

The *Ming Shi-lu* as a source for Southeast Asian History

by Geoff Wade, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

to accompany *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*

<<http://epress.nus.edu.sg/msl>>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Any student of the Southeast Asian past quickly comes to realize how the paucity of written sources relating to the period prior to the 16th Century restricts the reconstruction of the early history of the region. The reliance which must be placed on those works which do exist determines that much history is written from a single source or based on a single viewpoint. Works relating to the period, such as the *Nagarakertagama*, the *Sejarah Melayu*, other *sejarah* and *hikayat* of the archipelago, the Vietnamese Annals, the various recensions of the Ayudhyan Annals, the Cambodian annals, the chronicles of the various Tai polities and other such historical accounts can be compared with only a very limited number of alternate sources, and are essentially seen as “the account” of the polity during that period.

Thus any external source containing references to the polities of Southeast Asia can be seen as a possible repository of data and viewpoints useful for comparing against the indigenous accounts and histories. For Southeast Asia, one of the more obvious external sources for the period prior to the 16th century is constituted by Chinese works. The use of Chinese sources to re/construct the histories of Southeast Asian polities and societies is certainly not a new endeavour. The successive Chinese dynastic histories all contained accounts of areas which are today parts of Southeast Asia and, in many cases, the historical evolution of these polities, often based on earlier dynastic histories, constituted an integral part of the accounts. Over the last century, collections of such references have been compiled by Groeneveldt, Feng Cheng-jun (馮承鈞) and Gu Hai (顧海), while other historians have made much use of Chinese accounts in writing histories of the early polities of Southeast Asia. Pelliot's *Le Fou-nan*, Stein's *Le Lin-yi* and Taylor's *The Birth of Vietnam*, for example, all use Chinese texts as their major sources. Even Jacques (1979), when suggesting that indigenous, rather than Chinese, sources should constitute the primary element in the reconstruction of the early history of mainland Southeast Asia, concurrently affirmed the importance of the Chinese sources. Of course, the Chinese official histories, like histories generally, were conditioned by the purposes for which they were compiled. Thus, in using these sources, one is subject to the “tyranny” of Chinese state historiography, where the viewpoint recorded is that of the Chinese bureaucratic elite, where the values used to judge are those of Chinese elite culture and where the decisions on what to record were taken on the basis of traditional Chinese historiographical criteria. However, it is precisely because the aims and prejudices of Chinese historians generally differed from those of Southeast Asian historians that the Chinese sources provide such a useful adjunct in the study of Southeast Asian history.

The dynastic histories have been the major sources of Chinese references used in the writing of Southeast Asian history. These dynastic histories have the advantage of being divided into sections and subjects, which makes the finding of information about particular polities or persons a reasonably straightforward task. Another genre of Chinese writing, the annalistic (chronologically-arranged) works, however, has not been exploited as fully as the dynastic histories. This is simply due to the vast amount of time necessary in seeking out references of relevance to any target of enquiry. The subject of the present study, the *Ming Shi-lu* (明實錄 — hereafter *MSL*), is such an annalistic work, and

its 40,000 manuscript pages of unpunctuated text have provided quite a deterrent to even the most persistent enquirers. It is for this reason that the references to Southeast Asia contained therein have until now remained greatly under-utilized by scholars. For the present project, the references relevant to Southeast Asia have been identified and translated into English, and presented in a database which is searchable through several variables. As a background to the material, it is perhaps first necessary to examine the nature of the source and the ideological and rhetorical structures which conditioned its creation.

2. THE MING SHI-LU (明實錄)

The *Ming Shi-lu* (*MSL*) is a generic term used to refer to the collected *shi-lu*, or “veritable records” of the reigns of the successive emperors of the Ming dynasty in China (1368-1644). It can thus be said that the *MSL* constitutes the imperial annals of the Ming dynasty. It is by far the largest single historical source for this dynasty and thus plays an extremely important role in the historical reconstruction of Ming society and politics.¹

A number of detailed studies of the *MSL* have been produced, with those by Wu Han², Franke (1943 and 1968)³ and Mano Senryu⁴ being among the most prominent. Wu Han’s work mainly comprises a collection of documents and references relevant to the *MSL* and to its historical value, and details aspects of the compilation and presentation of the various *shi-lu*. Franke provides an overall study of the origins, methods of compilation and functions of the *MSL* and also examines its value as a historical source.⁵ Mano Senryu’s work comprises a general resumé of the research previously conducted on the *MSL*, and then sets down details of the compilers and editors of the successive *shi-lu*, the process of compilation and presentation and the transmission of various editions.⁶ More recently, a young Chinese scholar Xie Gui-an has produced the most detailed Chinese account to date of the compilation and editions of the successive *shi-lu*.⁷

In summary, the *Ming Shi-lu* is a collection of the *shi-lu* (or Veritable Records) of 13 of the 15 reigns during the Ming dynasty. The other two reigns are generally omitted from the “official” lists, for different reasons. The *shi-lu* of the Jian-wen Emperor (the second emperor) was not officially compiled as that emperor was deposed by his uncle Zhu Di (who became the Yong-le Emperor) in 1402, and the latter had the chronologies of the preceding two reigns re-arranged. Under the new chronology, the reign of his father (the Hong-wu Emperor) extended up until his own reign began and the intervening reign of his nephew was consigned to oblivion. Also, the *shi-lu* of the final emperor of the Ming dynasty could not, obviously, have been compiled by officials of the Ming dynasty and is thus not considered an “official” compilation. The Chong-zhen Chang-bian (崇禎長編) however, does provide an account of this reign and is included in the Taiwan photo-lithographed edition of the *MSL* (See 2.2 below). The other unusual *shi-lu* is the *Ying-zong Shi-lu* which includes three reigns, beginning with the Zheng-tong reign of Zhu Qi-zhen, prior to his being captured and carried off by the Mongols in 1449, then the Jing-tai reign of his half-brother Zhu Qi-yu and finally the Tian-shun reign of Zhu Qi-zhen subsequent to his restoration. Apart from the *Ying-zong shi-lu*, each of the *shi-lu* comprises an

account of one emperor's reign, and was compiled after the Emperor's death on the basis of a number of sources:

- i. The *Qi-ju zhu* (起居注), or "Diaries of Activity and Repose". These were daily records of the actions and words of the Emperor in court. The tradition of maintaining such records dates back to the Zhou dynasty (circa 1100-221 BCE). In the early part of the Ming dynasty such audience records were maintained, but very soon after this practice began, it was stopped. It was only following a memorial submitted by Zhang Ju-zheng in 1575 that the practice of maintaining "Diaries of Activity and Repose" was resumed. Parts of these diaries for the Wan-li, Tai-chang and Tian-qi reigns are extant.
- ii. The "Daily Records" (日曆). These records, established precisely as a source for the compilation of the *shi-lu*, were compiled by a committee on the basis of the diaries and other written sources. The only reign for which the "Daily Records" are recorded is the Hong-wu reign.
- iii. Other sources. In the process of *shi-lu* compilation, materials were collected from provincial centres and also culled from other official sources such as memorials, ministerial papers and the Metropolitan Gazette.

