

十七世紀的諷刺文章：
閻和赫立（Jan and Gerrit）兩個荷蘭人教師的對話
Lampoon in the 17th Century:
Samen-Spraeck tusschen Jan ende Gerrit

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Introduction

〈東印度群島巴達維亞城四個荷蘭人的閒談〉這篇諷刺文章是在 1663 年印刷的。作品中包含四個人物，第一位是商人，第二位是軍官，第三位是船員，最後一位則是教義問答教師。全文總共 24 頁，包括兩部分。*Monumenta Taiwanica* 期刊的第一期即以這篇對話作品第一部分的翻譯為專輯。第二部分的標題為「前大員及福爾摩莎總督尼可拉·福伯（Nicolaes Verburgh）任內的福爾摩莎政府」。此部分的附錄當中收錄另一篇文章，題目為「閻及赫立（Jan and Gerrit）兩位荷蘭人學校教師的對話——曾經進駐台灣，分別任職於蕭壠（今台南佳里）及法弗蘭（今雲林虎尾）」。現階段我們最感興趣的課題，也是這兩位曾經在台灣居留數年的荷蘭人教師之間的對話。

正如標題所示，閻及赫立這兩位教師之間的談話提到他們的在台經驗。根據這篇故事的敘事架構，閻來台灣的時間較早，而且被派遣到荷蘭人最早從事宜教活動的區域，也就是蕭壠的南部。赫立則剛從東印度群島回到荷蘭。如此的情節安排可提供一個思考、比較的視角，讓讀者來評比閻和赫立兩人的經歷。此外，他們的對話乃是以福伯總督從 1650 到 1653 年的執政為主題。閻在 1650 年代之前來台灣工作，而赫立至少在福伯執政期間曾經住在台灣。因此讀者若依照敘事邏輯，針對兩人的觀點做比較，亦顯得相當合理。閻和赫立偶然相遇，隨即展開對話，彼此交流他們在台灣擔任學校教師的經驗。整個故事的鋪陳依循嘲諷文類的規範，他們兩人批判當時藉由東印度公司的名義所推行的宗教活動如何剝削在地老百姓。照他們的觀察，在地原住民的困境乃是因教育政策的怪異實施方式所造成的。赫立特別在意的，即是以當地語言所施行的宗教教育。他並不反對在地人民以他們的母語來接受教育，而是抨擊這種方式帶給宣教師極大的困難，因為宣教師需要較長的時間才能嫻熟當地語言中相當數量的詞彙。在此之前，學校教師還得

代理宣教師的工作，直到宣教師當中有人能夠以在地語言流暢宣講基督教教義。閩和赫立兩人在談話中暗諷荷蘭人宣教師「忙著填飽荷包」。在此場景中，有一些嚴苛批評即便是針對尤尼士牧師（Rev. Robert Junius），亦不令人意外。1643 年尤尼士牧師回到荷蘭後便捲入一場宗教辯爭。根本的原因在於他同時向阿姆斯特丹的高等宣教法院，以及十七主任官的最高議會，控訴台灣教會的狀況。在台宣教師接到這個消息之後，大員合議會（the Tayouan Consistory）覺得迫不得已必須為自己的立場申辯，連當時自認委屈的在台宣教師也對尤尼士加以反擊。於是，雙方在這場宣教論戰中一來一往，相互指控。其間，1649 年 10 月尤尼士曾經於阿姆斯特丹的高等宣教法院出席為自己辯護，同時法院的判決也對他有利，但整個論戰的戰火仍舊延燒到 1652 年才平息。大員合議會雖被要求撤銷控訴，但事後多年論戰的後遺症依舊存在。尤其是在台灣的荷蘭人社區，尤尼士這個名字被列為黑名單。在這樣的情境下，閩頗為驚訝，尤尼士回到荷蘭以後，居然還能夠教導其他的荷蘭宣教師台灣的在地語言新港語，為未來派駐台灣來做行前訓練。

