

“Chu Wan, T. Tzu-shun, a native of Ch’ang-chow [i.e., Soochow], became a chin-shih in 1521. He was appointed the sub-prefectural magistrate of Ching-chow [of modern Hopei] and was later transferred to K’ai-chow [in Honan, it is called P’u-yang hsien today]. In the first years of Chia-ching, he was promoted to a vice-directorship in the Justice ministry. After some changes, he became a vice commissioner for military defense in the province of Szechuan. Together with Ho Ch’ing⁴¹, he pacified the tribesmen of Shen-kou and other outposts [in western Szechuan]. After five transfers, he became Senior Administration Commissioner of Kwangtung. In 1546, he was promoted to Junior Vice-Censor-in-Chief to govern Nan-kan [with jurisdiction over southern Kiangsi and parts of Fukien, Kwangtung and Hunan]. In the seventh month of the following year [i.e., by the decree dated July 24, 1547], after the rise of the Wo-k’ou, he was transferred to the governorship of Chekiang in command of coastal defense of both Chekiang and Fukien.

“Now, according to the regulations set down by the imperial ances-

tors, not a single board of wood was allowed to go out to the seas. After a long period of peace, treacherous people took liberty in going out and coming in and induced the Wo people [the Japanese], the Portuguese and people of other nationalities to come and trade. Li Kuang-t'ou, a native of Fukien and Hsü Tung, a native of She [in Anhwei], used Shuang-yü of Ningpo as a base to play host to or be sponsor for [the foreigners] and to take charge of their business transactions. Some influential families gave them support and protection. Among the influential families, most were from Chang-chow and Ch'üan-chow [of Fukien]; some even had marital relations with them [the treacherous people]. On the pretext of meeting their ferrying needs, [some] influential families had built big ships with two masts and used them to carry contraband goods. The local officers and officials did not dare to bother them. When some of these families had become indebted to the traders, Hsü Tung and others therefore coaxed them [the Japanese and foreigners] to attack and rob the debtors. Thereupon, the debtors put pressure on the officers and officials to expel them and at the same time leaked the news of the pending military operation to make them leave and promised that they would repay them at some other time. When the time came, they remained indebted as ever. The Wo people became greatly resentful and allied themselves more closely with Hsü Tung and the others. However, the coastal defense of Chekiang and Fukien had long deteriorated. Of the warships and patrol boats only one or two out of ten were still useful. Of the stipulated number of twenty-five hundred plus troops in the coast guard units in Chang-chow and Ch'üan-chow, there only remained a thousand men. As a result, when the Wo pillaged, they always got their way. Since they had nothing to fear, they came in succession.

“After Chu Wan had inspected the coastal defense, he adopted some of the suggestions made by the vice commissioner Hsiang Kao⁴² and other scholars and commoners. [They] said that if the ferryboats were not stopped, the waterways would never be cleared; if the tithing ward system was not stringently enforced, the coastal defense would never be restored. He memorialized the throne presenting all this in detail. As a result, the ferryboats were stopped, the tithing ward system was strictly enforced and an attempt made to search and arrest the treacherous people. The Fukienese had long depended on the sea for their livelihood. All of a sudden, they were now deprived of all those goodly gains; even the families of the scholar-officials felt the inconvenience. Hence they wanted to stop him.

“Chu Wan terminated the bandits of Fu-ting-shan.⁴³ The next year, before he attacked Shuang-yü, he ordered Vice Commissioner K'o Ch'iao⁴⁴ and Guard Commander Li Hsiu⁴⁵ to be stationed in Chang-chow and Ch'üan-chow [in the southeast] and Fu-ning [in the northeast] respectively for the purpose of preventing the pirates from escape, and at the same time ordered Regional Military Commissioner Lu T'ang⁴⁶ to lead the Fu-ch'ing soldiers to come in from the Hai-men garrison post [near Lin-hai in Chekiang].

"In contravention of the regulation, the Japanese envoy [Sakugen] Shuryo [1501-1579] came with six hundred men ahead of the scheduled time for tribute presentation.⁴⁷ Chu was imperially authorized to handle the matter at his discretion. Thinking that the mission could not be refused, he therefore caused Shuryo to petition to the effect that the mission, [if granted], would not set a precedent. He then had the ships registered and invited Shuryo into the guest-house at Ningpo. Some treacherous people delivered [an anonymous] letter to Shuryo with the intent to incite him to uprising [in fact, to kill Chu]. Since Chu Wan had taken effective precautions, the scheme was not realized.