The compilation of each *shi-lu* was carried out by a History Office established under the Grand Secretariat after the death of an emperor. Overall supervision of the work fell to grand secretaries who checked drafts and inspected the general compilation. The Inspectors of Compilation were apparently always appointed from the nobility and, as figureheads, did not greatly influence the work. Under the vice-supervisors of compilation, selected from the grand secretaries, the compilers and editors, ranging in number from 60 to 100, together with a large complement of ancillary staff, eventually produced a final account of the preceding emperor's reign in two copies, one of which was sealed and placed in the Grand Secretariat for use in the eventual compilation of the dynastic history, and the other of which was placed at the disposal of the emperor, the grand secretaries and the historiographical officials. That is not to say that re-editing did not occur. Sometimes, with changes in senior compilation staff during the period of compilation, the draft was subject to extensive revision and, on occasions, even the completed and sealed *shi-lu* were opened and re-edited. The seizure of power by Zhu Di from his nephew in 1402, as mentioned above, required wide-ranging revision of the account of his father's reign to excise details of his nephew having being appointed as the due heir, and to validate his own accession.

The names of the various *shi-lu*, the reign titles which they include, the periods they cover, and the dates of compilation of the extant versions are given in the following table.

SHI-LU OF THE MING DYNASTY

<i>Shi-lu</i>	Reign Title	Period included	Date of compilation of extant version
Tai-zu	Hong-wu	May 1351 to 24 Jun 1398	1418
Tai-zong	Yong-le	24 Jun 1398 to 2 Sep 1424	1430
Ren-zong	Hong-xi	25 Aug 1424 to 29 May 1425	1430
Xuan-zong	Xuan-de	16 Jun 1425 to 31 Jan 1435	1438
Ying-zong	Zheng-tong	29 Jan 1435 to 23 Feb 1464	1467
	Jing-tai		
	Tian-shun		
Xian-zong	Cheng-hua	23 Feb 1464 to 9 Sep 1487	1491
Xiao-zong	Hong-zhi	9 Sep 1487 to 8 Jun 1505	1509
Wu-zong	Zheng-de	9 Jun 1505 to 27 May 1521	1525
Shi-zong	Jia-jing	27 May 1521 to 23 Jan 1567	1577
Mu-zong	Long-qing	24 Jan 1567 to 5 Jul 1572	1574
Shen-zong	Wan-li	5 Jul 1572 to 18 Aug 1620	1630
Guang-zong	Tai-chang	19 Aug 1620 to 25 Sep 1620	1623
Xi-zong	Tian-qi	22 Jan 1621 to 3 Feb 1628	1637
Si-zong	Chong-zhen	7 Feb 1628 to 24 Apr 1644	Late 17 th century

* All dates are taken from Wolfgang Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, 1968.

2.1 THE CONTENTS OF THE MSL

The range of subjects covered by the various *shi-lu* is enormous, covering virtually every aspect of Ming administration and society. The first *juan* (chapter) of the *Xuan-zong shi-lu* lists 52 general areas, materials relevant to which were included in that *shi-lu*.⁸ Included were all details of the enthronement of the Emperor and subsequent events in his life; any events of note in the lives of members of the imperial family; marriages within and children born into the imperial family and families of princes; deaths in those families; sacrifices to the various spirits; all proclamations and edicts; the “soothing and instructing of distant peoples”; the issuing of seals; the coming to court of officials; the establishment and changes of offices and “native offices”; major administrative proposals and changes; the succession of the dukes, marquises and earls; the appointment of officials in all major civilian and military posts; details of examinations; sickness and retirement of senior officials, special rewards given to officials; annual population details; memorials; any new regulations of major significance in any administrative area including corvée, salt administration and granaries; changes in salaries paid to nobility and officials; banquets conferred upon officials and envoys; establishment or abolition of schools; details of persons dying in the service of the country, filial persons and chaste women of note; celestial events, the sending of envoys abroad; the arrival of foreign envoys; military deployments, the redressing of unjust

judicial cases; impeachment memorials; capital works and so on.

As can be seen, the references likely to contain information on Southeast Asia form only a very small proportion of the contents of the *MSL*. Such information is mainly contained in accounts of envoys arriving at the court from or being despatched to Southeast Asian polities, memorials from ministries or other organs referring to frontier/foreign policy issues, or memorials from officials in Yun-nan and Guang-dong.

2.2 EDITIONS

Franke⁹ notes that all copies of the *Ming Shi-lu* were kept secreted in the Grand Secretariat down to the Wan-li (1573-1619) reign and that it was only subsequently that duplicate copies began to circulate in private hands, being successively copied during the late Ming and the Qing dynasties. All of the copies down until the 20th century were manuscript copies, allowing much scope for erroneous copying, and today these copies are widely spread, in varying degrees of completeness, throughout China, Japan, Europe and the United States. In his work on the *MSL*, Mano Senryu provides details of the copies held in Japan. Of all versions spread throughout the world, the most “original” appears to be the Peking National Library copy which is possibly an official copy made during the Qing dynasty for use in compilation of the Ming dynastic history. It is this version which forms the basis of the Academia Sinica reprint (see details below).

The first printed edition of the *MSL* was published in 1940 by Liang Hong-zhi (梁鴻志) on the basis of a copy held in the Kiangsu (Jiangsu) Provincial Library and referred to as the Bao-jing-lou manuscript (抱經樓本), after the library holding the manuscript from which the Kiangsu Library’s version was copied. This printed version is particularly marked by signs of poor copying in the manuscript transmission. The most widely accepted and used version of the *MSL* today is that which was published in a photolithographic edition by the Institute of History and Philology under the Academia Sinica in Tai-wan from 1963 to 1968. This photo-lithographed version was based on the Peking National Library manuscript, with missing parts being supplemented from other copies. The actual *shi-lu* are complemented by over 20 volumes of textual criticism, providing variants and alternatives when the texts in other copies differ from the Peking National Library text. It does not, however, include the variants from all known texts and does not attempt a study of the variations or their significance. A brief history of the process of compilation and publication of the photolithographed edition is given by Huang Chang-chien.¹⁰

2.3 COLLECTIONS OF MSL REFERENCES

The importance of the *MSL* as a historical source has been long been recognized and a range of very useful compilations of *MSL* references to particular topics have been edited over the last 50 years. A number of the most important are listed below:

1943 – 羽田亨 《明代□蒙文料 — 明實錄抄：蒙古編 — 》 京都

Haneda Toru: “Historical Materials on Manchuria and the Mongols During the Ming Dynasty — *Ming Shi-lu* References (Mongols) - Part 1”, Kyoto, 1943.

This, the first of a large series, contains the Tai-zu shi-lu and Tai-zong shi-lu references to the Mongols.

1950 - 山本達郎 《安南史研究》 I 東京

Yamamoto Tatsuro: “Research on the History of Annam (Vol. I)”, Tokyo, 1950.

This work contains, throughout the text, an extensive listing of the MSL references to Vietnam.

1954-59 – 田村實造 《明代□蒙史料 — 明實錄抄：蒙古編》 2-10 京都

Tamura Jitsuzo: “Historical Materials on Manchuria and the Mongols during the Ming Dynasty — *Ming Shi-lu* References (Mongols - Parts 2-10)”, Kyoto.

