

From the Rover Incident to the Nanjia Treaty—Whose Conflict? Whose Treaty?

Kuo Su-Chiu

Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan

This paper will focus on the Rover Incident of 1867 and the subsequent Nanjia Treaty; the main protagonists of the incident were the Kuraluts indigenous people; and different perspectives will be explored by integrating archaeological and historical data. The Rover Incident, a conflict between the Kuraluts and the United States, led to the Nanjia Treaty (Treaty of the Southern Headland), a reconciliation between the US and Tauketok, pre-eminent leader of 18 indigenous communities inhabiting this region. From the geographic location of the Kuraluts Village (Sheding Site), however, as well as from foreign coins and blue-and-white ceramics found as funerary objects inside stone coffins, it would seem that such contacts with the outside world were relatively frequent. Moreover, due to the aborigines' ability to make use of knowledge of the local geography and their military skills to defeat forces from the US's naval fleet—which also indicates they were familiar with weaknesses in the military operations of foreign vessels—as a result, neither the US side nor Tauketok seemed to have any need to resort to the use of military force.

Keywords: Rover Incident, Nanjia Treaty, Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao, Kuraluts, Tauketok, Zhulaoshu Tribe

Preface

The Hengchun Peninsula at the southern tip of Taiwan had complex ethnic relationships and, from the 1860s onward, following the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin and the opening of international trade through the “treaty ports”, such factors as the occurrence of shipwrecks involving foreign ships¹, foreign powers overwhelming China's Qing-Dynasty government, and the Qing government being reluctant to deal with disputes because it considered the Hengchun Peninsula to be aboriginal territory, and the ever-increasing ambitions of foreigners to encroach into Taiwan, all presented increasingly volatile developments.

This paper takes as its focal point the Rover Incident of 1867 following the opening of the treaty ports, and the subsequent signing of the Nanjia Treaty by Charles W. Le Gendre for the US side and Tauketok as pre-eminent leader of the Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao. It will seek to understand the opposing sides involved in this conflict and its resolution, and the background of ethnic relationships.

As Kamimura (2014) and Tseng (2017) had already discussed in detail the perspectives of Tauketok and

Kuo Su-Chiu, holds a PhD. in Archaeology from Tokyo University of Japan, and is an Associate Research Fellow, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

¹ There had been many shipwrecks earlier, but these did not attract international attention. Europe and the United States had long noticed Taiwan's strategic and economic status, and in order to protect commercial interests at sea and provide rescue and shelter for their own merchants who had survived shipwrecks, even before the opening of trade they had already come to Taiwan to actively conduct geographical investigations of the seas and search for survivors (Sheng-chuan Chuang, “Taiwan's foreign relations beyond the Qing Empire”, <https://www.ntl.edu.tw/public/Attachment/35161649530.PDF>).

the trade of aboriginal produce, this paper will focus on the main protagonists of the incident, the Kuraluts, and will integrate archaeological data to explore the Incident from a different perspective.

The Rover Incident and the Nanjia Treaty

The 1860s was an important historical period: As a result of the Treaty of Tianjin, Chinese ports were opened up for trade, the so-called treaty ports, and subsequent disputes relating to commerce, religion, shipwrecks, and territories, as well as wars and negotiations, all had significant impacts on Taiwan's indigenous groups, the aborigines, and on the Qing-Dynasty government's approach to administering Taiwan.

The Rover Incident of March 1867 occurred when the US merchant ship *Rover*, on its way from Shantou in Guangdong Province to the treaty port of Newchwang (today's Yingkou) in the northeastern Liaoning Province, encountered a violent storm and drifted onto a reef at Qixingyan on the southern coast of Taiwan. When the survivors landed in the area of today's Kenting, they were attacked by aborigines of Kuraluts Village. Eventually, one sailor, a native of Guangdong, escaped, informed the authorities, and thus brought the incident to the attention of the Americans.

At that time, the US consul in Amoy (Xiamen), who was also responsible for foreign affairs in Taiwan, was Charles W. Le Gendre. After receiving report of the incident in April 1867, Le Gendre went to Taiwan to negotiate with local military figures, including Wu Da-ting and others. Since the aboriginal lands did not officially come under the Qing government's territories, however, they refused to send punitive troops and instead evaded responsibility, so Le Gendre returned unsuccessful to Amoy.

