
Research Article**Japanese Merchants Diaspora in the 17th Century into Southeast Asia****Riza Afita Surya**

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*Email: surya_riza@unej.ac.id*Received: August 21st, 2021; Revised: Oct 12th, 2021; Accepted: Oct 18th, 2021**Available online: Nov 9th, 2021; Published regularly: Dec 2021***Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the Japanese Diaspora in the 17th century into Southeast Asia. This article discussed critically the motives, process, and the effect of Japanese diaspora in the Southeast Asia. Researcher utilized historical method with descriptive approach. The process being performed namely heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Japanese history regarding abroad migration is an interesting issue between scholars who studied migration, anthropology, and minority studies over the decades. Edo period in Japan is one of the most studied field for many scholars for Japanese studies since it shaped the characteristic of Japanese culture until today. Trade of Japan is significant part of its economic development since the pre-modern era. In the 17th century, Japan established a solid trade network with Southeast Asia regions, namely Siam, Malacca, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Manila. The emerge of maritime trade with Southeast Asia encouraged Japanese merchants to travel and create settlements in some regions. The Japanese diaspora was encouraged with vermillion seal trade which allowed them to do journey overseas and settled in some places, which eventually increased the number of Japanese merchants in the Southeast Asia. However, after the Sakoku policy there was restriction of trade relation which prohibited overseas maritime trade, except for China and Dutch. Sakoku policy caused Japanese merchants who stayed overseas could not return for many years, then they settled themselves as Japanese communities known as Nihon Machi in some places within Southeast Asia. History of early modern Japan between the 16th and 19th century provides a broader narrative of global history as it was surrounded by intense global interaction.

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Japan is considered one of the most developed countries, both in the sense of Asian region or globally context. It obtains harmonious cultural mixed between traditional and modern feature, between elegant classic and immense technology development. Japan persistently shows itself as one of the most prominent countries in the world. Japan also known as *Nihon* is considered the 11th most density populated country and a member

of United Nations and other worldwide organizations such as Organization for Economic and Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Surya & Kaluge, 2021). Japanese history which is started in Jomon period displaying the country experiences from time to time to establish as a modern and prosperous country as now.

Trade is a remarkable feature of Japanese economy after the World War II due to significant development of

international sales. Since 1960's, Japan obtained a trade surplus mostly every year with the surplus number sometimes being the largest in the world. Japan is also the 4th largest importer and exporter of goods country and international trade contributes to 36.8% GDP. Hence, foreign trade is significant element of Japanese economy.

However, Japan trade through history is a dynamical process as the country originally was deeply rooted in a rigid social mobility and traditional philosophies as Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, and feudalism. It was the arrival of Portuguese in Japan 1543 which established a new stage of Japan history. Portuguese arrival directed Japan society to the outside world (Andressen, 2002; Gordon, 2003; Gakusho, 2019; Ribeiro, 2001). Portuguese accidentally harbored in Japan after being blown away by a storm in Kyushu. Portuguese were initially headed towards China then were blown off to Japan. Portuguese merchants brought Christianity as well as weapons to be sold. Slowly, there were also Spain, Dutch, England, and Italy came to Japan before 18th century. This interaction with the West also introduced the pumpkins, corn, sweet potatoes, and tobacco commodities into Japan (Andressen, 2002).

Historically, during the reign of Muromachi Shogunate in 1336, Japan started to experience important economical prosperous that prompted cross-cultural trade became more vibrant than before. After the downfall of Muromachi, there were Sengoku and Azuchi-Mamoyama era which encouraged more intensive of international trade network. Under Muromachi period until 16th century, there was famous pirate groups along the South Sea consisted of most Japanese and some Chinese pirates called *wako*. The *wako* also established somehow sizable trade network by trading of island off the Chinese coast or regions between Kyushu, reacted by force against the Ming government (Peng, 2019).

The trade network created by Japanese merchants eventually reached out Southeast Asia and their dynamic represented about Japanese pirate/bandits *wako* and the arrival of Europeans Portuguese. Portuguese appearance in the late of 16th century highlighted the start of trade between Nagasaki and Macau (Cho, 2000; Gakusho, 2019; Gunn, 2014; Peng, 2019). Achieving its peak under Ashikaga Shogunate (1336-1573), *wako* played their part-piratical, part-legitimate trade without Japanese regulation. Eventually, this changed after the unification of the archipelago by Toyotomi Hideyoshi as foreign trade was performed based on government-regulated *goshuin* or the red seal trade (Gunn, 2014). In addition, as pointed by Arano Yasunori that the 17th century the activities of "Japanese pirates" was fading, and the establishment of Tokugawa Shogunate in Japan began (Peng, 2019).