赫立曾經被派任到法弗蘭。他批評福伯總督任由宣教師予取予求，給他們太多執行權力。閩對於這個論點不但沒有表示訝異，反而呼應赫立的講法，並宣稱宣教師的權力把持在更早的卡洪總督（1644-46）及歐佛瓦特總督（1647-50）時期就已經存在，更導致新港、蕭壠、麻豆等地的居民受害。同樣重要的是，福伯總督接替歐佛瓦特就任之後，也無法改善教會狀況。福伯總督一上任，就為了發放人頭稅徵收文件給一些中國人的相關事宜（1650-52），而與哈維士牧師（Reverend Gravius）產生衝突。我們當然有充分的理由相信，宣教師的政治服務都是為了特定目的。後來哈維士保住他的名譽，而福伯總督卻被上級嚴厲指責，以至於 1653 年他請辭下台。從此，福爾摩莎和巴達維亞當局之間有關宣教事務的溝通一直惡化。雖然接下來的兩任總督對教會採取較寬鬆的做法，他們仍舊無法抑制前任總督福伯藉由巴達維亞而下達的干預。跡象顯示，在他的煽動之下，巴達維亞不但以指令來干預，而且還逾越福爾摩莎教會政策的基準用語界限。此外，兩位學校教師思考宣揚基督教的更好方式。赫立提出一個新的教育方案，閩則認為應改良治理手段。他們的看法都是以荷蘭人的人生觀為中心。兩人邊回想邊說，福爾摩莎原本可成為一塊樂土。下一段是閩及赫立的對話第一部分的翻譯，已改寫成現代英語。

The fictional conversation *Oost-Indisch-praetjen, Voorgevallen in Batavia Tusschen vier Nederlanders. Den eenen een Koopman, d'ander een Krijghs-Officier, den derden een Stuyrman, en den vierden of den laetsten een Krankebesoecker*. Gedrukt in't Jaer onses Heeren, Anno 1663 (*East India Chat, in Batavia between four Dutchmen. The first of which is a Merchant, another a Military Officer, the third a Ship Mate, and the fourth or the last one a Catechist. Printed in 1663*) contains 24 pages and consists of two parts. The inaugural issue of *Monumenta Taiwanica* features the translation of the first part of the conversation.¹ The heading of this second part is *Formosaense Regeringh, Onder Nicolaes Verburgh, Gewesen Gouverneur in Tayoan, en over Formosa. Met een Appendix van dierghelijcke Stof, of Samen-Spraeck tusschen Jan ende Gerrit beyde Schoolmeesters, d'eene in Soulang en d'ander in Favorlang een wijle tijds geresideert hebbende, behelsende, den verleden Stant aldaer* (*Formosan Government under Nicolaes Verburgh, Former Governor in Tayoan and Formosa. In appendix, a dialogue between Jan and Gerrit, both schoolteachers who resided for a while, one in Soulang, the other in Favorlang*). Our immediate interest is the conversation between the two former Dutchmen schoolteachers — Jan and Gerrit — in Formosa.

As the title suggests, the conversation between the two schoolteachers Jan and Gerrit deals with their experiences in Formosa. In the narrative structure of the story, Jan's personae served at an earlier time in Formosa. He was also located in the southern part of Soulang, the initial region of Dutch ecclesiastical activity. This kind of emplotment allows for a comparative perspective with Gerrit's experiences, who has just returned from the Indies to The Netherlands. Moreover, because the main title of this conversation refers to Governor Verburgh's administration (1650-1653), the logic follows that Jan served in Formosa before the 1650s and Gerrit at least during that time period. Jan meets Gerrit by sheer coincidence and both exchange stories about their experiences in Formosa as schoolteachers. Keeping in tradition with the lampoon genre, their criticism points to the manner how the local people were exploited by the clergy acting on behalf of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC). Contributing to this misery of the locals in the eyes of the two schoolteachers are the peculiar practices of the educational policy. In particular, Gerrit criticizes the practice of religious instruction in the native tongue. Not the fact that the local people were taught in their native tongue was an issue, but the difficulties this created for the clergy who needed a fairly long time to acquire the appropriate vocabulary in the local language, so that in the meantime