In June of the same year, the US government ordered troops from its naval fleet to punish the aborigines but, due to unfamiliarity with the terrain and suffering repeated ambushes, they were defeated. Le Gendre and US Ambassador Anson Burlingame filed a serious protest with the Qing government, and it, under diplomatic pressure, ordered Wu Hao, the governor of Fujian and Zhejiang, and Wu Da-ting, magistrate of the *dao* (regional administrative district), to investigate the incident and lead a punitive expedition against the Aborigines. Liu Ming-deng, *zongbing* (a senior military official) of Taiwan, personally led 500 soldiers deep into southern Taiwan to assist the Americans. In September, Le Gendre went to the front line and, without the prospect of any definitive victory, decided to adopt a diplomatic approach. With William A. Pickering—a Briton with multiple language skills from his work in the Chinese Maritime Custom Services—acting as interpreter and mediator, he met with Tauketok, paramount leader of the local Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao. The consensus reached in their Nanjia Treaty was that the 18 groups under Tautetok's leadership would promise to protect the lives and properties of all Europeans and Americans who drifted onto the coast.

Protagonists of the Rover Incident—The Kuraluts

According to historical documents and archaeological data, the Kuraluts were a tribe of Paiwan ethnicity, whereas Tauketok of the Zhulaoshu Tribe was of Puyuma ethnicity, who referred to themselves as Seqalu (Kamimura, 2003, p. 32).

Who were these Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao? The *Investigative Report into the Customs of Indigenous Peoples*—published in 1921 by the Provisional Old Customs Survey Team under Japan's Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan—referred to the Paliljao Aborigines as the “Lower Hengchun (恆春下) Aborigines”, and indicated that both these and the Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao were “tribes to the south of the Fenggang River basin”. In other words, references to the Eighteen Tribes of Langjiao, the “Unassimilated

Langjiao Aborigines (totalling 18 tribes)", the "Eighteen Tribes of Lower Langjiao (琅嶠下十八社)", and the Paliljau Aborigines or Lower Hengchun Aborigines, all referred to the same ethnic group:

These Aborigines (the Paliljau) comprise 14 subgroups: the Sabdiq, Kuaizi, Jiazhilai, Mudan, Zhu, Gaoshifo, Bayao, Silinge, Vangcul (on the top of Wenshuai Mountain), Zhulashu, Kuraluts, Shemali, Longluan, and Maozai. These aborigines call themselves the Sepaliljaliljau, a name also used for them by other groups of aborigines, the original meaning is unknown. (Kamimura, 2003, pp. 32-33)

Of these, the Zhulashu (which also appears in documents as Zhulaoshu), Shemali, Longluan, and Maozai "originally belonged to the Puyuma sub-ethnicity, called themselves Seqalu, and so differ from the other various Paiwan Aborigines" (Kamimura, 2003, p. 32). Thus, with the exception of these four groups belonging to the Seqalu, the others all are Paiwan; the relationship between the two being as follows:

Seqalu and Paiwan nowadays have different ethnicity names, but because the Seqalu have intermarried since early times, are largely similar to the Paiwan, with the exceptions of their sacrificial practices and customs of inheritance, because of which there is no particular need to distinguish [between them]. (Kamimura, 2003, p. 32)

According to records in the 1935 book *Research into Taiwan's Aboriginal Ethnic Systems*, there is a small hill to the northwest of Kuraluts Village known today as Dajianshi (a hill, same with Dajianshan), from the aboriginal name Katza-katza meaning "large", which Han-Chinese named as Toa-shiam-pan. Han-Chinese people living near Dajianshan believe it is a supernatural hill and are unwilling to stare at it for fear of getting sick. Kuraluts people do not speak in this manner, however, merely saying that before getting into fights with people from outside their group, they would ascend to stand on the huge rock platform they called Kapul at the eastern end of Dajianshi summit, to carry out divination in which they asked spirits whether they should participate in the battle (Yang, 2011, p. 369).

In 1874, at the time of the Mudan Incident, Japanese forces made use of a triple-route attack plan, the "Shimen, Zhu, and Fenggang/Triple-route Plan". This already had "Dashijian" marked on it, which was, then, the Kuraluts Village. From this plan, it can also be known that the geographic location of the Kuraluts Village provided a good view of all coastal activities in Nanwan (Southern Bay), which was very important (see Figure 2).