The relation between Japan and Southeast Asia began in 16th century based on historical records. Japanese official encouraged the daimyo to do trade with Portuguese in the South China Sea. Daimyo were the leaders of some area (similar with province) who became the feudal lords (Andressen, 2002). Consequently, Japanese merchants encountered Malacca, Macau, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Philippines. Most traders of Japan were coming from Nagasaki or Kyoto and Sakai, Osaka (Cho, 2000). Due to trade opportunities, slowly Japanese were spread across the Asian continent, especially East and Southeast Asia regions.

In 17th century, Japan started to establish a more solid trade network within Southeast Asia. After all, seaborne trade in Southeast Asia in 15th to 17th century was significantly flowing than before. Asian natives from regions such as Japanese, Chinese, Indians and Indonesians became obviously dominant in the sense of trade while European's arrival made partial

contribution (Reid, 1998). The 17th century also experienced changes towards trade between Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia (Cho, 2000). East Asian and Southeast Asian trade worked jointly by Japan, Ming, the Choson and European Portuguese (Gakusho, 2019; Tremml-Werner, 2014).

Japanese history regarding abroad migration is an interesting issue between scholars who studied migration, anthropology, and minority studies over the decades (Manzenreiter, 2017b). Several types and waves of migration influenced how Japanese diaspora has been formed in more than a hundred years. (Manzenreiter, 2017a; Tsuda, 2012). Japanese have been emigrating from their homeland for more than a century and have dispersed across the globe mainly for economic background. Therefore, Japanese movement is categorized as an economic or labor diaspora (Tsuda, 2012). In addition, even though Japan is an insular country, Japanese maritime history has rarely been examined in Japanese history due to economic history that widely perceived as a history of agricultural history, since most Japanese were peasants until the end of World War 2.

Migration itself is a must precondition for diaspora emergence, yet not a sufficient one. Diaspora needs more than a social minority concentrating at one place for speaking diaspora as a particular mode of existence and way of life (Manzenreiter, 2017a). The study of diaspora commonly investigates the lives of minority group who were displaced but preserving a connection to a 'prior home.' Current historians have showed how the transnational ties of Japanese immigrants to their homeland, whether material and mental have served as crucial resources for their daily struggles (Lu, 2013).

Previous research discussed about Japanese diaspora into Southeast Asia is quite limited. Yoneo Ishii's study about *Seventeenth Century Japanese Documents*

About Siam explicitly examines some historical records about Japanese settlement in Siam (Thailand). It explains several scripts found regarding Thai-Japan relations in the 17th century. Birgit Tremml-Werner *Spain, China, and Japan in Manila 1571-1644* briefly describes the development of maritime trade between Philippines under Spain, China, and Japan in the 16th and 17th century. It engaged two perspectives, namely local comparisons, and global connections. Another research performed by Nakajima Gakusho *the East Asian War and trade between Kyushu and Southeast Asia in the late sixteenth century: Centered on Katō Kiyomasa's trade with Luzon* focuses on trade between Kyushu and Southeast Asia in the 16th century. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the Japanese merchant's diaspora in Southeast Asia in the 17th century using descriptive approach.

2. Methods

This study utilized historical method with qualitative approach. The process is attempting to investigate and analyze the historical resources. Historical method performed in this study was modeling Gottschalk with four stages (Gottschalk, 1975). The stages being taken of this process namely of 1) heuristics, 2) criticism, 3) interpretation, and 4) historiography. Heuristic is the stage which researcher collected historical sources. Researcher used historical resources in terms of books, dissertation, thesis, and journals. Researcher also investigated the previous research regarding Japanese diaspora and Japan trade with Southeast Asian countries in the 17th century. The next stage is criticism. Researcher selected the sources based on reliability, validity, years, accuracy, as well as indexation for journals. Qualified sources were then being studied critically based on some issues, such as Japanese emigration in term of *Nihon-Machi* or *Nikkei*. *Nihon-Machi* is a term used for

historical Japanese communities both in Southeast and East Asia. However, Nikkei means Japanese who emigrated or descendant who are not Japanese citizen. Japanese foreign trade during 17th century and Japanese diaspora into Southeast Asia in the 17th century. The next stage is interpretation, means researcher performed interpretation towards historical sources after being examined. The final stage is historiography, which is researcher established the meaning of facts then narrating Japanese Diaspora in the Southeast Asia in the 17th century in a systematical article.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Japanese Foreign Trade Policy in the 17th Century