¹ 賀安娟，2010，〈東印度群島巴達維亞城四個荷蘭人的閒談（East India Chat）〉，《台灣學誌》，創刊號，頁271-281。

schoolteachers had to take over until one of the clergy was fluent enough to instruct Christianity in the local tongue. The undertone is that the clergy were too busy “filling their purses.” Not surprisingly, some harsh words for Reverend Junius were part of the scene as well.² After his return to The Netherlands in 1643, Junius became involved in a clerical dispute. Underlying reasons was that he had been complaining about the state of the Church in Formosa to both the higher ecclesiastical Court or Classis of Amsterdam and the Supreme Council of Seventeen Directors (The XVII).³ When the missionaries in Formosa received this news, the Tayouan Consistory felt compelled to defend its position, and the frustrated missionaries fired back. The accusations erupted in a clerical dispute, which would drag on until 1652, in spite of the fact that the matter was decided by trial in favour of Junius in October 1649 when Junius appeared before the Classis of Amsterdam to defend himself. The Tayouan Consistory was asked to drop the matter, but it left a wry aftertaste for years to come.⁴ Especially within the Dutch circles in Formosa, Junius name was persona non grata. In that context, Jan is surprised to hear that Junius after his return to The Netherlands had been instructing Dutch clergy in the Formosan language—the Sinkan tongue—to prepare them for their assignment in Formosa.⁵

Having been stationed in Favorlang, Gerrit comments on how governor Verburgh gave the clergy too much power to act as they felt like. Jan does not show any surprise; rather he echoes Gerrit's that the clergy's power play was already the case in the days of governors Caron (1644-46) and Overtwater (1647-1650), which made the inhabitants of places like Sinkan, Soulang and Mattau suffer. Not unimportantly, the appointment of Governor Verburgh

² Reverend Junius arrived in Formosa in 1629 and served until 1643. This made him not only of the pioneering missionaries, but also one of the longest serving ones. For a lively portrait about Junius and his ecclesiastical activities in Dutch Formosa, see Leonard Blussé, (1995), “Retribution and Remorse: The Interaction between the Administration and the Protestant Mission in Early Colonial Formosa,” in Gyan Prakash (Ed.), *After Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 153-82.

³ The Reformed Church in Formosa was not an independent body. The Tayouan Consistory was controlled by decisions from the Classis of Amsterdam. In reality, the daily church organization was entirely subjected to the directives of the local colonial administration, the one in Batavia and sometimes the XVII in Holland. The XVII was the Supreme Council of Seventeen Directors in Amsterdam which exercised supreme control over the affairs of the East India Company. Ministers were hired, appointed and paid by Batavia. Usually they served for a term of four years. See, William Campbell, (1903), *Formosa under the Dutch, Described from Contemporary Records*. London: Paul Kegan. (reprint 1992, Taipei), p. 540.

⁴ See, J.J.A.M. Kuepers, (1978), *The Dutch Reformed Church in Formosa 1627-1662: Mission in a Colonial Context*. Switzerland: Nouvelle Revue de Science Missionnaire, pp. 29-31, also cited in Ann Heylen, (2001), “Dutch Language Policy and Early Formosan Literacy (1624-1662),” in Ku Wei-ying (Ed.), *Missionary Approaches and Linguistics in Mainland China and Taiwan*. Louvain Chinese Studies, Leuven: F. Verbiest Foundation and Leuven University Press, pp. 219-220.