So, where is the Kuraluts Village in terms of today's location, and what correspondence does it have with archaeological remains found to date? According to the findings of the author's collation of various maps, it can be seen that the archaeological remains of "Guizijiao Village" (龜子角社, which is presumably a mistranscription of the similarly written 龜仔角社, which is a near homonym for Guizilu Village 龜子律社, the more common sinicization of the name of Kuraluts Village, as used in this paper)² is marked on the 1904 "Map of Taiwan's Fortifications", of which there are remains at two locations: Sheding and Guizijiao/lù (see Figure 1). From this, it is presumed that these two locations should be related to the remains of the Kuraluts Village.

Taking as an example the remains at Sheding, located at Kenting in Hengchun Township, Pingtung County, the main research history is as follows:

In October 1986, a stone coffin was unearthed when the Kenting National Park was building a new road at Sheding. Since there are many of this kind of stone coffin dating from that period, on October 7-8th

² Japanese pronunciation of the character 角 found on the 1904 map (see Figure 1) is *ru*, and so will be a mistranscription of the character, also pronounced *ru*.

Kuang-chou Li surveyed to the south and found a square stone coffin whose lid was already cracked at one corner and had shifted to leave the coffin half open. An iron knife and ceramic bowl base parts originally in the coffin had already been removed, and many ceramic pieces were found in a pile of earth beside the coffin. No excavation was undertaken at that time, however (Huang, Chen, & Yen, 1987, pp. 30, 31), on October 24, 1986, Shih-chiang Huang again excavated southward toward the Shedding Site's above-mentioned tomb (B1) and about 20 meters to its southeast found another stone coffin (B2) beneath a bishopwood tree. Details of these two coffins are given below:

B1 is a square coffin made from sandstone. The coffin's aperture was about 3 to 10 centimeters beneath the ground surface, and the depth to the coffin base from the aperture was about 88 centimeters. The four side pieces face each other at right angles, making a width of about 60 centimeters square; placed on top of each of the four side pieces is a rectangular slab measuring about 70 cm long by 20 cm to 30 cm in width; though due to having endured pressure from above these are already broken many times. On top is a six-sided slab lid, measuring about 90 cm in length and with a thickness of about 9.5 cm. The base slab is already broken, and now only covers about half of the base area. The human bones within the coffin were in disarray, showing evidence of disturbance. From discovery of three mastoid bones and many limb bones, it is speculated that the coffin was used for two or more corpses buried at different times. Moreover, from the shape of the stone coffin, it is speculated that burial was in a squatting position with limbs bent, a form of burial custom practiced by the Paiwan ethnicity right up to Retrocession from Japanese rule in 1945, as was witnessed personally by local elders. Funerary items placed in the coffin are numerous, and include two complete porcelain bowls, one porcelain pot, 10 bronze bracelets, 35 rings, bronze ornaments, two circular shell ornaments, four foreign silver and copper coins, four recognizable iron spearheads, and other iron implements, a complete belt comprising 275 pieces of agate, as well as other glass and shell beads. The porcelain bowls and pot are all products of the Qing Dynasty or period of Japanese rule, and are more exquisite than pottery found elsewhere in the cultural stratum. The bronze bracelet, rings, and ornaments were all personal accessories; the bronze bracelet has a gap, which was perhaps made into the shape of a hand; the bronze ornaments were connected by means of a small bronze chain, the top was inlaid with a half bead of agate; a small number of the rings were similarly inlaid with agate beads. There is a betel nut box containing lime and betel nuts that have turned to fiber, and there are three pieces of iron that could have been used to smear the lime before chewing the betel. The iron spearheads are 10 cm to 12 cm long, and would have been typically tied onto wood or bamboo to make a spear. The agate beads, glass beads, and shell beads all have a hole to facilitate stringing together. The copper coins are already corroded making them unidentifiable; two of the foreign silver coins can be recognized, however, being cast with "HISPAN, 1786" and "MEXICANA, 1862" (Huang et al., 1987, pp. 30-33).

The slab lid of the B2 stone coffin at the Shedding Site is circular with a diameter between 90 cm and 95 cm and thickness of 7-8 cm. It appears very uniform on the outside, which is clearly the result of careful trimming. There are four side plates, joined together at right angles, similar to those of the square coffin B1. The skeleton inside the coffin is complete, and there are many kinds of funerary objects: five iron knives, betel nuts, a betel nut box, and remnants of undecayed clothing, and so forth, all of which should be of similar age to those of B1 but, since this tomb was said to be privately owned, it was not further excavated (Huang et al., 1987, p. 33).