International trade has been prominent element of the long-term economic development of the world history. Japanese involvement in international trade eventually directed to important foundation for current economic growth since the 14th century. The commercial economy improved significantly during Japan unification process, between the middle 16th to the early of 17th century. This improvement due to agricultural production revolution. Productivity and yields also increased as well as fertilizers which resulted in farm tools development and new strains of seed being constructed. There was also reclamation and large-scale irrigation project constructed mainly by daimyo to expand the tax revenue within their domains (Hall & McClain, 2008).

Japan very first cross-cultural trade dated back in the late part of Jomon Age (14.000-300 BCE) as there were found some entrepôts within the coastline of Japanese Sea. Japanese during this period had traded with some foreign merchants, namely Russia, China, as well as Korea. Japan Sea was considered prominent upon Asian network route. Initially, Japanese international trade was assumed to be salt merchants. They occupied the inland sea

between Shikoku and Chugoku (Setonai-kai modern day). In the 12th century, the coastline of Japanese sea was connected by ships. Hence, the main goods were exchanged by maritime trade.

Japan in the late of 16th century experienced deterioration due to civil war between daimyo. The central power weakness directed to the appearance of a warrior society along with military, as well as commercial power in western Japan, especially in Kyushu. Kyushu was known as place where *wako* gathered and recruited members to do piracy in the coasts of Korean and Chinese. It was the arrival of Portuguese Jesuit in Southern Kyushu which led to the establishment of trade between Macau and Nagasaki (Riskianingrum, 2011).

During Tokugawa reign, Japan was divided into more than 230 competitive states, many of which expected to reduce the domination of the shogun economy. Hence, the 17th century in Japan, economy was based on warrior/samurai service and typical of political economy that centered on the daimyo and samurai groups. (Ravina & Roberts, 2000). The 'economy service' resulted in crises such as deforestation, land degradation, and the increase of corrupt tax levies that led to skeptical feelings towards government. Therefore, the lower classes were inspired to form a mercantilist strategy of protection within commercial economy (Ravina & Roberts, 2000; Shilling, 1950).

Edo period in the 17th century was the early stage of Japanese history in which businessmen came into their own. The Japanese merchants started to establish just a small business with very limited powerful merchants in being (Shilling, 1950). Japan is under Tokugawa reign with domestic peace after unification before 1615, political integration by the system of alternate attendance required for the daimyo, urbanization, and the withdrawal of most samurai to the cities, also clear separation between warriors-bureaucrats-

aristocrats, farmers, artisans, and merchants. This social stratification is known as *shi-nou-kou-shou* (Andressen, 2002; Gordon, 2003; Hauser, 2016).

Tokugawa official and their representatives entirely managed the trade and political contacts (Totman, 2007). Tokugawa government controlled the silk imports and required some qualified merchants from Sakai, Kyoto, as well as Nagasaki during the early 17th century to create a trade union that was accompanied by Osaka and Edo merchants afterwards. Some qualified merchants later bought silk solely from Portuguese as well as Chinese brokers in considerable volume for a prior fixed prices before distributing it for domestic traders. Since there was an incline of trade with some countries and witnessing some commercial activities, later Japanese maritime trade turned standardized and trade was performed by Tokugawa Shogunate in the early 17th century (Tremml-Werner, 2014). The most compelling shift upon abroad trade in the 17th century was the exported goods and the volume being exchanged as government concerned towards the copper, silver and gold sent to China. Government also recommended import-substitution regulations as the most important of all being local sericulture. Furthermore, Chinese had been long constructed themselves as middlemen between Europeans, Arabs, and Japanese merchants (Surya & Fikriya, 2020).