"In the 4th month that summer [1548], Lu T'ang came across the pirates in Chiu-shan-yang⁴⁸ and captured a Japanese by the name of Ch'i-t'ien and also Hsü Tung. Hsü Tung's associates, Wang Chih and others, gathered all their people and fled. After having blocked the harbor of Shuang-yü, Lu T'ang returned. Those barbarian ships that had come late were not able to go into [the harbor] and were therefore moored at such islands as Nan-ch'i, Chiao-men, Ch'ing-shan and Hsia-pa.⁴⁹

"Having lost [the source of] their profit, the influential families, in order to cause doubt in the minds of the people, circulated the idea that those who had been captured were all good people, not pirates. They also put pressure on the local authorities in order that the latter should consider a lighter sentence for some of the prisoners on the ground of their being followers under duress or being captured [by the pirates] and should apply to the more serious ones the statute governing robbers who resist arrest. In his memorial, Chu said, 'Now that the maritime interdiction is clear to everybody, [I] do not understand why they should be considered as being captives, why they should be considered as being followers under duress. The reason that those people who have gone into a barbarian country to guide the invaders should be considered robbers, that those people who have fought against our forces should be considered as resisting arrest—I, ignorant though I am, really do not understand.' Accordingly, by using his discretionary power, he had them executed. The influential families were all scared.

"After Chu had made all the arrangements for Shuryo [and his mission], Lin Mou-ho,⁵⁰ a Fukienese serving as Director of the Bureau of Reception [in the Ministry of Rites], said publicly that it behooved us to dispatch the envoy back home. But Chu Wan thought it to be proper for the Middle Kingdom to abide by her promise and forcibly argued the case in his memorial. He even said that it was easy to get rid of foreign pirates but difficult to get rid of Chinese pirates, that it was still easy to get rid of China's coastal pirates, but particularly difficult to get rid of China's pirates attired in caps and gowns.⁵¹ [Because of this] the people of Chekiang and Fukien became the more infuriated. It turned out that Shuryo was at last made to moor at the offshore islands to wait till the scheduled time. Adopting the suggestions by Censor Chou Liang,⁵² a Fukienese, and Supervising Secretary Yeh T'ang,⁵³ the Personnel Ministry recommended that Chu Wan be transferred to the

post of Inspector General—a means to reduce his power. Chu became indignant.

“In the spring of next year [1549], Chu memorialized the throne saying that when he was about to have naval defence matters in order, Chou Liang wanted to reduce his power with the result that his subordinates had refused to carry out orders. Then he continued, recommending six things: to have a clear-cut national policy, to give proper authorization to the high-ranking official [in charge of the matter], to define the assignments of regional officials and officers, to guard the strategic points, to get rid of the source of trouble, and to honor the decisions made.⁵⁴ The memorial showed much indignation. Among the court officials, however, some who had heard and believed what the people of Chekiang and Fukien had said, now showed their displeasure with Chu.

“Chu Wan had for some time been dealing with the pirates at Wen-p’an⁵⁵ and Nan-ch’i. After a campaign of three months, [Chu’s troops] inflicted a resounding defeat on them. After their return, they pacified the miners who had turned bandits in Ch’u-chow [in southern Chekiang]. In the 3rd month of the year,⁵⁶ when the Portuguese came to plunder Chao-an [in southernmost Fukien], Chu Wan attacked and captured their ringleaders, Li Kuang-t’ou and others, altogether ninety-six persons, and by using his discretionary power had them executed. All this he reported to the emperor in the memorial, wherein his wording again drew bead on the influential families. Consequently, Censor Ch’en Chiu-te⁵⁷ impeached Chu for killing people without proper authorization, resulting in Chu’s dismissal from office. The Chief Supervising Secretary for the War Ministry, Tu Ju-chen,⁵⁸ was sent to make a thorough investigation. Upon hearing this, Chu, saddened and tearful, said, ‘I am poor and sick. What is more, I have such a hot temper that I cannot face the investigators. Even if His Majesty does not want to kill me, the people of Chekiang and Fukien will. I will take my own life and do not have to wait for others to do it.’ He composed his own epitaph and farewell sayings and committed suicide by taking poison.

“In 1550, Chief Supervising Secretary Tu Ju-chen and Censor Ch’en Tsung-k’uei⁵⁹ returned to the capital. They reported that the treacherous people in illicit trade had resisted arrest and there had never been any assumption of titles⁶⁰ or plundering. They impeached Chu for killing without authorization. The Emperor decreed to have Chu arrested. But Chu had already died. K’o Ch’iao, Lu T’ang, and others were also given severe punishments.

“Chu Wan was a man of strong will and rugged integrity. He was courageous in the discharge of his duty. He wanted to plug up the source of troubles to the empire but instead was framed by the influential families. People both within and without the government heaved a heavy sigh over him.

