas voyage which was time and silver-costly, the purchasing magistrates had several advantages. First, the time it took between the daimyo's order and the arrival of the goods was short, especially in seasons when the foreign vessels were around. Another advantage

was about the range of choices which was much wider than the daimyo's own voyages.¹¹¹ Sometimes when the daimyo needed a small amount of consumptive goods, buying them from Nagasaki was the best choice. Accompanied with the range of choices was that the purchasing magistrates could wait for the optimum price. A general trend was that in the beginning of the trading season when few vessels had arrived, the price of the foreign goods were high; by the time when many vessels had come, the price dropped. Hosokawa Tadatoshi was well aware of this advantage. In a 1622 letter he wrote to his retainers, he asked them to order the purchasing magistrate to hold on, "because everything is at a high price when the ships are not visiting Nagasaki."¹¹² In another letter from 1624, he ordered his retainer to not purchase *shōjōhi* 猩々皮¹¹³ at a price that is higher than normal.¹¹⁴ All these suggest that the daimyo could have the privilege to choose the price as he saw fit.

The purchasing at Nagasaki often started with the daimyo's purchase order. Tadatoshi's 1624 letter to his retainers stated that he would attach a list of desired goods on another paper. Luckily, this paper survives to give us a sense of the actual material proof of the domainal foreign trade.¹¹⁵ In the list, there are foods and drinks like pickles and grape wine, there are also clothes like socks, and there are also utensils like boxes or fruit cages. Notably there is also a bulk of cotton fabrics that counted to 300 *tan*.¹¹⁶ Sometimes livestock was bought from Nagasaki: On

¹¹¹ For a list of the Hosokawa clan's purchased goods from Nagasaki and Hirado, see Takeno, *Han bōeki shi no kenkyū*, 192-97.

¹¹² *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 202.

¹¹³ An imported scarlet colored fabric, usually used to make jacket for samurai.

¹¹⁴ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 227.

¹¹⁵ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 54.

¹¹⁶ *Hosokawa-ke monjo: kinsei shoki hen*, 233. A *tan* corresponds fabric with a width of 36 cm and a length of 10 m.

1624/3/27, Kokura domain bought 80 pigs and 10 goats from Nagasaki.¹¹⁷ both of which were not common stocks in Japan at the time, so it was reasonable for the domain to import them and breed them in the domain.

The domain did not just simply use silver to buy goods from Nagasaki. Sometimes domainal products were exported to Nagasaki in exchange for foreign goods, and we know salt was among them because of a record in summer 1623. In 1622, the domain sold salt at Nagasaki, but the amount was not handled to the buyer completely and for every *oku* of salt that was supposed to be handed over, the domain owed the buyer 0.149 *oku*.¹¹⁸ On 8/2, the Nagasaki purchasing magistrates sent a boat to Kokura and the salt were transported to Nagasaki.¹¹⁹ Another known export was wheat. On 1628/7/18, a boat sent wheat to Nagasaki and came back with some birds and plants.¹²⁰

The orders were often issued directly to the purchasing magistrates when they were at the domain, but when they were at Nagasaki, the information was passed on by messengers (of course they pass on all kinds of message between the domain and Nagasaki). It once took two messengers nine days to go to Nagasaki from Kokura and come back, a rapid speed given that they probably traveled on foot. They brought back multiple letters, not necessarily just for one round of letter exchange. After they came back, the domain government asked them to report the sight of drought (that was on the seventh month of 1626) along the way, to gain intelligence related to fields of administration other than foreign trade.¹²¹ When purchasing magistrates

¹¹⁷ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 312.

¹¹⁸ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 197-98. A *oku* is equivalent to 180.39 L.

¹¹⁹ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 205.

¹²⁰ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 55.

¹²¹ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 161, 167.

commutes between Nagasaki and Kokura, they also carried letters with them on their way. On 1628/7/24, when a purchasing magistrate was going to come back to Nagasaki shortly after he came to Kokura, he carried with him a total of six letters, in addition to two boxes of books for Mizuno Morinobu and Suetsugu Heizō, both were top Tokugawa officials at Nagasaki.¹²² In some occasions when the amount of goods was small, people just directly brought the goods to the domain. On 1628/7/22, two messengers came to Kokura from Nagasaki. One messenger was dispatched from the domain and with him was another messenger based in Nagasaki, probably hired by the purchasing magistrates' office at Nagasaki to help the domain's messenger to carry the goods.¹²³ The two messengers brought with them a small amount of goat skin and *heruhetowan*.¹²⁴ On 1630/8/7, two messengers were dispatched to Nagasaki, and twelve days later, they brought back with them two packs of Chinese cotton, two *tan* of cotton from Macao, one *tan* of Chintz,¹²⁵ and ten *tan* of cotton with fish scale pattern.¹²⁶ Just thirteen days later, more domainal messengers came from Nagasaki to bring two *tan* of Chinese cotton and a bowl.¹²⁷ This shows great frequency of human-transportation between Kokura and Nagasaki especially during the trading season. The movement of people between the domain and Nagasaki was the first level of communication for the domain's commercial activities at the port.