1954-59 – 田村實造 《明代□蒙史料 — 明實錄抄：□州編》 1- 6 京都

Tamura Jitsuzo: Historical Materials on Manchuria and the Mongols during the Ming Dynasty *Ming Shi-lu* References (Manchuria - Parts 1-6), Kyoto.

These works are a continuation of the series initiated by Haneda Toru in 1943 and contain the remainder of the relevant MSL references. The second part of Vol. 10 of the series relating to the Mongols contains MSL references to Tibet and Tibetans in China.

1959 - Serruys, H.: “The Mongols in China During the Hung-wu Period (1368-98)”, in *Melanges Chinois et bouddhiques Vol. II*, 1956-59.

Throughout the text are to be found details of a large number of the references from the Tai-zu shi-lu relating to the Mongols in China during that period.

1959 – 全國人民代表大會民族委員會雲南民族調查組 雲南省少數民族社會歷史研究所編 《明實錄有關雲南歷史資料摘鈔》 (上, 中, 下) 昆明, 1959年

Yun-nan Provincial Social and Historical Research Institute for Minority Nationalities Under the Yun-nan Nationalities Survey Group of the NPC Nationalities Commission (ed.): “Collected Historical References Relating to Yun-nan Contained in the *Ming Shi-lu*”, Kun-ming, 1959.

As the title suggests, this work contains references to Yun-nan, but also includes many of the references to Vietnam.

1964 - 田坂興道 《中國における回教の傳來》 東京, 東洋文庫

Tazaka Kodo: “Islam in China—Its Introduction and Development” Vol. II, Toyo Bunko, Tokyo, 1964.

This work contains many of the MSL references relating to Islam in China.

1966 – 許祥生 《明實錄中所見之中流封貢關係》 國立台灣大學歷史研究所碩士畢業論文, 1966年

Hsu Hsiang-sheng: “The Feudal Enfeoffment and Tributary Relationship Between China and Ryukyu as seen From the *Ming shi-lu*”. — Master’s Thesis submitted to the Historical Research Institute of National Taiwan University, 1966.

This thesis contains a listing of MSL references to Chinese-Ryukyu interactions throughout the Ming dynasty.

1968, 1976 – 趙令揚, 陳學霖, 陳璋, 羅文 (編著) 《明實錄中之東南亞史料》 (上, 下冊) 1968, 1976年

Chiu Ling-yeong, Chan Hok-lam, Chan Cheung and Luo Wen (compilers): “Historical References to Southeast Asia in the *Ming Shi-lu*”, Hong Kong 1968, 1976.

A two-volume collection of MSL references relating to Southeast Asia, compiled under the direction of Professor Lo Hsiang-lin by four of his graduate students at the University of Hong Kong.

1971 – 和田久徳 “明實錄の沖繩史料” 《御茶の水女子大學人文科學紀要》第24卷第2号

Wada Hisanori: “Historical References to Okinawa contained in the *Ming Shi-lu*”. First part published in *Memoirs on Humanities of Ochanomizu University of Women*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1971, pp. 1-61.

1971 – 台灣銀行經濟研究所(編) 《明實錄閩海關係史料》 臺北 1971年
Economic Research Institute under the Bank of Taiwan: “Historical Materials Contained in the *MSL* Relating to the Seas off Fu-jian”, Taipei, 1971.

The references contained in the work generally relate to coastal and maritime activities of Fu-jian, but some references to coastal and maritime activities in Guang-dong and Zhe-jiang are included.

1974 – 荻原淳平 《明代西域史料: 明實錄抄》 京都 1974年

Hagiwara Junpei: “Historical Materials Relating to the Western Regions During the Ming Dynasty — *Ming Shi-lu* References”, Kyoto, 1974.

1975 – 山本達郎 《バトナム中國關係史》 東京 1975年

Yamamoto Tatsuro (ed.): “History of the International Relations between Vietnam and China—From the Rise of the Khuc Family to the Sino-French War”, Tokyo, 1975.

The notes to Chapters III, IV, V and VI in this collection, written by Yamamoto Tatsuro,

Fujiwara Riichiro and Osawa Kazuo, contain a wide range of the MSL references to relations between Vietnam and China during the Ming Dynasty.

1980 – 中山大學東南亞歷史研究所 (編) 《中國古籍有關菲律賓資料□編》北京 1980年

Southeast Asia Historical Research Institute, Zhong-shan University (ed.): “Collected Materials Relating to the Philippines Contained in Ancient Chinese Works”, Bei-jing, 1980.

Within this work, pp. 28-36 contain MSL references to Luzon, Pangasinan and Kumalarang, while pp. 76-79 contain MSL references to Sulu.

1980-83 – 鄭鶴聲, 鄭一鈞 《鄭和下西洋資料□編》(上, 中(上), 中(下), 下) 濟南, 1980-83年 Zheng He-sheng, Zheng Yi-jun (Ed.): “A Collection of References to Zheng He’s Voyages to the Western Ocean”, (4 Volumes), Shan-dong, 1980-83.

Contained within these volumes are the various MSL references to the Zheng He voyages and to places visited during those voyages.

1980 – 青海民族學院民族研究所 (編) 《明實錄清實錄撒拉族史料摘抄》 Nationalities Research Centre under Qing-hai Nationalities Institute (ed.): “Collected References from the *Ming Shi-lu* and the *Qing Shi-lu* to the Sa-la Nationality”, n.p.

1981 – 青海民族學院民族研究所 (編) 《明實錄青海民族史料摘抄》西寧 1981年

Nationalities Research Centre under Qing-hai Nationalities Institute: “Collected *Ming Shi-lu* References to Qinghai’s Ethnic History”, Xi-ning, 1981.

1981 – 鄭樑生 著 《明史日本傳正補》臺北 1981年

Cheng Liang-sheng: “Original and Supplement to the Account of Japan contained in the *Ming Shi*”, Taipei, 1981.

Contains many of the MSL references to Japan and to “Japanese” in Chinese coastal waters.

1981 – 羅香林 (主編) 《明清實錄中之西藏史料》香港 1981年

Lo Hsiang-lin (Editor): “Tibet in the *Ming Shi-lu* and the *Qing Shi-lu*”, Hong Kong, 1981.

Contains a large range of references to Tibet and Tibetans from the two sets of Veritable Records.

1982 - 《淮噶□史略》編寫組 (編) 《“明實錄”瓦刺資料摘編》烏魯木齊

1982年

“Brief History of the Uighurs” Compilation Group (ed.): “Compendium of References to the Wa-la Contained in the *Ming Shi-lu*”, Urumqi, 1982.

This work collects together those references to the Oirat contained in the MSL.

1982- 顧祖成 (主編) 《明實錄藏族史料》 拉薩， 西藏人民出版社

Gu Zu-cheng (ed.) “Historical Materials on the Tibetan People contained in the *Ming shi-lu*”

This multi-volume collection includes materials relating to Tibetan peoples, most of whom lived outside the formal Ming state.

1983 – 貴州省民族研究所 (編) 《明實錄貴州資料輯錄》

Gui-zhou Nationalities Research Institute (ed.): “Collected Materials Relating to Gui-zhou Contained in the *Ming Shi-lu*”, Gui-zhou, 1983.