“Since his death, the post of inspector general had been vacated, and

officials in and out of the central government refrained from discussing maritime interdiction. In Chekiang, there had been forty-one garrison posts and four hundred and thirty-nine warships. But then all the records had been lost. Chu Wan had rounded up more than forty Fu-ch'ing patrol ships and deployed them to guard the sea lanes. Fourteen of them were stationed in the Hai-men garrison post in the prefecture of T'ai-chou [which is called Lin-hai today] as a protective screen for Huang-yen. Vice Commissioner Ting Chan⁶¹ sent all of them away. All of the defense measures were put aside and the interdiction was relaxed. Soon after this, piracy broke loose and plagued the southeast for more than ten years."

41. Ho Ch'ing was a member of Ch'eng-tu guard unit, Szechuan. During the period of Cheng-te, he succeeded to the hereditary post of Assistant Commander. He achieved successes in the suppression of frontier tribes and was stationed in western Szechuan for twenty-four years. He was appointed Regional Vice Commander to deal with the Wo but was soon dismissed from office. His biography is in *MS*, 211.

42. Hsiang Kao should read Hsiang Ch'iao. Hsiang (T. Ch'ien-chih) was a native of Yung-chia, Chekiang; a 1529 chin-shih; was later promoted to Senior Administration

Vice Commissioner in Kwangtung. Ho Ch'iao-yüan (1586 chin-shih), *Min-shu*, 49/18a-b.

43. Fu-ting-shan is in the north of the district of Yung-ch'un.

44. K'o Ch'iao: T. Ch'ien-chih, a native of Ching-yang, in modern Anhwei; a 1529 chin-shih. *Lan-t'an fa-chien lu* (or LTFCL) compiled by Ho Ch'u-kuang *et al.*, 15/36b.

45. More about him later.

46. Lu T'ang (T. Tzu-ming), a native of Ju-ning guard post, Honan. He was one of the few officers who was deeply involved with Wo fighting. In the end he achieved some fame as a good Wo fighter. His biography is in *MS*, 212.

47. Shuryo's mission first arrived in the 4th month of the 26th year of Chia-ching (i.e., 1547) and was instructed to wait on the off-shore islands till the scheduled time. Then Chu Wan was authorized to handle the matter.

48. Chiu-shan-yang, apparently, is the same as Chiu-shan. It was considered the first line of defense for the guard command post of Ch'ang-kuo to the south of Hsiang-shan, Chekiang. Mao Yuan-i, *Wu-pei-chih*, 215/31b.

49. Nan-ch'i is to the southeast of Wen-chou. Ch'ing-shan is a very common name, and there are several of them. Most probably it is the one near Liu-heng-shan. Hsia-pa is located in the outer Chou-shan group. Chiao-men has not been identified.

50. Lin Mou-ho: T. Wei-chieh, H. Shuang-t'ai; a native of Min-hsien; a 1541 chin-shih. *MJCC*, 298.

51. i-kuan literally means 'caps and gowns'—a phrase referring to the scholar-official group.

52. Chou Liang: T. Shang-yin, a native of Hou-kuan, Fukien, a 1532 chin-shih. *LTFCL*, 16/11a.

53. Yeh T'ang: T. Ju-sheng, H. Shao-yen; a native of Shang-yao, Kiangsi; a 1541 chin-shih; a bachelor in the Hanlin Academy, then Supervising Secretary for the War Ministry; served as Senior Vice Minister of Justice before he left official life. *MJCC*, 733.

54. For the wording of the proposed measures, the translation is done according to the original as found in Chu's work, *P'i-yü tsa-chi* (from now on *PYTC*), 5/14a-32b, dated Feb. 5, 1549.

55. Wen-p'an refers to the P'an-shih guard command post in Wen-chou prefecture, Chekiang. The command post was 50 *li* south of the administration city of Lo-ch'ing. Ts'ai Feng-shih (a 1580 chin-shih, *MJCC*, 812), *Wen-Ch'u hai-fang t'u-lüeh* (Wan-li ed.), 1/1a.

56. In fact the incident took place on the 20th day of the 2nd month of the 28th year of Chia-ching or March 18, 1549. According to the original memorial in *PYTC*, 5/41a-61a.

57. Ch'en Chiu-te: T. Chi-fu; a native of Luan-ch'eng in modern Hopei; a 1541 chin-shih. *LTFCCL*, 16/44a.

58. Tu Ju-chen: T. Kung-ning, H. I-so; a native of Nan-ch'ung, Szechuan; a 1538 chin-shih. *MJCC*, 187.

59. Ch'en Tsung-k'uei: T. Wei-i; a native of T'ung-shan, Hukuang; a 1538 chin-shih. He then served as a regional inspector in Fukien. *LTFCCL*, 16.

60. In the memorial Chu reported that the treacherous people assumed imperial authority in assigning titles to their subordinates.

61. Ting Chan: T. Tzu-i, H. Ku-shan; a native of P'eng-tse, Kiangsi; a 1529 chin-shih. For this action, he was later cashiered. It is said that that was because he had antagonized the Grand Secretary, Yen Sung. *MJCC*, 3.