⁵ Dutch was officially introduced in February 1648 under Governor Overtwater and had the intention of bringing the natives closer to the Dutch settlers.

as the successor of Van Overtwater did not help much to improve ecclesiastical work. Soon after his arrival, Governor Verburgh and Reverend Gravius were caught up in a conflict regarding the issuance of some Chinese poll-tax papers (1650-52).⁶ Suffice it here to say that there was a definitive end to the political services of the ministers. Gravius' name was restored and the Governor was severely reprimanded, which resulted in his resignation in 1653. From then on, communication between Formosa and Batavia on church matters deteriorated. Although the next two Governors were more lenient towards the Formosan clergy, they could not change the interference from Batavia under influx of ex-Governor Verburgh.⁷ There is reason to believe that at his instigation, Batavia interfered with the method of instruction and disregarded the linguistic boundaries upon which the Formosan missionary strategy was based.

The two schoolteachers speculate on what they consider a good remedy to better propagate Christianity: Gerrit describes an educational initiative and Jan tackles the issue of “good governance,” framed in a very Dutch outlook on life. Hence both reminisce about how Formosa could have developed into a fine place. The following is a translation of the first part of the dialogue between Jan and Gerrit. The translation has been adapted to contemporary English.

Dialogue

JAN: Well Gerrit, if it isn't you. I was not expecting your homecoming from the East Indies so soon, nonetheless you are most welcome.

GERRIT: I sincerely thank you, Jan mate, God be praised that I still see you in good health, and that I have arrived safely in my fatherland, where I from now on hope to spend the remainder of my days under a free, rather than tyrannical, government.

JAN: How come you mention this so suddenly, Gerrit mate, I also spent some years of my time in Formosa, and often saw that there were a few screws loose on the bandwagon, however I did let it go by, without making too much talk of it, thinking that bad tidings would soon enough come to see daylight.

⁶ Kuepers, *The Dutch Reformed Church* provides a comprehensive overview of the dispute, pp. 36-38.

⁷ Verburgh made an inspection report, entitled “Cort vertooch ende relaas over Formosa door Nicolaes Verburgh, gewezen gouverneur, Batavia 10/03/1654”. For a reprint, see, Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch*, pp. 292-297.

GERRIT: The truth needs to be told, matters were spinning out of control in Formosa, and our lords and masters were of the opinion that it had reached its limits, though now they are probably turning a blind eye.

JAN: Well then, Gerrit, exactly how cunning and sly were things going on there when I left the place? Surely, they were boorish and rude enough.

GERRIT: I witnessed in Favorlangh that the locals were not as taxed, shorn, and harassed as it has been in the past couple of years; Verburgh gave the clergy too much power to act as they felt like.

JAN: Yes, keep talking, but in the days of Caron and Overtwater the clergy did not have less power to act, and the inhabitants of Sinkan, Soulang, Mattau and other places suffered just as much.

GERRIT: How could it have been worse? Was it already not bad enough that they first leased the lands of the poor and ignorant locals to the clergy and afterwards to the Chinese which until presently (God be well) has been the case? But then the poor people, who for a pittance received from the Chinese most of the meat and skins of deer, elk and the like that they caught, and which made up most of their income, now had to be bartered with the Chinese. Moreover, the clergy then imposed a head tax, especially Reverends Vertrecht, van Breen, and Happart; and those mates were clever enough to know how to implement this. All the locals, both old and young, had to attend school daily to be instructed in the Christian religion, prayers, reading and writing, and so on. Those who did not show up in school or in church were fined, either a deerskin or something that was of use for the “Lord” of the parishioners. Moreover, the clergy also organized hunts, to which the locals when they finished school, were asked to join in order to make a living. Both Chinese and locals had to put up cruel snares to trap deer, contrary to the placards of the government that limited the quota of deer meat and skins. The clergy sold the meat to the Chinese and shipped the skins to Japan for good financial return. They also knew to nicely accommodate the Chinese tenants by providing them with indigenous labor by giving them leave from school. Without their labor, the Chinese could not acquire much meat and skin. The Chinese were very grateful for this kind of charity, yes, to the extent that in the end things were so gross, that a proverb was coined: “the clergy baptize deer for skin.”