On the two foreign silver coins unearthed from the square coffin at the Shedding Site can be distinguished the writing "HISPAN, 1786" and "MEXICANA, 1862". According to Tai-kang Lu's identification, these can

be identified as an 8 Real Spanish silver coin from the reign of Carlos III, and a Mexican 8 Real silver coin from the Mexican Republic minted in 1823 after the Mexican Revolution and the successful separation from Spanish rule, its weight and silver are similar to those of the Spanish 8 Real coin. Since the obverse side of the coin is cast with the image of an eagle, it was known as the “Eagle Silver”. (Lu, 2015, pp. 163-164) (see Figures 3-9 to 3-12).



Figure 1. Kuraluts Village marked on the 1904 Map of Taiwan's Fortifications overlaid with archaeological sites (although appearing incorrectly as 龜子角社; from the Japanese pronunciation it can be seen as a mistranscription for 龜仔角社 or 龜仔律社, that is, Kuraluts Village).



Figure 2. “Dashijian (大石尖)” marked on the Japanese military triple-route attack plan from the Mudan Incident (the “Shimen, Zhu, and Fenggang/Triple-route Plan”), was Kuraluts Village, whose geographic location provided a good view of all coastal activities in Nanwan (Yang, 2002, Figure 12).



Figure 3-1. Circular stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 24).



Figure 3-2. Square stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 23).



Figure 3-3. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 25).



Figure 3-4. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 26).



Figure 3-5. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Li, 2002, Figure 93).



Figure 3-6. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 28).



Figure 3-7. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 29).



Figure 3-8. Funerary objects from stone coffin
(Huang et al., 1987, pl. 30).

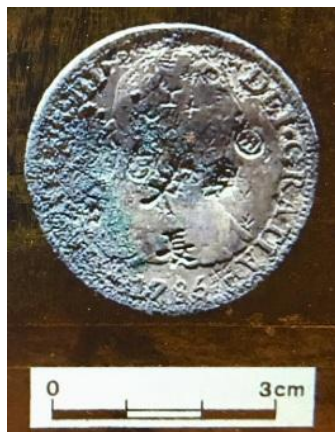


Figure 3-9. Spanish Carlos III 8 Real silver coin (Lu, 2015, p. 182, Figure 17)³.



Figure 3-10. Spanish Carlos III 8 Real silver coin (Lu, 2015, p. 182, Figure 18)⁴.



Figure 3-11. Mexican Republic 8 Real silver coin (Lu, 2015, p. 188, Figure 69).⁵



Figure 3-12. Mexican Republic 8 Real silver coin (Lu, 2015, p. 188, Figure 70).⁶

Figure 3. Stone coffins and funerary objects from the Sheding Site.

³ Obverse side: King's bust with face and folds of clothing blurred; around the edge, despite a patina of corrosion, can still be deciphered the inscription "DEI GRATIA 1785 [CAROLUS]" meaning "By the grace of God, 1785, Carlos III". The coin has been over stamped with several Chinese characters including 王 "king" (inside a circle), 長 "long" and 天 "heaven".

⁴ Reverse side: Decorated with Spain's royal coat of arms, which is divided by a cross, within which are two cities and two lions, above is the royal crown, to the two sides are the Pillars of Hercules, and on the pillars are winding scrolls, which bear a text that is now illegible, but originally would have read "PLUS ULTRA", Spain's national motto, meaning "[There is] Further Beyond", that is, heaven above the ocean. Inscribed near the edge is "HISPAN'ET'IND'REX'OM'8R'F'M", meaning "King of Spain and the Indias", M for Mexico City Mint, 8 Reals, and F and M for the initials of the two mint supervisors.

⁵ Obverse side: showing the national emblem of an eagle with spread wings symbolizing the founding of Mexico; near the edge is inscribed "REPUBLICA MEXICANA".

⁶ Reverse side: over stamped with the Chinese character 昊 "sunlight"; in the center is a conical cap of freedom, within is inscribed "LIBER___[IAD]"; and from it spreading in all directions are 32 rays of light of differing lengths; near the edge is inscribed "☆ 8R·G·1862·Y·E·10Ds·20Gs". The G before the year of casting shows it was made by the Guanajuato Mint, the four groups of letters after the date are used to confirm the batch number.

