

[The Ming Maritime Policy in Transition, 1368 to 1567](#)

Bearbeitet von
Kangying Li

1. Auflage 2010. Buch. X, 211 S. Hardcover
ISBN 978 3 447 06172 8
Format (B x L): 17 x 24 cm

[Weitere Fachgebiete > Geschichte > Asiatische Geschichte](#)

Zu [Inhaltsverzeichnis](#)

schnell und portofrei erhältlich bei


DIE FACHBUCHHANDLUNG

Die Online-Fachbuchhandlung beck-shop.de ist spezialisiert auf Fachbücher, insbesondere Recht, Steuern und Wirtschaft. Im Sortiment finden Sie alle Medien (Bücher, Zeitschriften, CDs, eBooks, etc.) aller Verlage. Ergänzt wird das Programm durch Services wie Neuerscheinungsdienst oder Zusammenstellungen von Büchern zu Sonderpreisen. Der Shop führt mehr als 8 Millionen Produkte.

Li Kangying 李康英

The Ming Maritime Policy
in Transition, 1367 to 1568

2010

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISSN 1860-1812
ISBN 978-3-447-06172-8

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	vii
Preface	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Map.....	xii
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTION.....	3
CHAPTER II	
Socio-economic Institutions and Foreign Trade Policy	
Confucianism and the Prohibition of Foreign Trade	24
The Redistribution of Social Wealth	27
The Suppression of Commerce	33
The Politicised Culture of Consumption.....	38
Currency Control	42
Self-Sufficiency	45
The Wider World	48
CHAPTER III	
The Collapse of the Early Ming Institutions and Foreign Trade	
Land Centralization	57
Commercialisation of the Economy.....	62
The Silver-Based Tax Reform	67
Paralysis of the State-run Manufacturing Industries	73
The Weakening of Conventional Values	75
The Pursuit of Politics and Social Influence by Merchants	80
CHAPTER VI	
The Grand Policy Debate – Part One: The Problem	
External Pressure, the Trade Prohibition and the Wars.....	97
Internal Pressure, the Two Camps and the Memorial System	100
Trade Prohibition and Prejudice about ‘Barbarians’	105
The Foreign Tribute Missions.....	110
Legitimate Grievances?	119

Social Injustice and Insurgency	123
The Military's Involvement in the Illicit Trade	127
Inability to Maintain the Policy	131
CHAPTER V	
The Grand Policy Debate – Part Two: The Solution	
The Power of Trade.....	140
Trade Diminishes Conflict.....	141
Trade as a Source of Strength vis-à-vis Foreign Powers	146
Trade as a Means to Restore a China-Centred World Order	150
The Debate on How to Relieve the Financial Crisis.....	158
Funding the Defence Systems.....	164
Trade as a Means to Import the Silver.....	171
CHAPTER VI	
Conclusion	177
BIBLIOGRAPHIE	185
INDEX	203

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As it has taken ten years to research and bring to completion this book, I owe a great deal to a number of people. First of all, my gratitude goes to Professor Angela Schottenhammer, who involved me in her East Asian Maritime History project and has given me a lot of valuable suggestions on new research areas to explore for this book. Her encouragement and patience has always been an inspiration for my further efforts while her standard in minute exactitude has always generated an enhancing impact. I wish to take this occasion to thank my supervisor, Professor Brian Moloughney, for without his initial direction, his timely and valuable advice and his constant supervision my thesis would not have been possible nor would the completion of this book. I also wish to thank my doctorate thesis examiners, Professor Billy So Kee Long of Hong Kong Chinese University and Dr Duncan Campbell of Australia National University, who provided me with many expert insights to contribute to the improvement of this book. Finally, I wish to pay tribute to my university teacher, the late Professor S.A.M Adshead. His outstanding scholarship in Chinese history and great personality drew me to study under his tutelage at the University of Canterbury, and his teaching guided me towards a more comprehensive and scientific approach to the past. Unfortunately, he died earlier this year, too soon for me to be able to present him with a copy of this book as a small token of thanks for his friendship and encouragement.

My appreciation also goes to Professor Fang Baochuan 方寶川, librarian at Fujian Normal University, who provided me much assistance during two years of research at the library. He allowed me access to the 200,000 tomes of the ancient book collection in the library, which was a great privilege and was invaluable for my research. Professor Zheng Hui 鄭輝, Director of the Ancient Books department of the library, Ms Chen Biru 陳碧茹, and Dr Zheng Zhenqing 鄭振清 from the then History Department also gave me much support on a daily basis. Particularly, I am grateful to Professor Xie Bizhen 謝必震 and Professor Li Xiangmin 李湘敏 from the History Department of the University, who kindly provided me with a free apartment during my research work there.

I am grateful to Professor Lin Renchuan 林仁川 of Xiamen University for providing me with a great deal of help, not only in hunting down materials but also liaising with libraries during my research work there from 1999-2000. My thanks also go to the staff of the Ancient Book department of the Shanghai Central Library for their timely assistance during my research odyssey there from 2003-2009, especially to Liang Ying 梁穎, Zou Xiaoyan 鄒小燕, Jiang Li 蔣藜, Wu Jianwei 吳建偉, Wu Fangli 吳芳荔 Huang Yanwan 黃燕婉 and Wu Min 武敏. I wish to thank the staff at the National Library in Beijing, who allowed me to copy a great deal of useful material. In addition, I owe gratitude to the assistance from staff at the Hong Kong University library, Huadong Normal University library, the National Library in Taiwan, the Library at Taiwan National University, at Beijing University, Shandong University and also the Shandong Provincial Library. I am also grateful to my assistant Liang Fang 梁芳, for her many years of supporting work.