JAN: Ha! Ha! Mate, the clergy in the districts where I was were not much different. Junius, Gravius and more of those blokes will still remember, because none of them returned home without a full purse and big means, moreover these fellows did not see any sin in accusing the poor locals of all kinds of crimes, such as whoring, promiscuity, bad housekeeping, and truancy from church and school. And because of that, they imposed high fines as they saw fit and even sunk to beating, kicking and other torments that they daily inflicted on these poor people which would even break a heart of stone. Yes, Gravius even dared to tie locals to the pillory and have them flogged to death, and boasted about such mischief that he had hens boiled and cooked in cream. What do you think of such apostles, and the practice of gruesome usury by which they moved among the Chinese, and enabled them to secure such high profits? What do you say mate, is this proverb not very applicable to these fellows?

*Are they Reformed,
Or do they abuse in its name?*

Surely the Company can send all her ships to the East Indies in pursuit of the Spanish tyrants, but if her Governors should have kept better rule in these countries, one would not these days speak as much as one does of places (I was appalled when I heard the names) like Lumay or the Goude Leeuws Eylandt, or Formosa, and Engano, which put us on the same par and level (God be well) as the Spanish. Yes, if it were God's wish that we were not helpers, I may well say that we were the very cause of the most gruesome and horrible, yes, inhuman persecution of Portuguese Christians who had been to the Empire of Japan. Though some would have long admitted responsibility in their hearts, still the Company has started to investigate. The proof is the text of the following Placard-extract: "Reynier van Tzum, headmerchant and supervisor of the Company's Office-Ships and People in Japan, all audience who shall read or hear this read aloud":

It was seriously prescribed by quill and dictated, that it is forbidden to sell, exchange, worship or in a handy way proffer any Christian ornaments, psalm books and other spiritual authors to the Japanese or any other nation. Moreover, they have to keep these things out of sight of the eyes of the Japanese and other nations present here. Yes, to observe what has been the custom in Japan for a long time already, likewise that from now on there will be no celebrations on Sundays or holy-days as well as on weekdays which is customary in Japan, and that all will have to work as usual. Likewise, that no public gatherings, prayers, either before or after the meal, or any

other type of Christian exercises that were practiced by the Portuguese are to be held as long as for the time one resides in Japan. Although all of this is difficult for a Christian mind to observe; it is to prevent as much as possible objections which could be inflicted on the dear Companies' Ships and Peoples, and that we should adhere to as long as we are here. In the meantime it is for each of us to serve the Lord with one's inner holy thoughts. Act of 20 September 1646.

At Office Nangasacqui

Signed

REYNIER VAN TZUM

GERRIT: No, for sure, it was not that gross in Favorlang and vicinity, or it was due to the fact that the clergy did not dare to [act cruelly] because the region was too far removed from the Honck. Unlike the ones located closer, they were not so sure "about the eggs in this basket." However, these things take place in all villages where the schoolmasters ordered the poor locals about to run errands for a pittance, even if it were as far as ten to twelve miles away simply to go get a dozen eggs.

JAN: That's nothing! In my days the inhabitants even had to build their own churches and schools; besides supply and furnish the materials without ever having enjoyed a cupful of water in return. They provided in addition the lodgings of the schoolmasters, horse stables, and barracks for the soldiers and so on.

GERRIT: It is also true that the inhabitants more up north have to do the same, but they are being appeased with some sweet talk that they will be compensated, but that never happens.

JAN: I am surprised that in spite of the fact that all these locals are free people and that the governors of the VOC lack all moral fiber for having taken their land away from them, the people do not throw this insupportable yoke off their necks and beat the clergy and schoolmasters to death.

