History 170E

Lecture Outlines

Lecture 16: Maritime Trading World of East Asia

Maritime Trade in Song China
--Song state encouraged foreign trade to increase wealth of realm
--Quanzhou (Fujian): cosmopolitan merchant communities from Indian Ocean
--“South Seas” trade: exotic goods such as spices, incense, tropical products
--Technological innovations: shipbuilding (“Fuzhou ship”); nautical compass

Sino-Japanese Trade
--Ningbo (near Southern Song capital) became hub of trade with Japan
--Song imported bulk commodities such as gold, timber, sulfur (for gunpowder weapons) from Japan
--Bronze coin as main export from China to Japan
--Ningbo merchants became dominant population of Hakata, Japan’s main port
--Mongol invasions of Japan (1274, 1281): temporary interruption of Sino-Japanese trade

Ming Maritime Ban & Voyages of Zheng He
--Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang prohibited overseas private commerce
--Yongle 永樂 Emperor (1402-24): returned to Mongol conception of world empire
--Launched overseas expeditions under command of Zheng He 郑和 (7 altogether; reached India, Arabia, east coast of Africa)
--Ryukyu 琉球 kingdom (Okinawan archipelago): intermediary between China and overseas trading world under Ming tribute trade system

Restoration of Foreign Trade in Sixteenth Century
--Overseas demand for porcelain and other goods fostered rampant smuggling
--Silver strikes in Japan in 1530s led to vast increase in scale of clandestine trade
--Ming campaigns in 1540s-50s against “Japanese Pirates” (Wokou 倭寇) and Portuguese collaborators failed
--Repeal of Ming prohibition against overseas trade in 1567

Silver and the Formation of the Global Economy
--China’s insatiable thirst for silver (money) stimulated global flow of silver from near (Japan) and far (Spain’s American colonies) into China
--European established trading colonies (Portuguese at Macau; Spanish at Manila) to gain access to China trade
--Dutch and English created East India Companies to unify their efforts (including armed force) to compete for China trade

Primacy of Asians in Intra-Asian Trade
--Bulk of intra-Asian trade carried by Asian ships (Chinese dominated silver imports)
--Nguyen kingdom in central Vietnam: crossroads for Sino-Japanese trade
--Chinese trade diaspora to Southeast Asia