A chronological listing of the MSL references to Gui-zhou province.

1983 – 谷口房男, 小林隆夫 (編) 《明代西南民族史料 – 明實錄抄》 (第一冊)

東京 1983年 Taniguchi and T. Kobayashi (ed.): “Historical Materials Relating to the Ethnic Groups in the South-west [of China] During the Ming Dynasty — *Ming Shi-lu* References (Vol. 1)”, Tokyo, 1983.

This work collects together the references to non-Chinese people in Guang-xi, Guang-dong, Gui-zhou, Si-chuan, Tibet and Yun-nan contained in the Tai-zu and Tai-zong shi-lu.

1984 – 陳高華 (編) 《明代哈密 / 吐魯番資料□編》 烏魯木齊 1984年

Chen Gao-hua (ed.): “A Collection of Ming Materials on Ha-mi and Tu-lu-fan”, Urumqi, 1984.

Contains MSL references to Hami and Turfan.

1985 – 景振國 等 (編) 《中國古籍中有關老□資料□編》 鄭州 1985年

Jing Zhen-guo et al. (ed.): “A Collection of References to Laos Contained in Ancient Chinese Works”, He-nan, 1985.

The MSL references to Laos can be found on pp. 41-63 of this work.

1985- 陳顯泗 等 (編) 《中國古籍中的柬埔寨史料》 鄭州 1985年

Chen Xian-si et al. (ed.): “Historical Materials Relating to Cambodia Contained in Ancient Chinese Works”, He-nan, 1985.

The MSL references to Cambodia can be found on pp. 168-174 of this work.

1985 – 辛法春 著 《明沐氏與中國雲南之開發》 臺北 1985年

Hsin Fa-chun: “The Mu family and the Development of China’s Yun-nan during the Ming”, Taipei, 1985.

The notes given in this work include references to a very large proportion of the MSL references to the Mu family and their role in bringing Yun-nan within the Chinese sphere.

1985 – 何炳郁, 趙令揚 (編) 《明實錄中之天文資料》 (上, 下冊) 香港 1985年

Ho Peng-yoke and Chiu Ling-yeong (ed.): “Astronomical References Contained in the *Ming Shi-lu*” (Vols. I and II), Hong Kong, 1985.

Contains those references to celestial observations found in the MSL.

1986 – 陸峻岭, 周紹泉 (編) 《中國古籍中有關柬埔寨資料□編》 北京 1986年

Lu Jun-ling and Zhou Shao-quan (ed.): “A Collection of Materials Relating to Cambodia Contained in Ancient Chinese Works”, Bei-jing, 1986.

MSL references to Cambodia can be found on pp.162–172 of this work.

1987 – 鄭樑生 (編校) 《明代倭寇史料》 (一, 二輯) 臺北 1987年

Cheng Liang-sheng (ed.): “Historical References to Japanese Pirates during the Ming Dynasty”, Taipei, 1987.

A punctuated collection of the many references to those maritime marauders known as “Japanese pirates” along the coast of China during the Ming dynasty.

1988 – 劉耀荃 (編) 練銘志 (校補) 《“明實錄”廣東少數民族資料摘編》 廣州 1988年

Liu Yao-quan, Lian Ming-zhi (ed.): “A Collection of References in the *Ming Shi-lu* Relating to the Minority Nationalities of Guang-dong”, Guang-dong, 1988.

A collection of references generally relating to non-Chinese peoples of Guang-dong, but also including some other references to the province.

1988 — 楊新才, 吳忠禮 (主編), 《明實錄寧夏資料輯錄》, 銀川: 寧夏人民出版社, 1988.

Yang Xin-cai, Wu Zhong-li (eds.), “Collected references to Ning-xia in the *Ming shi-lu*”, Yin-chuan, 1988.

A collection of references to Ning-xia, an entity which did not exist during the Ming dynasty. The references are to polities and societies which were located in places which are today part of the autonomous region of Ning-xia.

1989 – 刀永明 (編) 《中國傣族史料摘要》 雲南省少數民族古籍譯叢第14輯 昆明

1989年

Dao Yong-ming (ed.): “Collected Historical Materials Relating to the Dai People of China”, Yun-nan Provincial Minority Nationality Ancient Works Translation Series No.14, Kun-ming, 1989.

This work contains a large selection of the MSL references to Tai peoples and polities during the Ming, divided by polity.

1989 – 魏治臻 《 彝族史料集 》 成都 1989年

Wei Zhi-zhen (ed.), “A Collection of Historical Materials on the Yi Nationality”, Si-chuan, 1989.

The MSL references within this work are recorded on pp. 134-232.

1989 – 郭厚安 (編) 《 明實錄經濟資料選編 》 北京 1989年

Guo Hou-an (ed.): “Selected References to the Economy Contained in the Ming *Shi-lu*”, Bei-jing, 1989.

Contains MSL references to population, field systems, taxes, agriculture, industry and commerce, salt, grain transport and finances.

1990 – 李國祥 (主編) 《 明實錄類纂 – 人物傳記卷 》 武漢 1990年

Li Guo-xiang (chief editor): “*Ming Shi-lu* References classified by Subject—Personal Biographies Volume”, Wu-han, 1990.

1991 - 李國祥 (主編) 《 明實錄類纂 – 涉外史料卷 》 武漢 1991年

Li Guo-xiang (chief editor): “*Ming Shi-lu* References Classified by Subject – Foreign Relations Historical Materials Volume”, Wu-han, 1991.

These were the first two volumes in a series to comprise a large number of collections of MSL references classified by subject. Other volumes published include:

1992 - 《 湖北史料卷 》 “Collected References to Hu-bei Province”

1992 - 《 北京史料卷 》 “Collected References to Bei-jing City”

1992 - 《 文教科科技卷 》 “Collected References to Culture, Education and Science and Technology”

1992 - 《 宮廷史料卷 》 “Collected References to Palace Affairs”

1993 - 《 四川史料卷 》 “Collected References to Si-chuan Province”

1993 - 《 自然災異卷 》 “Collected References to Natural Phenomena”

1993 - 《 經濟史料卷 》 “Collected References to Economic Matters”

1993 - 《 福建台灣卷 》 “Collected References to Fu-jian and Tai-wan”

- 1993 - 《廣東海南卷》 “Collected References to Guang-dong and Hai-nan”
 1993 - 《廣西史料卷》 “Collected references to Guang-xi Province”
 1994 - 《安徽史料卷》 “Collected references to An-hui Province”
 1994 - 《山□史料卷》 “Collected references to Shan-dong Province”
 1994 - 《司法監察卷》 “Collected references to Law and Supervision”
 1995 - 《婦女史料卷》 “Collected references to Women”
 1995 - 《河北天津卷》 “Collected references to Hebei Province and Tianjin”
 1995 - 《浙江上海卷》 “Collected references to Zhejiang Province and Shanghai”
 1995 - 《職官任免卷》 “Collected references to Appointments and Dismissals”
 1995 - 《宗藩貴戚卷》 “Collected references to Feudatory Princely Families”

As this series provides *MSL* references in a useful, type-set and punctuated format, it will undoubtedly become the most widely-used *MSL* collection. However, it should be borne in mind that each volume was compiled, edited and punctuated by different persons, which sometimes results in the same reference, when appearing in different volumes, being punctuated differently. In rare instances, characters also differ between volumes. These volumes should thus be used in conjunction with the Taipei edition and its appendices of textual criticism.