Tokugawa Shogunate also began to maintain more flexible thought upon overseas trade, since government had to control the trade monopoly. The most significant regulation generated by Tokugawa official is establishing the vermilion-seal passport *shuinjo*. This system was firstly introduced by Hideyoshi (Tremml-Werner, 2014). Hideyoshi reunited Japan in 1590 introduced the *Shuinsen* (ships used for foreign trade) with formal permit from Japanese official.

As time went on, the official entirely managed the profitable overseas trade.

Entering year 1640, Tokugawa policy limited foreign affairs, yet kept commercial network with a variety of non-official actors (Ravina, 2015). Tokugawa's *Sakoku* did not imply to reduce trade as it reached its peak in 1661 (CULLEN, 2017). *Sakoku* is an isolation policy which prohibited foreign contact and closing Japan to the outside world (Andressen, 2002). There was an increase of commercial agriculture and intense activities by farmers which blurred the line between handicraft industries, trade, and farming. Between the year of 1600 and 1867, the economy of Tokugawa became highly monetized and commercialized, farming moved from subsistence to market oriented cropping patterns, and new production system and distribution were established. In addition, in the 17th century Kyoto and Osaka were the main foci of commercial centers (Hauser, 2016). Osaka was also the rice market center. There was also Kinki region that surrounding the imperial capital of Kyoto and Osaka. It had long been the center of the Japanese economy and handicraft industrial production (Hauser, 2016).

In 1616, all ships to Japan (except Ming China) were allowed to sail to Nagasaki. However, in 1624 Japanese official banned the Spanish from entering Japan Sea. For several years later, Portuguese ships were also restricted in entering Japan. Finally, in 1640 the *Sakoku* was being implemented with full force with the adjustment of Dutch mercantile house to Dejima (Tamaki, 2014).

Japanese trade is a story of trade bolster by the ample of supply of silver in the first sixty years in the 17th century which was followed by progressive contraction, especially after 1715. *Sakoku* policy did not intent to whether reduce the volume of trade nor lower the ceilings to trade. Japanese did imports that generated the encouragement for promoting trade.

Silk was the prominent commodity that local production pinched in both quantity and quality. For foreign trades, Japanese lure was silver as the money supply in most countries (CULLEN, 2017).

Japanese trade with foreign merchants slowly encouraged emigration towards Southeast Asian region. In the late of 16th century, Portuguese began to create trade network between Macau and Nagasaki. Afterward, the considerable silver of Japan flowed towards Guangdong by East China Sea along with America silver which moved to Pacific Ocean to Fujian through Manila. Later, overseas trade by carried out by Japanese traders who visited Luzon eventually expanded. The commercial business among Southeast Asia, Japan, and China is a an intricate issue as it has few historical records (Gakusho, 2019). Hence, trade with foreign merchants had become very appealing subject to be studied.

3.2 Japanese Diaspora in 17th Century

Trade in the world history is an action which commonly performed naturally to fulfill the needs by exchanging goods and obtain profit. The movement of products is indirectly assumed to deliver the of professional traders. Trade activities does not only bring goods, but also communities and insights. International trade occurs within a context in which traders worked thought politic/diplomacy (Surya et al, 2020). Japanese diaspora in the 17th century mainly was promoted by economical opportunities in Southeast Asia.

Before the arrival of Europeans, Japanese used to think traditionally that world was consisted of three countries, namely Japan, China, and India. Japan knew China as the neighbour country as they had obtained quite intimate relation since antiquity. For India was less known compared to China before Buddhism came and being recognized as Lord Buddha country. Japanese assumed India as the

ideal country located in far-western land. Some Japanese Buddhists tried to visit India, yet they had little success (Kondo, 1985). However, this changed after Japanese encountered Europeans and Southeast Asia countries, especially in the 16th century when Japanese activities in the South Seas reached the peak.

Japan was able to connect to other Asian countries also influenced by Japanese merchants' network known as *Kaimin*. Japanese merchants initially contributed to larger commercial network as they traded silver globally. Silver was the most important commodity in global market. Japan, along with South America and European countries produced silver considerably as it flowed all over the world. In addition, Japan obtained the number of silver and Japanese coins also had a large proportion of the valuable metal (Tamaki, 2007).