¹²² *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 65.

¹²³ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 64.

¹²⁴ *Heruhetowan* refers to a kind of high-class wool fabric made in Europe. In early modern Japan, fire was catastrophic for urban spaces, especially for the growing shogunal capital of Edo. Firefighting became another battlefield for samurai in the peaceful era, and the daimyo and their retainers who resided in Edo for alternate attendance also had their duty when there was fire. When they fulfilled their firefighting duty, they put on special jackets usually embroidered with their clan emblem. *Heruhetowan* was the fabric often used for making daimyo's fancy firefighting jackets.

¹²⁵ A kind of cotton fabric produced in India since the sixteenth century.

¹²⁶ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 5, 12.

¹²⁷ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 24.

The second level was water transportation. For the transportation of the purchased commodities constituted a great part in the communication between the domain and Nagasaki. In most of the times, considering the amount of goods, the domain dispatched Kobaya Boats 小早船, a small-scale military boat known for its speed and agility, suitable for transporting an amount too large for land transportation and too small for bigger boats. From the sources available, three places explicitly stated that Kobaya boats were used. On 1628/7/26, one Kobaya boat was arranged to depart the next day. It carried some agarwood which, bought from Nagasaki before, needed to be returned due to its bad quality.¹²⁸ Another clearly documented Kobaya boat came from Nagasaki to Kokura on 1630/9/4, and took with it steamed bonito, salted bonito, fig, and a kind of dessert called Kaseita.¹²⁹ Another documented Kobaya boat to Nagasaki appeared in an 1623/5/19 entry.¹³⁰ There are many more records about transport by boat in general, and I assume many of these were Kobaya boats for their economy and convenience. In addition to transport of commodities, many occasions boats were used to transport the domain's purchasing magistrates. On 1623/5/10,¹³¹ 1626/6/1,¹³² 1629/5/23,¹³³ and 1629/6/12,¹³⁴ there are records that Nagasaki purchasing magistrates left the domain by riding boats. In particular, in the 1629/6/12 record, the boat came back to Nagasaki with the head of the boat bringing four bottles for making pickles, and the pots were handed over to the daimyo's warehouse keepers. The boats,

¹²⁸ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 66.

¹²⁹ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 25. Kaseita was a Portuguese style dessert and was favored by Hosokawa Sansai. The making of Kaseita was later localized in Kumamoto and was one of the Hosokawa daimyo's tributes to the shogun. See Nakayama Keiko, *Jiten wagashi no sekai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2018), 154.

¹³⁰ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 167.

¹³¹ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 160.

¹³² *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.1, 136.

¹³³ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 261.

¹³⁴ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 277.

when leaving Kokura and heading for Nagasaki, also brought with it the domain's capital to be spent at Nagasaki as well as export commodities like previously mentioned salt. On 1631/10/12, it was reported that the domain's boat carried silver to Nagasaki came back and brought white sugar and shark skin.¹³⁵ From the above discussion on the means of transport between the domain and Nagasaki, we could see that the Hosokawa clan facilitated a comprehensive network of connection between the two places both through water and land. The transportation system was used for transmission of information, transportation of goods, and movement of people, and the system was used in a flexible and timely way to maximize its efficiency. This part of administration provided important logistical support to the domain's frequent foreign trade at Nagasaki.

The purchasing agents, when at Nagasaki, needed to monitor the market closely, part of it being choosing the correct timing for optimum price. They also needed to monitor other aspects about the market. One important information was each year's date of market opening at Nagasaki. On 1630/3/26, messengers from Nagasaki reported that the market did not open on that day.¹³⁶ This seems like an unexpected information, maybe the market opening date at Nagasaki was delayed due to some reasons. Again, on 1631/11/3, the daimyo asked the purchasing agents at Nagasaki on whether they knew the exact date of the opening date of the market.¹³⁷ This date was important because some goods could be sold very quickly, and it was crucial for the magistrates to communicate with the domain on this matter.