2002 - 田衛疆 (編) 《《明實錄》新疆資料輯錄》, 烏魯木齊市: 新疆人民出版社, 2002.

Tian Wei-jiang, “Collected References to Xinjiang found in the ‘Ming Shi-lu’”, Urumqi, Xin-jiang People’s Press, 2002.

This collection of MSL references to Xijiang (an entity which had not even been created during the Ming dynasty) contains references to polities which have been subsequently occupied and incorporated into the Chinese state.

2.4 INDEXES TO MSL REFERENCES

In addition to the various collections of references notes above, there also exist a number of helpful indexes to *MSL* references on particular topics. They include:

1969 – 白鳥芳郎, “華南・東南アジアにおける 権力構造形成の基盤” 《華南文化史研究》東京 1985

Shiratori Yoshiro: “The Basis of Power Structure Formation in South China and Southeast Asia—Ethnic Groups and their Genealogies”, reprinted in his *Ethnohistorical Studies of Southern China*, Tokyo, 1985.

On pp. 410-42 of the 1985 reprint is an index to the MSL references to tu-si (native offices) of Hu-guang, Si-chuan, Gui-zhou, Yun-nan, Guang-xi and Guang-dong up until the end of the 15th Century.

1975 - Watanabe Hiroshi: "An Index of Embassies and Tribute Missions from Islamic Countries to Ming China (1368-1644) as Recorded in the *Ming Shi-lu*, Classified According to Geographic Area", in *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, No. 33, 1975, pp. 285-347.

This is an English-language version of a paper originally published in Japanese in 1971, and contains details of MSL references to many obviously Islamic polities, and other polities not so obviously Islamic, in the Middle East, Central Asia and Southeast Asia.

1988 – 松竹秀雄 "慶長14年 (1609) 東南アジア海域の我國海運につこて" 《東南アジア研究年報》第30集 (1988), pp. 47-80

H. Matsutake: "A Survey of Japanese Maritime Transportation in the Southeast Asian Seas in the 14th Year of Keicho (1609 A.D.)", in *Annual Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 1988, pp. 47-80.

This article contains a listing of the MSL references to Ryukyu on pp. 60-63.

At a Ming-Ch'ing Conference held at the University of Hong Kong in 1985, Professor Hsü Hong (徐泓) gave details of a "Classified Index to the *Ming Shi-lu*", an overall index to the *MSL* which was being compiled in Tai-wan, comprising 11 major sections encompassing over 1,200 subject headings. This was apparently being funded, at least partly, by Harvard-Yenching money. No further details of this project have come to hand, and given the current progress toward an electronic version of the entire *MSL* text at Academia Sinica, as detailed recently by Chen Kuo-tung (陳國棟) it has likely been subsumed by the new project.

2.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE *MSL* AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE

Wang Shi-zhen (王世貞), a scholar of the 16th century, is noted as having remarked: "The official historians are unrestrained and are skilful at concealing the truth; but the memorials and statutes they record and the documents they copy cannot be discarded."¹¹ Here, then, while criticizing some of the methods of the official historians, Wang Shi-zhen was noting one of the major characteristics of the *MSL* — that it is a repository of much original material from the reigns of the Ming emperors. This is one of the elements which make the *MSL* such a valuable source — it contains much material subsequently deleted from more concise later official accounts, such as the official dynastic history *Ming Shi*. A study of Southeast Asian official titles, for example, is possible based on the *MSL*, but not feasible from materials contained in the *Ming Shi*.

One of the most outstanding characteristics of Chinese historiography, and the *MSL* in particular, is the accuracy of the chronologies. The daily diaries and other court records upon which the *MSL* was based (as well as the *MSL* itself) were all dated by the traditional Chinese calendrical method of reign

title, year of reign and month. Generally, each *juan* (chapter) of the various *shi-lu* comprises the record for a single month. Within each month, the references are dated by day in accordance with the *gan-zhi* (干枝), or “stem-and-branch” system.¹² Thus events are fixed to a specific day, and such dates can often be correlated with other sources. The compilation of the *shi-lu* for a particular reign was commenced after the Emperor’s death and therefore the period elapsed between events and the recording of those events was not great, further reducing the likelihood of chronological error. Thus, the various *shi-lu* provide an accurate daily-calibrated record of events and can be used as a chronological datum line against which to compare the chronologies provided in Southeast Asian historical traditions.

Occasional editorial interpolations mean that there are in places references to events which occurred subsequent to the date of that entry. For example, in a 1427 reference to how magistrate Luo Tong in Jiao-zhi (Vietnam) had defended his prefecture against the Vietnamese general Li Li (Lê Lo’i), the reference concludes: “When Wang Tong abandoned Jiao-zhi, Tong and the others returned to the capital”.¹³ This is simply an editorial note to advise of the eventual fate of Luo Tong. Another example is seen in 1445, where it is noted that the court had ordered Si Ji-fa of the Tai Mao polity of Lu-chuan, who was resident in Meng-yang (Mogaung), to come to the capital with the Meng-yang chiefs to admit his guilt in a particular matter. At the end of the reference, the editors noted that Si Ji-fa and the Meng-yang chieftains did not come to the court.¹⁴ Such interpolations, used to provide an ending or to connect references, are usually easy to recognize and generally do not generate doubts about the chronological accuracy of the entries. There are some apparent chronological problems, but most are easily explained. Many of the apparent discrepancies can be assigned to the length of time taken for information to flow from distant provinces such as Yun-nan and Guang-dong to the capital, as well as different grades of urgency assigned to such communications. Thus, for example, we have the appointment of Cheng Zong as grand coordinator of Yun-nan noted on 18 Nov 1483, while the death of his predecessor Wu Cheng is only recorded on 9 Dec 1483.¹⁵ A memorial arriving from Mu Ang of Yun-nan subsequent to notification of his death is attributable to the same cause.¹⁶ Also, despite the death of Mao Sheng being recorded on 21 Sep 1458,¹⁷ an entry of 29 Jan 1459 records that a report from the Yun-nan polity of Nan Dian had stated that Mao Sheng had forcibly occupied stockades and fields in Zhao-bie, and that, in response, the court had ordered his arrest.¹⁸

Franke lists some of the objections by traditional Chinese historians to the *MSL*,¹⁹ while Wu Han quotes a number of other comments on its defects as a source.²⁰ Complaints that the compilers of the various *shi-lu* were excessively biased or influenced by others are frequently met, and in some cases the lack of sources employed in the compilation also attracted comment. Wang Shi-zhen (1526-90) commented as follows:

The national historiography never failed in its task to such an extreme degree as under our dynasty....The records of utterances and actions by the historiographers of the Left and Right (i.e. the Diaries of Activity and Repose) are missing. Thus [the compilers of the Veritable Records] had no materials upon which they could rely, and therefore they were not in a position to write. As to national disgraces and imperial faults, there was

reason for evasiveness and they did not dare to write. But the worst of all was that those in charge of writing had their private sympathies and aversions therein; thus, even if there was material to rely upon and nothing to evade they did not wish to write; and therefore if they wrote, it did not correspond to the facts.²¹