Commercial motive encouraged Japanese merchants to visit and settle in some place, and eventually created Japanese Diaspora. Diaspora is a term illustrates a clear unit of geographically spread people that related in term of sentiment, culture, and history. Diaspora term obtains a claim that means diasporic ideas could establish a required unit towards country-oriented history and in the same time acknowledges the historical construction of diaspora needs to be examined (Surya & Fikriya, 2020).

Japanese diasporic communities in the 17th century to Southeast Asia is called as *Nihon-Machi* or Japantowns in many cities, Asian trading ports, and European fortified cities. These immigrants were the consequences of Japanese participation in the *Shuinjo*, or red seal trade under official passports were given to selected merchants group, such as those occupied western Japanese ports as Nagasaki and Hakata. The red seal trade system continued until 1636. In 1624, it permitted 179 seal voyages to Siam (35 ships), Vietnam (26 ships), Brunei (2 ships), Philippines (20

Ships), Cambodia (23 ships), and Malacca (1 ship). Between 1604 to 1635, there were 356 vessels visited Southeast Asian ports. Until *the Sakoku* policy disappeared through assimilation into the host communities, there was the establishment of Japanese communities in remote cities and ports, namely Macau, Manila, Batavia, Ayutthaya, Phnom Penh, and Hoi An in Vietnam (Gunn, 2014). The Sakoku policy was officially ended after Japan-US treaty of Peace and Amity, also known as The Convention of Kanagawa, signed in 1854 (Andressen, 2002).

Ishizawa Yoshiaki argues about the quarters which developed in 17th century were constructed due to three main reasons, namely 1) to provide support for Japanese emigrants, 2) essential necessities of international commerce that significantly benefited from a settled establishment in the main ports abroad and 3) due to local officials used to develop certain places for foreigners to control their activities and movement (Ribeiro, 2001). In addition, between the 14th and the 17th century, maritime trade in the South China Sea and East China Sea was more intense than before. Nonetheless, due to sakoku policy after the first half of the 17th century, there was also witnessed the decrease of trade between China, Japan, Java, and Thailand. Hence, the 17th century obtains prominent important in embracing understanding the history of East Asia and Southeast Asia (Cho, 2000).

Many Japanese who emigrated to Southeast Asia were Christians. Their presense increased considerably due to high number of persecution for Christian by Japanese authorities. Japanese Christians fled and expelled from Japan as the result of Christian Japanese peasants earlier and obtained aid from Macau missionaries. Some of the emigrants were also warriors (samurai) after the Battle of Sekigahara (1600) and the blockade of Osaka in 1615. These warriors were *ronin* held offered their talents as mercenaries in

different areas and were respected by the elite of Southeast Asia due to their military skills and experience. There are some events that promoted the reign of Tokugawa Ieyasu also affecting the increase of Japanese emigrants' community. The emigrants warriors acted as trade mercenaries in different authorities within Southeast Asia regions and also devoted themselves to the regional trade (Ribeiro, 2001).

3.3 Japanese Merchants in Southeast Asia in the 17th Century

Between the 15th and the 17th century, Japanese history is characterized by the extension of commercial network to the coastline in the Southeast Asia. Japan's involvement with world trade was considered greater than before. Both Japanese and foreign merchants were bringing goods and people back and forth between places and most coastal region in Asia. Even, some of the cargo went to Europe. Japanese speaking communities lived in a few *Nihon-Machi* "Japan town" in Southeast Asia (Totman, 2007).

In the surface, Southeast Asia region has high temperature and humidity. Initially, people occupied mountainous regions compared to delta areas. Economical state of Southeast Asia had experienced development pattern than other regions with temperate condition. Delta regions in Southeast Asia was encouraged to do cross-cultural trade. Overseas demands for products distributed from the interior, also the sizable income from profit given from transit trade promoted people to travel and stay in the lower places. Thus, emporium such Gresik (Java), Palembang in Sumatera, and Ayutthaya in Thailand were constructed to provide maritime trade (Shimada, 2019).

In the sense of historical events, Southeast Asia was involved with two types of sea trade. The first type was intra-Asian. This type is occurred more than two thousand years. As Southeast Asia is in the

middle of China and India, these two regions played as prominent economic strength. Thus, Southeast Asia trade grew along with Asian countries trade through intra-regional trade. Therefore, in the 15th century, international maritime trade truly improved in global level and Southeast Asia economy also experienced changes (Shimada, 2019). The growth of Southeast Asian maritime trade between the 15th and 17th century promoted the appearance of stronger, centralized states drawing most of their revenues from trade (Reid, 2012).