Discussion and Conclusions

In summary, it can be seen that what started as a conflict between the Kuraluts and the Americans (the Rover Incident) in the end led to a reconciliation (the Nanjia Treaty) between the US and Tauketok, leader of the 18 tribes.

Scholars now believe that the Nanjia Treaty was not approved by all tribes in the area of the 18 villages. Tauketok then employed traditional tribal ceremonies to achieve a kind of ratification within the 18 communities and bring into effect the Nanjia Treaty, signed between himself and Le Gendre. Using the resource-distribution models of economic anthropology established by Karl Polanyi, Tseng Ming-te re-examined the four main models presented by Toru Kamimura in his *Investigative Report into the Customs of Indigenous Peoples*: These were the “tribute model”, the “inspection tour after storm damage model”, the “inspection tour model”, and the “water rent model”; and concluded that Tauketok made use of representative ceremonies in the “inspection tour model” to separate the four major communities from the other Paiwan-system tribes of varying status (Kamimura, 2014; Tseng, 2017, p. 80).

Examples include the ceremony held with William Pickering in 1869, and the banquet with Le Gendre in 1872, both of which made use of transformed traditional ceremonies so that the implementation of the Nanjia Treaty could be accepted throughout the territory of the 18 tribes. Tauketok used the Nanjia Treaty signed with Le Gendre, as representative of a foreign power, to re-establish his authority as the main leader of the 18 tribes, hoping to avail of this to re-extend his power northward to the Mudan people in the middle and upper reaches of the Sichong River as had been proclaimed since 1837. By nominally taking control of the storage of Aboriginal produce, Tauketok attained a kind of status as a true leader in the distribution of resources (Tseng, 2017, p. 80).

Scholars have further identified the process surrounding the signing of the Nanjia Treaty by Tauketok and Le Gendre, as well as how its ratification was brought about within the 18 tribes. Following the Rover Incident that occurred in the wake of the opening of the treaty ports to foreign trade and under pressure of the maritime powers and Qing government, the Langjiao region (in present day Hengchun) faced an unprecedented crisis, and possible collapse of an alliance of its 18 tribes. Paramount leader Tauketok displayed his political talents in dealing with the external invaders and, while these foreigners displayed their military power, they left space for negotiation. Ultimately, Tauketok signed the Nanjia Treaty with Le Gendre, achieving a kind of balance between internal and external pressures. As a guarantee agreed between Tauketok and Le Gendre, the Nanjia Treaty could be said to be a form of personal diplomatic relations. Tauketok also made use of this to maintain his personal authority and consolidate the structure of the alliance of 18 tribes (Tseng, 2017, pp. 79-80).

But did the Rover Incident really instigate such “an unprecedented crisis” and the “potential collapse” of the alliance of the 18 Langjiao tribes? To judge from the US’s call on the direct intervention of naval Fleet to “punish” the aborigines and, when this ended in failure, they then blamed the Qing government, it would seem that neither the United States nor the Qing knew what to do, and both faced a crisis of loss of prestige. Moreover, when the naval Fleet failed to defeat the Kuraluts militarily, did the Kuraluts feel unsafe and seek the protection of the leader Tauketok? It would seem to be the opposite, in fact; that is, that Le Gendre, through Pickering’s mediation, tried to ask Tauketok to see justice done, since the Qing government was incapable of enforcing the punishment, and sent only 500 Plains Aboriginal soldiers to assist Liu Ming-deng. In this context, as far as the United States was concerned, it sought Tauketok, as nominal leader of the 18 tribes, to handle the

matter, just as initially the United States had tried to find a local official of the Qing government in an attempt to resolve disputes through diplomatic means. The Nanjia Treaty did not demand the punishment of the Kuraluts, however, and merely preserved the face of the United States, whilst covering over the awkward situation of using the naval Fleet, which failed and retreated, and simultaneously achieving Tauketok's ambition of regaining his status.

Discovery of Spanish and Mexican coins and Japanese porcelain among the funerary articles objects in Kuraluts' stone coffins (see Figure 3) shows the diversity of objects' origins from overseas. This is probably strongly related to the Kuraluts Village's geographic location adjacent to the sea, since by ascending Dajianshan, one can quickly understand coastal activities (especially any appearance of large vessels). Shipwrecks had already been frequent before that of the Rover, and contacts with the outside world would also have been common. That Kuraluts were able to use their knowledge of local geography and military skills to defeat forces from the naval Fleet indicates they were also familiar with weaknesses in the military operations of foreign ships.

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