¹³⁵ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 90.

¹³⁶ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.2, 436.

¹³⁷ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 128.

Nagasaki was a complicated place when different interests converged, combined with the problem of Christianity and illicit trade, it naturally became a realm of political struggle. Inevitably the domainal Nagasaki magistrates were entangled with politics. On 1629/5/23, the domain ordered the purchasing agents to have their residence at Nagasaki far from the residence of Takenaka Shigeyoshi. This was because Suetsugu Heizō suggested Hosokawa Tadatoshi that because his relationship with Shigeyoshi was bad, he would be better not to place the residence of the purchasing magistrates close to his office.¹³⁸ From this episode we could see that because Suetsugu Heizō was political rival of Shigeyoshi (see Chapter I), he incited Tadatoshi to distance himself from Shigeyoshi. Of course, Tadatoshi already had bad relationship with Shigeyoshi, but still Heizō's suggestion was intended to get himself more alliance in the upcoming political attack. The separation of space became a reflection of political camps at Nagasaki, and the Hosokawa daimyo was part of this.

A Shift to the Dutch East India Company After “The Closing-Country Edicts”

Prior to the expulsion of the Portuguese, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) had only managed to establish a trading foothold within the Hirado Domain, a small island dozens of kilometers away from Nagasaki where the Portuguese had already established their base. Because Hirado was the legal and only trading port for the Dutch, Hirado domain had first hand access to the imported goods brought by the Dutch. During the 1620s and 1630s, the daimyo of Hirado quickly purchased large quantities of available goods brought by the Dutch.¹³⁹ The

¹³⁸ *Hosokawa Kokura-han*, v.3, 262.

¹³⁹ Adam Clulow, “From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain: Hirado, 1609–1641,” *Monumenta*

daimyo of Hirado wanted to resale the goods, and the daimyo including the Hosokawa and the Kuroda became Hirado domain's costumers as seen from several sources. The Hirado resale of Dutch goods in this sense was a factor restricting the direct interaction between the Dutch and Fukuoka and the Hosokawa's Kokura, and later Kumamoto domain. The Hirado domain finally lost their dominant access to trade with the Dutch in 1641 as the Dutch factory was forced to move to the island of Dejima at Nagasaki, being part of the *kaikin* policies. Both Fukuoka and Kumamoto domains sent officials to supervise the tearing down of the Dutch Factory at Hirado.

Three factors created favorable conditions for increased interaction between the VOC and the domains. First, although the Dutch lost a considerable amount of trading freedom by entering the “national prison”—the strictly guarded Dejima, breaking away from the Hirado domain as an intermediary enabled more equal and direct participation from Fukuoka and Kumamoto in trading with VOC. Second, the duty of Nagasaki maritime defense was assigned to the surrounding domains, including Fukuoka and Kumamoto, by the Tokugawa government. As this study shows later, the lords usually used the convenience of their defense role to inspect the Dutch factory, and thereby establishing economic ties with the VOC. Finally, following the prohibition of all Japanese vessels from overseas voyage in the fifth month of 1635, the Dutch quickly expanded their economic power at Vietnam and Cambodia, places where Japanese red-seal ships had traditionally occupied with their trade. According to the minutes from the Governor-general of Dutch East Indies' palace in Batavia in 4/11/1636, “because the emperor of Japan (shogun) prohibited his people from overseas voyage... it is decided that we must expand

the company's trade at places where those people had always sailed to... where we have not carried out trading.”¹⁴⁰ The effect of the Dutch strategy was reflected by the increasing trading volume in Japan from Dutch vessels during the latter half of the 1630s.¹⁴¹ To replenish the lost supply of goods from the red-seal ships, the domains were in a need to establish a closer relationship with the Dutch, who had successfully taken over the trading share that once belonged to the Japanese in Southeast Asia.