In the early Qing, Xu Qian-xue (徐乾學), a chief compiler of the official dynastic history *Ming Shi*, is noted as writing:

Of the *Ming Shi-lu*, those for the reigns of Hong-wu and Yong-le are most arbitrary and summary. Most detailed are those for Hong-zhi, but the brush of Jiao Fang in distributing praise and censure has in many cases distorted the facts. Most careless are those for Wan-li, and not a single one of the statements written by Gu Bing-qian (Supervisor of Compilation of the *Shen-zong shi-lu*) can be selected as adequate. Only [the *shi-lu*] for the reign of Jia-jing are skilled and clear in their statements, keeping the balance between detailed and summary [description]. The *Ren-zong*, *Xuan-zong*, *Ying-zong* and *Xian-zong shi-lu* are superior to those of Wen Huang (that is, *Tai-zu*). Those for Zheng-de and Long-qing are inferior to those of Shi-miao (that is, *Shi-zong*). That is a general judgement about the Veritable Records for the successive reigns."²²

A very obvious deficiency of the *MSL*, which affects its use as a historical source, is the omission of the records of the reign of one of the Ming emperors. This was a result, as mentioned above, of the seizure of the Ming throne from his nephew, by Zhu Di, who subsequently became the Yong-le Emperor. The seizure resulted in no official *shi-lu* for the second reign being compiled, and in the account of the first reign being revised two further times after its initial compilation. The definitive study of how the account of the Jian-wen Emperor was incorporated into that of the *Tai-zong shi-lu* is that by Wang Ch'ung-wu.²³ How such revisions affected the references relating to Southeast Asia contained within the *shi-lu* is still difficult to ascertain. However, it appears that in either the original compilation of the *Tai-zu shi-lu* or later revisions much of the saga relating to Chinese relations with Java and San-fo-qi (Zabaj) in the last quarter of the 14th Century, and details of the connections between these two polities and the alleged coup plot by the Chinese prime minister Hu Wei-yong, were omitted or distorted. For studies of the references remaining, see Wu Han and Wolters.²⁴

The personal connections, predilections and enemies of compilers were also very influential in the shaping of the various *shi-lu*. As mentioned above, Jiao Fang (焦芳) was renowned for having compiled the *Xiao-zong shi-lu* on the basis of his own prejudices, while Wang Gungwu, in his biography of Zhang Fu contained in the *Dictionary of Ming Biography*,²⁵ notes that the lack of mention of Huang Zhong's execution by Zhang Fu in the *Tai-zong shi-lu* resulted from the latter's involvement in the compilation of the work. In the first Ming volume of the *Cambridge History of China*,²⁶ Franke notes:

The compilation of the Veritable Records was more a political enterprise than a detailed exercise in academic scholarship. Since the grand secretaries who supervised

the compilation had often been involved in political controversies during the preceding Emperor's reign, they were eager of course to have their personal points of view brought forth in the text at the expense of opposing views. Moreover, they were sometimes able to express regional or group points of view. Therefore, the *Ming shi-lu* has been severely criticized by contemporary Ming scholars for its political bias.

The fact that the *MSL* was essentially a record of the emperors, the court and the central administration, determined that much detail of activities on the borders and beyond the borders was either not recorded or recorded in only very brief detail. A report from the Guang-dong/Guang-xi supreme commander in 1493 noting that a large number of foreign ships had been coming to Guang-dong to trade was countered by the Ministry of Rites which noted that in the previous five years only one mission from Champa and one from Siam had arrived.²⁷ Obviously, then, many of the events and activities which occurred on the borders with Southeast Asia were not notified to the Court, either because they were not considered of interest to the central administration, or because they provided economic advantage for local officials, and had to be kept undisclosed. Examples of the latter situations are seen frequently in the distorted eunuch reports from Yun-nan in the early 15th century. This limitation of the various *shi-lu*, resulting from the more primary concern with the centre constituted by the Chinese court, is of course a characteristic observed in many historical sources.

Another prominent characteristic is that certain incidents were omitted, or almost omitted from the *MSL*, as they did not conform to the "required" patterns of events in Chinese historiography. These omissions included, for example, the "national disgraces" mentioned above by Wang Shi-zhen. An interesting example of such is what might be called the "Lin Xiao Incident". On the 13th day of the seventh moon in the 18th year of the Cheng-hua reign (equivalent to 28 July 1482), it is recorded in the *MSL* that the Ming court sent Lin Xiao, a supervising secretary in the Office of Scrutiny for Justice, as chief envoy, together with the Messenger Yao Long as deputy envoy to proceed to Siam to enfeoff "Guo-long Bo-la Luo-kun Si-li You-di" (Krung Phra Nakhon Sri Ayudhya) as the king of that country.²⁸ This reference was of course in accord with the elite Chinese world view of the time whereby the court "enfeoffed" the rulers of surrounding polities, and the rulers gratefully offered tribute. Nothing more is immediately recorded of this mission and, assuming that it fulfilled its purpose and that the ruler was enfeoffed, the *Ming Shi*, the dynastic history compiled in its final form in the 18th century, recorded in its account of Siam that Lin Xiao had enfeoffed the ruler at this time. However, in the *MSL* record of 1505, we read a very cryptic note. In an on-going discussion of the appropriate method by which to deal with the king of Champa, it was noted that: "...In the past, when the supervising secretary Lin Xiao went as an envoy to Melaka, [the ruler] refused to kneel facing to the north, [and Lin Xiao] was secluded, given little food and died. We could not go to punish the crime and both the gravity of Imperial orders and the nation's dignity inevitably suffered...".²⁹ Given that Lin Xiao is not recorded as ever having been sent to Melaka, the mention of Melaka must be seen as an erroneous reference to Siam, a supposition confirmed by the biography of Lin Xiao found in a local gazetteer. In the *Jia-qing Tai-ping Xian-zhi* (太平縣志), under the "Righteous and Upright Officials"

section of the biographies, we read:

Lin Xiao (*zi* Ke Chong), the younger cousin of the director [Lin] E ...Siam sent an envoy to offer tribute and advise of the death of the ruler. As Lin Xiao had clear skin and an imposing appearance and spoke in a sonorous and clear tone, a set of first-grade robes was especially conferred upon him and, together with the Messenger Yao Long, he went to enfeoff the heir Guo-long Bo-la Lue-kun Xi-la Wu-di as king. The country lies to the South-west of Champa and the journey there requires 10 days and nights with a good wind. The waves were huge and everyone on board feared the dangerous journey. Lin Xiao said: 'The Emperor is Heaven. You should fear failure in carrying out the orders rather than being concerned about the dangers of the journey!' When they reached the country, there was discussion about an audience, but the rites suggested were inadequate and Lin Xiao refused to read the proclamation. They were then shifted to the Western suburbs and provided with very meagre provisions. The Siamese repeatedly sought Lin Xiao's submission, but he refused to bend. His anger and indignation caused him to fall sick and he died. The deputy envoy Yao Long then humbled himself and received rich banquets and great presents. On his return, the events were advised. Yao Long was dismissed and great sympathy was shown for Lin Xiao....³⁰

An earlier gazetteer of the Jia-jing reign, *Tai-ping Zhi* (太平志), dated 1540, includes a shorter account of Lin Xiao under the "Martyrs" (死事) section. Here then is the explanation of the cryptic statement in the 1505 *MSL* reference. The omission of these details from the *MSL* is very revealing in two aspects. First, it confirms that the rulers of the Southeast Asian polities often saw themselves as equals of or superiors to the Chinese emperor and that the Chinese world view was sometimes more delusion than reflection. Second, it tells us that Chinese historiography of the Ming dynasty was very loath to record that which violated the required "patterns", that which failed to conform to certain modes, or that which showed the Chinese state being denigrated. One must thus of course ask to what degree the *MSL* is a reflection of events and to what degree it is a manifestation of the ideology of the Chinese rhetorical world order.