GERRIT: What could these poor people have done otherwise? It probably could have taken place at one moment or another in time, when they start affecting their sowing-lands which are their main source of livelihood. In fact, the VOC has done this for quite some time and now only tries to do even more. Take Gravius and his friends, for example, they have been acting

like this only to get the choicest cuts, which of course you have more knowledge of than I do.

JAN: But, Gerrit mate, is not paganism decreasing a bit in the northern regions, and Christianity on the increase, or does it make much difference?

GERRIT: Talking about Christianity, the clergy are not concerned about putting in zeal and diligence. If they had been serious about that task, they would have taught the locals our native language, similar to what the Portuguese and the Castilians do wherever they go, and put in all their efforts so that many pagan peoples could be converted to Christianity. On the contrary, the locals are now being instructed in their own tongue, which is not always studied by our clergy, so that they can know even the basic doctrines of theology. For example in certain places the word Deus is used for God while in other places it is the name Jehovah. Just take a look how resistant this work is. Even if the clergy are of the opinion that they should study the Formosan language and put it to the best possible use, reaping the best results, but in the meantime fill their purses, and then anchors away and set sail, then the praiseworthy work obviously comes to a standstill. Meanwhile in their absence, churches and schools have to be served by schoolmasters, until a penniless newcomer arrives as clergyman and becomes adept in the language. He then instructs and orders the locals to follow whatever he has been fantasizing about, and the locals one by one or among themselves draw their conclusions that once again they have another God or Christ, because they have to study different prayers and other doctrines from what had been imprinted in their memory by the previous clergymen.

JAN: It is really like that! Anyway, the locals in the south fare better, although it is true that at times they too are being chaffed. Yet, the people who live in Tamsuy and Kelangh do not have any complaints of the clergy, who do not dare to venture into these far places, because the climate is unhealthy and they are afraid they will lose their livelihood; I praise the priests and monks who in order to introduce their religion abroad neither stand in awe of the devil nor dead. But our cozy ministers here like to remain where they are, and prefer to carry on some private trade, becoming as skilled as the merchants in India.

GERRIT: Yes, I also take it like that. And since I am fluent in speaking, reading and writing the Formosan language, I intend to follow in the footsteps of Dominus Junius and attract young clergymen who want to go to the Indies, to teach them the language. The Company will do just as they did for Junius, and because it has the financial means to do so, compensate me for this.

JAN: Yes, what's this I hear? I crack up with laughter. Has Junius actually taught young clergy the Formosan language? What kind of high and mighty man does he take himself for? He who hardly knows the language himself properly! All the time while he was serving in the Church in Formosa, he filled his purse, but without doing any special services, of which the powerful ones in due course will demand to see evidence of, knowing that this is not only cheating the Company in India but also the fatherland. And this was done in order to make a name for himself. This Dutchman has always made an effort, as is revealed from his published lies⁸ to show testimonies of his faithful work among the blind heathens in Formosa, to bring them Christianity. Yes, I believe that he, just like his Reverend Cornelis, became clergy with ulterior motives.

GERRIT: In the final days, the clergy in Formosa were no longer feasting away as they were before as Lord and Master, playing Pope over the locals everywhere. In every district or governmental province they had placed political overseers (*politijcque*) who were only supervised by a General Landdrost, who had to protect the inhabitants and see to it that the deer were no longer converted for their skin. What do you reckon, Jan my Friend, isn't that more like putting an honest pair of spectacles on the nose of the clergy?

JAN: Exactly as you say so, but if it remains like that, I am very apprehensive of it, because the clergy were too much of a Master in India. But Gerrit, do tell me, what kind of remedies are there to continue Christianity in the several districts?