The Nagasaki defense system certainly gave the daimyo at both domains great privileges, maybe more than the pre-*kaikin* era, at Nagasaki. The year of 1647 was the time when the post-*kaikin* defense system was put into test. Two ships full of Portuguese envoys, desperately hoping to restore the prohibited trade with Japan, departed from Macao and arrived off shore Nagasaki on 6/25, and the ships were guided by the panic Japanese vessels into the Nagasaki harbor the next day, and the harbor was blockaded to keep the Portuguese ships from escape.¹⁴² Unlike the tragic end to the 1641 Portuguese ship incident, this time the Portuguese ships departed peacefully. Yet, troops from many Kyushu domains were mobilized to respond this incident. Fukuoka and Saga domain sent the largest number of troops, and Fukuoka domain was on-duty that year; troops from Kumamoto domain also arrived.¹⁴³ Wilson shows that Fukuoka domain had a lot of agency in this incident at Nagasaki, and resisted many directives from the Nagasaki magistrate, an official representation of the Tokugawa government at Nagasaki.¹⁴⁴ Although Kumamoto domain

¹⁴⁰ Iwao Seiichi, *Shuin sen boekishi no kenkyu*, 387-88.

¹⁴¹ Iwao Seiichi, *Shuin sen boekishi no kenkyu*, 387-88.

¹⁴² Matsutake Hideo, “Tokugawa jidai no Nagasaki keibi to Shōhō 4 nen no Porutokaru shisetsusen jiken” (*Keiei to keizai* 69, no.4, 1990), 263-64.

¹⁴³ Wilson, *Defensive Positions*, 41-42.

¹⁴⁴ Wilson, *Defensive Positions*, 42-43.

played a lesser role in this incident, their were still an important part of the defense system.

In a 1650 entry from the diary kept by the captain (Dutch: *opperhoofd*) of the Dutch factory at Nagasaki records Kuroda Tadayuki's visit to Dejima; he looked around the factory but said nothing of importance.¹⁴⁵ The important information here is that Kuroda Tadayuki could enter Dejima, thus creating rooms for trade negotiations even though this time he did nothing important. Earlier in 1644, a retainer of Kuroda Tadayuki visited the Dutch factory, paid thanks to the Dutch, and gave them 30 silver coins that each weighed 4 taels 3 maces, for a hound they brought to the lord last year.¹⁴⁶ According to the retainer, Kuroda Tadayuki gave the dog to the shogun and the shogun liked it, which could improve the image of the Dutch in the eyes of the shogun.¹⁴⁷ The Kuroda daimyo had the authority to access the trade with Dutch and at the same time the Dutch hound as a present to the shogun shows that this trading relationship was allowed by the Tokugawa government.

Compared to Fukuoka domain, even more information could be seen from the Dutch sources about the Kumamoto domain. The authorities at Kumamoto Domain found the VOC a client to export their domainal products. The 11/17 entry in the Dutch factory captain's diary in 1644 shows that 120 kegs of camphor arrived at the factory that day. In the next day the camphor was packed, ready for loading. Two days later on the twentieth, the camphor, along with silver and rice, was loaded on the fluyt ship *Capelle*.¹⁴⁸ This ship arrived at Nagasaki from Taiwan on 10/6/1644. On the twenty-fourth, the ship departed from Nagasaki.¹⁴⁹ A contemporary map

¹⁴⁵ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.12, 207.

¹⁴⁶ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.8, part 1, 117.

¹⁴⁷ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.8, part 1, 117.

¹⁴⁸ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.8, part 2, 118. All dates in this paragraph are in Gregorian calendar.

¹⁴⁹ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.8, part 2, 121.

suggests that the camphor could be transported to Cambodia or Siam.¹⁵⁰ Some other possible destinations of Dutch camphor export from Japan included the Coromandel, Dutch Suratte, Persia, and the Netherlands.¹⁵¹ A more detailed account on camphor export that year can be found from the captain's instruction to the VOC members in Japan on 11/20 of the same year. The Dutch requested the merchant "Torraja Sioubiedonne (Toraya Shirobei *dono*)" from "Fingo (Higo)" to provide them camphor with a price of 12 taels of silver per picul until the next trading season. The Dutch understood that this cheap price was due to the low cost of camphor processing that year, but in case the cost would increase in the future, they could accept a price 5 mace to 1 tael more expensive.¹⁵² A year later, the captain instructed not to order any camphor that year, stating that "in other years the camphor was cheap," that is, the camphor was too expensive in the year of 1645. In 1646, the Dutch administration at Batavia reminded the VOC branch in Japan to not overstock camphor, while encouraged them to buy it in a low price.¹⁵³ The VOC wanted to make the most profit out of this commodity, so their related business decisions were highly sensitive to price fluctuations, which created much uncertainty for the Kumamoto side. It turned out that exporting camphor to the Dutch was not a stable means of maintaining a continuous channel of export. The limited demand from the VOC also meant that the domain could not dump camphor in order to win stable orders from the Dutch. It can be imagined that Kumamoto camphor remained mostly unsalable in the years after 1644.