Japanese ships sailed to Southeast Asia regions in different times. Despite the trade between Portuguese and Chinese, Japanese merchants initially also traveled to Luzon and Vietnam and carried saltpeter commodity from Cambodia and Thailand. Time which Japanese started to sail into Southeast Asia was considered in the 16th century according to historical sources (Cho, 2000; Gakusho, 2019). Japan vessels for the first time traveled to Luzon (Philippine) in the half of the 16th century. They took the route from Southern Kyushu across the Ryukyu islands (present day Okinawa) and ended up in the Philippines island as it was considered convenient and was part of common route of Japanese ships. The period in 1500's and 1600's century, Japanese and Southeast Asian merchants were exclusively depended on trade network managed by Ryukyu kingdom. The merchants of Japan usually came to visit Southeast Asia regions, such as Luzon, Siam, and Ayutthaya to do trade (Gakusho, 2019).

The vermilion seal trade *shuinjo* initially released in the late of 16th century managed by Hideyoshi official to manage Japanese merchants for overseas trade as they had become intensively active with Southeast Asia. In the following century, Japanese merchant groups created Japanese communities known as *Nihon-Machi*. Later, *Nihon Machi* was defined as Japanese streets or towns scattered in some Southeast Asia regions, namely Oudong

(Cambodia), Phnom Penh, Manila, and Ayutthaya. *Nihon Machi* successfully collected at least 10.000 Japanese merchants. As time went on, Japanese merchants turned as brokers for both Japan and Southeast Asian merchants as well. They also played important trade with Vietnam and Thailand, despite their involvement was not as significant as Chinese traders. In Vietnam, the number of Japanese merchants performed trade in the Southern region under Nguyen regulation as it obtained more active international trade (Cho, 2000). Below is explained briefly the existence of Japanese settlements in the Southeast Asia regions.

Japanese merchants also traveled to Annam and Cochin China or Nguyen region as 84 Japanese with vermilion seal trade obtained the permit to do journey to Southeast Asia regions. The vermilion seal trade or *shuinjo* was effective since 1604 to 1635. In the 17th century, Japanese merchants' communities were also found in Hoi-an as the most important trading port in Nguyen area. Japanese communities in Vietnam were mostly Christians, larger than those in Thailand. (Cho, 2000).

Regarding Japan-Thai relation, Japanese started coming with considerable number to Siam at the end of the 16th century. It was well-known that the reigns of Phracahao Songtham and his successors, several Japanese settlements occupied outside the city of Ayutthaya in place present-day called as *ban jipun* "Japanese quarters". Japanese relations with Siam (Shamuro) in the 17th century according to translated documentary shows Japanese merchants' commercial expeditions into Southeast Asia and place called as *Nanban* (Southern barbarian). It also explains the trade with European traders that mainly controlled by Ieyasu. Japanese government needed gunpowder and saltpeter which were unavailable in Japan. It was obvious that Siam held good market opportunity in Japan, while Japanese silver was very

demanded in Southeast Asia (Iwamoto & Bytheway, 2011; Na Pombejra, 2013). Thus, government decided to perform import from Siam and other entrepôts of Southeast Asia.

Japanese government sealed the vermilion trade license between Siam and Japan between 1604 and 1605. The Japanese merchants were intensively engaged in trading hide and other local goods (Ishii, 1970). The most prominent feature of Japanese settlements in Thailand was their role within local affairs whether in Thailand or Thai-Japanese commercial network until 1630's (Cho, 2000). The study regarding Japanese and Siam relation could be investigated with Tsuko Ichiran (lists of navigations), a collection of diplomatic documents of Shogunate (Iwamoto & Bytheway, 2011).

Japanese merchants' group in Siam (Ayutthaya) was a significant component of the relations between Japan and Siam. Japanese merchants in Ayutthaya were mainly under the Shogun mercenary troops, yet there was a solid commercial element within Japanese community. Japanese in Ayutthaya, and later *Japanese mestizos* was possibly very active to gain and to produce deerskins for export. This trade was a role between Ayutthaya and Nagasaki trade. Officials also sent letters and gifts between Kings of Ekathotsarot and Songtam of Siam and Tokugawa shoguns (Na Pombejra, 2013).