There are also instances of false reports submitted from provincial officials being included in the *MSL*. In 1427, the Zhen-yuan Marquis Gu Xing-zu reported that he had killed the Vietnamese person Wei Wan-hong. However, subsequently it was revealed that the latter was still alive.³¹ Separately, in 1440, reports from Yun-nan are recorded, noting that success had been achieved against the Tai Mao leader Si Ren-fa's forces at Zhe-zhang-ying Stockade by Tao Zan and others of Jing-dong (Kengtung).³² Later, in June 1441, further reports were received from Jing-dong noting that the accounts of the successes were completely fabricated.³³ In the late 16th century, reports of military successes against Ava-Burma forces which were submitted to the Court by Li Cai were recorded in the *MSL*. A 1588 impeachment of Li Cai by the Yun-nan regional inspector, however, noted that Li's reports were fabrications intended to further his career. The above are only known to have been false or

incomplete accounts by the fact that subsequent reports revealed them to be so. One is left to wonder how many of the other border accounts are fictitious or embroidered, but were not subsequently revealed as such.

On occasions, two versions of the same events submitted by different persons are recorded in the *MSL*. After the Chinese general Wang Ji reported in 1448 a massive success against the Tai Mao leader Si Ji-fa's stockade and the routing of his forces in Yun-nan,³⁴ the court received a memorial in 1449 from Zhan Ying, a minor official at a Confucian school in Si-chuan, who had also accompanied the expedition, giving another version of events. The latter report described how Wang Ji's luggage required 200-300 porters, how the various generals sought personal advantages from the "native officials", and how in fact Wang Ji had been defeated by Si Ji-fa. Zhan also claimed that the prisoners sent to the court were simply captured "fisher-people" from the area.³⁵ In some cases, there are so many conflicting reports that the veracity of all versions is in doubt. The various accounts of the relations between the Tai polities of Meng-mi (Mongmit), Mu-bang (Hsenwi) and Meng-yang (Mogaung), all polities located in what is today northern Burma, during the last decade of the 15th Century is an excellent example of how conflicting allegiances and interests contorted the accounts which were received by the Ming court and subsequently recorded in the *MSL*. Differing reports by the various participants in the events, the Ministry of War and various censors produced numerous versions of the events, all of which must be viewed with much caution.³⁶

One of the most prominent examples of how accounts varied with time, place, informant and the historiographical and other needs of the Chinese state is the way in which the capture and death of the Tai ruler Si Ren-fa of Lu-chuan (Möng Mao) is recorded in the *MSL*. A reference dated to the equivalent of 14 January 1445 noted that Si Ren-fa had been captured and handed over by the Ava-Burmese to the Chinese Battalion Commander Wang Zheng, but that as Si Ren-fa had refused to eat and Wang Zheng feared that he would die, he executed him and sent his boxed head to the capital.³⁷ Later, in Imperial orders sent to Si Ji-fa, the son of Si Ren-fa, dated to the equivalent of 14 August 1446, it was noted that: "Your father was beheaded by the people of Ava-Burma, and his head was presented to the Court."³⁸ Subsequently, in an account dated 5 October 1446, Yun-nan advised that Han Gai-fa of Mu-bang (Hsenwi) had exchanged gold and land with Ava-Burma for Si Ren-fa, then beheaded him and sent his head to the Chinese forces.³⁹ A later claim by the ruler of Ava-Burma in 1479 was that "I/we captured Si Ren-fa and his wife and children and presented them".⁴⁰

Much of this revision and confusion in the Chinese accounts appears to stem from the fact that the Ming court had promised the land of Lu-chuan to whoever could capture and present alive Si Ren-fa. The Chinese administration used such promises frequently as a means of inducing polities to act in certain ways, and the subsequent renegeing on the undertaking had to be validated by the historical record. Hence, the creation of the two later accounts where Si Ren-fa was beheaded either by Ava-Burma or Mu-bang, rather than being presented alive. Such renegeing was to be a cause of repeated military activities by Mu-bang and Nang Han-nong, the ruler of Meng-mi (Mongmit) in the latter part of the 15th Century. In some ways, the recording of such varying accounts can be seen as an

advantage rather than a deficiency of the *MSL* as a historical source, as it allows some of the motives and mechanisms behind actions and the recording of events to be observed (albeit dimly), something which is precluded by single, uniform accounts such as those given in the standard Ming history.

Some obvious errors are also observed in the *MSL*. In 1450, it is recorded that Ban-ya Zhe, the son of Dao Xian-dai, deceased pacification superintendent of Laos, was to inherit his father's post,⁴¹ while one month later [Dao] Ban-ya Zhe is noted as the pacification superintendent of the Ba-bai/Da-dian (Lan Na) Military and Civilian Pacification Superintendency.⁴² The second of these references is obviously erroneous as in notices both before and after that date Dao Zhao Meng-lu is recorded as the pacification superintendent of Ba-bai/Da-dian. Also, references to Dao Xian-da (刀暹答) in 1428⁴³ and 1431⁴⁴ as the ruler of Laos are erroneous references to Dao Xian-dai (刀線歹). Dao Xian-da was in fact the ruler of Che-li (Sipsong Panna), at an earlier period in the 15th century. Such errors likely crept in because of the unfamiliarity of the *MSL* compilers with either the people or the events being written of.

3. THE CONTEXT OF THE COMPILATION OF THE *MSL*

All histories are written within the constraints of contemporary ideological, social and political conditions. The societies in which the various *shi-lu* of the Ming dynasty were compiled certainly differed over time, with the much more globally-connected 17th-century China being obviously unlike 14th century China in many respects. However, there are particular aspects of elite Chinese rhetoric which manifested certain ideals in China's relations with those outside Chinese culture and those outside the state, which do not appear to have seen great change over the period. It is these aspects which can be looked at as forming the rhetorical base of the elite Chinese "world view" manifested in the *MSL* references, and it was within the confines of this rhetoric that many of the records of frontier/foreign affairs in the various *shi-lu* were compiled. The other major variable determining the content of the official historiographical record as it related to Southeast Asia during the Ming dynasty is, of course, the specific policies pursued by the Chinese state during that period. These policies, often markedly at variance with the roles and aims proclaimed by the Chinese "world-view" rhetoric, obviously greatly affected how the relations between the Chinese state and the frontier/foreign polities were officially recorded. The policies which the Ming state pursued in respect of the region we know today as Southeast Asia will be the subject of a future monograph. Here, it is simply intended to present a brief overview of the Chinese "world view" and its attendant rhetoric and how these affected what was recorded within the *MSL*.