Another important Kumamoto export to the Dutch was wheat. Earlier the wheat produced

¹⁵⁰ Fujita Akiyoshi, "Edo Period Maps of the Old World: An Analysis on Their Textual Information of Ports and Trade", 137.

¹⁵¹ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.9, 285.

¹⁵² *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.8, part 2, 159.

¹⁵³ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.9, 285.

from the Hosokawa's Kokura domain was already exported to Nagasaki, probably to some foreign traders. In 1650/10/7,¹⁵⁴ the Dutch vessel loaded 1000 packs of wheat produced in Higo (Kumamoto).¹⁵⁵ This gives another example of Kumamoto export during the beginning of post-*kaikin* years. According to Yao's research, the Kumamoto domain had a steady export of rice to the Dutch factory between 1641-1650.¹⁵⁶ Yao further theorized that for the western daimyo, even the *sakoku* era Nagasaki market had a greater importance than the Kyoto-Osaka market due to its close locality and connection to a wide overseas market.¹⁵⁷ At least for the Kumamoto and Fukuoka domains, the *kaikin* did not weaken the importance of Nagasaki market for them.

¹⁵⁴ In Gregorian calendar.

¹⁵⁵ *Oranda Shokancho nikki*, v.12, 113.

¹⁵⁶ Yao, *Kinsei Oranda bōeki to sakoku*, 21.

¹⁵⁷ Yao, *Kinsei Oranda bōeki to sakoku*, 27.

CONCLUSION

This study was not intended to be a comparative study between the two domains, and although their foreign trade established some different characteristics which are expected, the differences are not the subjects of this paper. A clarification needs to be made here to explain my choice of two domains instead of one or more. This is purely because these domains have more sources available to me. Henceforth, this study is more intended to show how Kyushu daimyo generally have approached foreign trade. Without the existence of the miscellaneous merchants, domestic and foreign, who made a living in Kyushu during the first half of the seventeenth century—many of whom were already in the international trade even before, it would be hard for me to imagine how the daimyo could have run their own foreign trade as smoothly. The proxy these merchants played for the daimyo functioned as a buffer between the daimyo's longing for autonomous interaction with the broader world and their obligation as samurai subjects to the emerging Tokugawa control of this interaction with foreigners. Similarly, the merchant proxies also functioned as a parclose separating the daimyo with the earthy deals that was inappropriate for their status as samurai lords. Because of the translucent existence of daimyo in their foreign trade, they could impose little effect to change the “rule of game” which had long existed among the merchants. In this way the daimyo's existence in the international commercial world was more like some average merchants, if their relationship with the other merchants was not revealed by the scholars.

However, in the power structure of the Tokugawa *bakufu*-domain system, the daimyo were

also constantly aware of the boundary of their samurai duties. This motivated them to constantly connect their foreign trade to the Tokugawa by gift-giving, thereby acknowledging the Tokugawa authority as the overlord. The daimyo had multiple roles in their self-centered foreign trade, which matched with the transitional nature of the timeframe they were in.

This generalization could not undermine the diversity in the approach the daimyo took in domainal trade. Whether it was the assistance from the Chinese retainers, investment to the Portuguese merchants, or the dedication to a highly efficient system of communication between the domain and Nagasaki, or simply the various relationships with red-seal merchants, there were multiple choices for the daimyo in most of the times. With the evolution of Tokugawa policies, the daimyo sought different avenues for the international capital and goods to flow to their domains. In the initial years after the *kaikin*, both daimyo reached a new equilibrium as a result of convergence of international commercial ties to the shogunal city of Nagasaki, but foreign trade at the domain-level still continued.

This study remains an elementary attempt to understand a tip of an iceberg of Japan's history of global interaction. There are yet more details of this history waiting to be excavated, and I believe more approach from a regional perspective can be supplemented to the existing research. For example, the gold mines at Kokura which I read about but gave up discussing here due to the complexity they involved, were actually globally significant. While legal trade can be seen in domainal sources, smugglings at Kyushu domains were not privileged by official writings. Finally, the approach of this study could be applied to a broader time and space, and I believe by doing so, the scale of long overlooked rivulets of global connection at a local level could initiate

a forceful call for a re-examination of the narrative of Tokugawa hegemony in foreign relations and reshape how we understand early modern Japan's relation with the rest of the world.

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