GERRIT: That is the duty of the authorities and the clergy, whose responsibility it is. But (my feelings, tell me) if they want to take up that task seriously, the best remedy would be to establish a church school in every province, while there are currently five or six church schools in total; and from each district, 50 to 60 children of about 8 to 10 years of age are commended. The school children, clergy, schoolteachers and whoever else doing the same kind of work would be lavishly compensated from the villages' poll-tax income. In case of surplus, the mentioned children in the schools can be instructed in Christianity, taught and practiced in the Dutch language, in the future maybe even instructed to read and write in Latin. In due course it is hoped that this instruction will have produced wise, educated and godly men, who naturally

⁸ This refers to three catechisms compiled by Junius. He had made extensive use of references to the people's own traditions and included adaptations to their psychology. Because of the clerical dispute between Junius and the missionaries, Junius' oeuvre was completely rewritten. Its replacement, the New Formulary, was based upon the Dutch Heidelberg version. For a brief discussion of the adaptation of the catechisms to local customs, see Ann Heylen, "Dutch Language Policy," pp. 220-221.

and by themselves with zeal in their hearts will take on to convert and bring the knowledge of salvation to their fellow country men. Yes, so that the locals will be keen to learn more from them than from our clergy.

JAN: Well, how would you picture the situation, with the elders and all others who have been instructed?

GERRIT: I would not add more grease to those gears and with what is going on these days, even less grease. If the older and younger ones up to the age of twenty years of age could look after their church on Sundays and holidays and the other ones look after the school and rehearse what they had learnt, this way they could easily provide for the entire household. While now, the damned coercion of compulsory school attendance makes them they suffer to the extent that these pitiable people dare not utter the smallest murmur of discontent.

JAN: Well, if I were to speak confidentially, Gerrit my mate, I would consider your proposal very good. Moreover, I also believe that there would be quite some extra pennies left over from the poll-tax money. Now it all goes straight to the Company, but if they were to do God's law and will, they could distribute these pennies among the poor who are of whom (God be well) there are too many in the villages. Then, some of the locals could buy a milk-cow and raise it, which in the future would not only bring in products, like milk, butter, cheese and so on for their households, but they could use the animal to plough, whereas at the moment they are dependent on the very traditional lifestyle of hunting and gathering.

GERRIT: And this could not have been at a more suitable moment, as when Formosa still belonged to the Company, when the place was abundant with animals, which cost only a little money. It would have been no problem to raise donkeys and mules which could have been imported from foreign countries with the purpose to make the heavy work that was demanded by the one and the other, especially by the clergy and schoolteachers, for the locals a bit lighter, including us, my dear friend.

JAN: If God would have let this happen, then Formosa would have had the name of a good government. Instead, it now has been darkened by evil and God's wrath has befallen the place, which will be talked about more afterwards, so that we in the year 1652 witnessed the outbreak of the Chinese War and other events.

GERRIT: Yes, you call it the Chinese war, rather say the Chinese manslaughter, that is calling the child by its correct name, because what were the Chinese to blame for? They did nothing else but try to free themselves from Verburgh's tyrannical rule. Though I have to repeat the same mercy after about 4,000 Chinese men, women and other people extinguished their flame, and among our people barely one died. But truly, it did not take place without hands full of so much gold, comparable to his wife's cradle filled with children's clothes, and with the rest of silver, gold, pearls and textiles that could have furnished an entire conscript army, the total cost which the poor Chinese had to cough up and be collected by their headmen or chiefs mainly. What do you think, Jan mate, could one for such game not commit a small war?

JAN: Surely, I was under the impression that Verburgh was a friend of the Chinese, but after what I hear from you now, is that not so much the case.

The lust for wealth of Verburgh and Co is illustrated with some examples, yet the narrative of the two schoolteachers hinges on the financial profit and embezzlement practices in dealing with the Chinese merchants. References to the 1650s earthquakes, the grasshopper plague, the destruction of parts of the Dutch fleet are all seen as an ill omen. These events precede the coming loss of Dutch Formosa to the Chinese which is narrated in terms of another wave of God's wrath upon the poor people. The translation of the remainder of the dialogue is for next issue. To be continued.