All of the translations in the thesis are my own, except where indicated. I owe gratitude to all the authors whose work I consulted. All the errors are mine.

I dedicate this book to my father Li Changjiu 李長久 and my mother Wang Xiuhe 汪秀荷 for their devoted parental love.

Preface

The maritime prohibition imposed during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) has long been a subject of debate. While different interpretations of the policy have been proffered by historians, sociologists and political scientists, none have got to the heart of the issue. All have tried to decipher the rationale for the implementation of the policy during the very early years of the dynasty, explain why it was maintained for so long, and, why, in 1568, it was eventually abolished. This book is different from earlier interpretations in offering a structural analysis of these issues. In this book, ‘structure’ has two implications. On one hand, the process of policymaking is viewed as a super-structural activity, reflecting the distribution of power within the government, which, in turn, is seen as a product of deeper social and economic foundations. On the other hand, ‘structure’ also implies the period of some 200-odd years, from the Hongwu administration (1368–1399) to the Longqing administration (1567–1573), which is examined as a distinct entity. During this period, certain institutional forms structured the operation of the empire’s foreign relations and commercial activity. Against this background, and in the context of this wider perspective, I explore the institutional changes beginning in the 1560s which saw the abolition of the maritime prohibition and a dramatic shift in the political and economic orientation of the Ming administration.

The book envelops through five chapters. The introductory chapter surveys Chinese commercial and maritime history from the Tang (618–907), through the Song (960–1279) to the Yuan (1206–1368) periods. Against this background, I will show how the Hongwu administration (1368–1398) reversed the maritime tradition of these earlier periods, instituting an unconventional prohibition policy which was then maintained by subsequent administrations for nearly two centuries. The policy was enforced with great effort, despite the fact that it was extremely difficult for the military to maintain, and that it generated considerable economic disruption and political difficulties for the administration.

The second chapter begins the analysis of the issues surrounding the maritime prohibition by employing a new methodological approach. Instead of targeting the policy itself, I explore the early Ming social and economic structure in order to probe the very foundation on which the policy was initiated. I argue that the establishment of the maritime prohibition policy, far from being an isolated coastal issue, was an integral part of the overall domestic and foreign policy structure of the early Ming administration, which was closely conditioned by the dynasty’s general political and social situation at the time. The early Ming years were a distinctive period in Chinese dynastic history. After decades of destructive wars at the end of the preceding Mongol Yuan dynasty, there was considerable social polarization and economic dislocation. Because of this, during the early Ming the new administration came to place considerable emphasis on stability; constructing a stable society and economy became the over-riding goal of the administration. Radical institutional changes were initiated in order to achieve this, and the maritime prohibition policy was one of these. It was an integral part of a much wider and comprehensive network of institutions. These included a self-sufficient economic

system, extensive networks of social control, suppression of commercial activity in conjunction with a state monopoly over key manufacturing sectors, restrictions on social consumption, and a prohibition on private foreign trade. The maritime prohibition policy was one part of this comprehensive network and it would have been impracticable without the wider institutional structure.

Such a politically-arranged system could not survive without political coercion. But coercion was politically very costly. The third chapter traces the weakening and breakdown of the early Ming institutional structures. The combined costs of increasing domestic disruption and intensifying border wars meant the Ming administration did not have the political resources to maintain the institutional structure. As political intervention declined, the Ming society and economy underwent a great transformation. Powering the process of social re-structuring was the commercialization of the economy. With this went and increase in status for merchants. Gradually, political power was shifting to those who benefited most from this restructuring of the society and the economy, especially as more and more men with merchant family backgrounds or with connections to merchant families gained office through the examination system and through the sale of office. This re-configuration of the political landscape meant the legitimacy of many of the early Ming institutions was called into question. The maritime prohibition policy was one of the institutions that came under great scrutiny. Its viability became the subject of much debate.

During the sixteenth century, and the Jiajing reign (1522–66) in particular, there was a heated debate within the administration over many aspects of Ming policy. At the heart of these debates were concerns over foreign policy, because a viable foreign policy was seen as crucial to resolving the social, political and financial crises that confronted the administration. Chapters Four and Five deal with the world politics, exploring the debates about foreign policy in all their many aspects. Central to these debates were the contributions from a new political faction, the pro-trade faction, who argued that lifting the prohibitions that restricted foreign trade was fundamental to resolving the many crises plaguing the empire. They were opposed by a group of officials who insisted that the best way to negotiate the crises was to maintain the institutional structures established during the early years of the dynasty. The pro-trade faction would eventually gain the upper hand. They argued that engaging in business with foreign merchants, and allowing China's own people to make a living through foreign trade, would see an end to the costly border wars and also generate significant revenue for the state. As these arguments gained ground, a wave of policy changes was implemented. These involved relaxing the policy governing the tea and horse trade on the western border, the abolition of the maritime prohibition on the coast and the restoration of the horse fairs along the frontier with the Mongols. The final chapter concludes by emphasizing that it is crucial to understand the inner dynamics driving forward these policy changes, and that this can only be achieved by employing the structural approach that underlies the book.