In Philippines, Japanese merchants were also engaged in maritime trade network through Spain. Several historical sources indicate that native Filipinos carried overseas trade under the Spain rule. Filipinos' merchants exchanged goods with foreign traders from East Asian for some commodities, namely gold, wax, and deerskin. Laura Lee Junker's research shows that between the 15th and 16th century, many Filipinos' chiefs were intensively active within maritime trade. It was assumed that the very first Japanese merchants to do trade was in Cagayan and

Pangasinan. Both areas were well located and economically potential. Japanese merchants formed settlements in both Cagayan and Pangasinan (northern Luzon) with at least 600 people. As the shuinjo being released, the pattern of Japanese merchants in Philippines also changed (Tremml-Werner, 2015).

Due to intense trade between Japan and Philippines, they also came with agreement. Ieyasu and Manila Governor came for agreement in the 17th century regarding the regular trade between Japanese, Luzon, and New Spain. This agreement was part of institutionalism of overseas trade which promoted the more intense trade between Japanese with Philippines traders. Japanese merchants whose being granted with vermilion seal trade gained benefit from catering to the luxury needs back home and providing the daily demands of Spanish community. In the first decade of the 17th century, there was an increase of Japanese settlers in Manila (Tremml-Werner, 2017).

Japan under Tokugawa government also started relation with Cambodia which was considered later compared to China. The relation initially began since post Angkor period as Japanese merchants' groups came from Kumamoto prefecture exchanged goods with Khmers as well as traveled to Angkor temples. What time precisely could not be confirmed, yet several historical records of Japanese were found at Angkor Wat wall. The script illustrates that Japanese visited and exchanged goods with Cambodia and carried gold to build a castle back in Kumamoto, part of Kyushu Island (Vannarith, 2009). Another record regarding Tokugawa-Khmer states that it started in 1603 and continued until the collapse of Khmer kingdom in the mid of 17th century. Cambodia ships were also found sailed to Nagasaki (Ravina, 2015).

Another relation was also found in Malaya (Malacca). Before Japanese applied Sakoku policy, the early contact

between Japan and Malaya was unobtrusive and inconsequential. Japan trade with Malaya was performed by Japanese brokers from Ryukyu Island who was coming to Malacca each year to sale Japanese goods and China for souvenirs in the cosmopolitan port. It has been known that the 17th century, Japan saw intensive overseas trade, there was direct and legal relation with the peninsula, yet this was limited to an annual visit by *Shuisen* to Malacca. However, there were not Japanese settlements found in Malaya, compared to Luzon, Siam, and Vietnam. In contrary, after the Meiji Restoration there was a growing Japanese community in Malaya. In the late of 19th century, the number of Japanese populations reached more than 4.000 people (Leng, 1978). Therefore, Japanese settlement history in Malaya obtained unfavored beginning.

4. Conclusion

The history of Japanese diaspora is a complex subject to be examined thoroughly. The Japanese diaspora in the past is encouraged by several factors, one of which is international trade network. This article discussion has been the 17th Japanese diaspora to Southeast Asian region encouraged by commercial trade network. Japanese merchants were decently engaged with their compatriots in other Southeast Asian. International trade was encouraged by silver commodity that being the most sought good in global market and Japan produced it in large quantity. Hence, eventually they came contact with other Asian countries. They settled in some countries within the region, namely Burma (Myanmar), Cochin-China, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Celebes, as well as in Java. Those areas were the main cities and ports where Japanese merchants in 17th century established settlements. Japanese merchants stayed and dedicated themselves to build commercial network with other nation. As the silver production

declined, Japan under Tokugawa stopped the export activities and after Sakoku being implemented, Japanese official managed the governance still engaged with rice-standard.

History of early modern Japan between the 16th and 19th century provides a broader narrative of global history as it was surrounded by intense global interaction. In the 15th century, Japanese merchants began to sail into Southeast Asia ports and settled trading ports in several places, namely Siam, Cambodia, Philippines, and Malacca. Japan appeared as the new major role within modern world trade along with Ming Dynasty of China. Eventually, Japan actively held dominant position upon commerce as well as diplomacy.

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