This rhetoric which decorates so many of the references to Southeast Asia in the *MSL* was, in many cases, inherited from a long-standing rhetorical tradition, extending back to the Zhou dynasty, which the Chinese state has used to depict and represent the relations between itself and those "distant" to varying degrees (either geographically or culturally) from the centre. Aspects of this tradition will be examined below:

3.1 THE EMPEROR / THE CHINESE STATE

In the rhetoric of the elite Chinese “world view”, the Chinese emperor, apart from having received the divine right to rule through the Mandate of Heaven (天命) and thus being the embodiment of righteousness, fairness and kindness, was also the state incarnate. The Yong-le emperor, noted in 1405 that “I manifest the love of the “One on High” (上帝) for all living things”. This sentiment was repeated in the same words 150 years later by the Jia-jing Emperor.⁴⁵ The origins of this idea that a love for all living things was an intrinsic element of any “humane” ruler extend at least as far back back as the classic *Shu Jing* (“Book of Documents”). Also, in response to actions by the Vietnamese rulers, the Yong-le emperor stated “fairness and righteousness will not tolerate such actions”.⁴⁶ Here the *MSL* was setting the emperor/court as both the possessor and arbiter of such values. It was moral claims such as these which were used by the Chinese administration to validate the Ming invasion of Vietnam in 1406.

Apart from direct imperial claims to these virtues, the *MSL* references include many examples of decisions or actions which stress the benevolence of the emperor/court. Often the words/actions of the Emperor were contrasted or juxtaposed with more intransigent or harsh proposals by his ministers, so as to intensify the image of apparent benevolence. In 1404, when the Ministry of Rites proposed retaining three Cambodian troops who had been sent by the ruler of Cambodia to replace three Chinese soldiers who had fled from a Chinese mission to that country, the Emperor is recorded as saying: “They all have families and would be happier in their country... As ruler, I must treat people with the affection of Heaven and Earth.”⁴⁷ When, in 1406, the ruler of Che-li (the Tai polity of Chiang Hung) sent his son to the Court as a hostage, the Emperor is recorded as sending him home, advising him to demonstrate filial piety, loyalty to the court and concern for the people.⁴⁸ Following urging, in 1408, by the Ministry of Rites that the tribute of Meng-gen (Kengtung) not be received as they had been “guileful”, the Emperor is recorded as responding: “When *man* and *yi* are able to repent and come to Court it is pleasing indeed. The previous events are insufficient to warrant severe castigation.”⁴⁹ The succeeding emperors were likewise depicted as being imbued with this benevolence. In 1438, the Zheng-tong Emperor in response to a request by the Yun-nan grand defender to despatch an army against Si Ren-fa of Lu-chuan/Ping-mian (Mong Mao), claimed: “I manifest Heaven’s love for all living things and I am convinced that if the Imperial army is despatched, it will be impossible to avoid harming the innocent. Also, my heart could not bear taking persons away from their fathers, mothers, wives and children.”⁵⁰ There is a multitude of such references throughout the various *shi-lu*, repeatedly proclaiming how benevolent was the ruler and, by extension, the state.

As the personification of the state, emperors obviously had to be depicted in the *MSL*, and in Chinese historiography generally, as peace-lovers. It is thus that, when advised of what had been captured in Vietnam by his invading forces in 1408, the Yong-le Emperor decries the implication that he had been seeking gain from the expedition, and advises the world: “I am the lord of all people under Heaven. Why would I act in a warlike manner in order to obtain some land and people? My concern was only that rebellious bandits not go unpunished and that the suffering of the people not go

unrelieved”.⁵¹ It is interesting to compare the pretext given by the Xuan-de Emperor when the Chinese forces were eventually forced out of Vietnam in the 1420s. He noted that he was withdrawing the troops as: “Heaven manifests the ultimate in benevolence and accords with the wishes of the people. The Emperor represents Heaven and rules in accordance with the wishes of the people”.⁵² This passed into lore as in 1540, the Jia-jing emperor noted that the attack on Annam by Yong-le’s forces in the early 15th century had “allowed the Jiao people to escape from the torments of fire and water” and that the withdrawal resulted from the fact that the Xuan-de emperor “took pity on the Jiao people and chose not to punish [Lê Lo’i]”.⁵³ Thus, the Ming emperors, regardless of whether they were invading or withdrawing, acting on their own initiative or being forced into action, were eternally manifesting benevolence, grace and concern. Having the right to rule also meant that all decisions taken were correct, as “Heaven is the law and none dare violate it. The Way of Heaven is supremely just and correct to the minutest degree”.⁵⁴

As the embodiment of Heaven and as the representative of the “One on High” (上帝), Emperors were also the link between the natural world and the spiritual world and thus were, apart from being divinely-inspired, also the bringers of blessings. This was reflected in the *MSL* in the words of the Chinese themselves and, as further validation and confirmation, by purported memorials from abroad. Ma-na-re-jia-na-nai, the king of Bo-ni, supposedly advised the following in a memorial to the court in 1408:

“...My country is a distant island in the ocean, but I received Imperial grace and was enfeoffed. Since that time, in our country, the rain and sunshine have been timely, there have been successive years of bountiful harvests and the people have been without calamities. In the mountains and in the streams, precious treasures have been revealed and the plants, trees, birds and animals have all thrived. The elders of the country say that this is all due to our being sheltered by Your Majesty’s great grace.”⁵⁵

Again, in 1416, the king of Cochin purportedly submitted the following in a memorial:

“For the last several years, the country has had fertile soil and the people have had houses in which to live, enough fish and turtles to eat and enough textiles to make clothing. Parents have looked after their children and the young have respected their elders. Everything has been prosperous and pleasing... This is all indeed the result of the civilizing influences of the sage.”⁵⁶

The marked similarity of such memorials suggests that they were fabricated by Chinese compilers following a particular model and were intended to reflect the role of the emperor and, by extension, the Chinese state as the “bringer of blessings”. The Chinese ruler was also depicted as impartial in his dealings with all. The Yong-le Emperor noted: “I do not differentiate between those here and those there,”⁵⁷ while the Xuan-de Emperor noted his “desire to treat all equally” and stated that “to all that I cover and contain, I strive to bring prosperity and peace.”⁵⁸ The idea of treating all equally (一視同仁)

is a constant theme of Imperial action throughout the *MSL*. Examples can be seen in 1431, 1436, 1443, 1446 and 1460.⁵⁹

In an extension of model family relations, the perfect ruler in traditional Chinese society is depicted as treating the people both within and outside the state as a father might treat his children. The Jia-jing emperor (r. 1522-1566) advised the ruler of Annam in the 1540s: “I am the Emperor and I treat all under Heaven as my family.”⁶⁰ The Cheng-hua emperor (r. 1465-1487) also claimed to look on all people as his children.⁶¹ This image is succinctly manifested in a memorial supposedly submitted by Chen Hao (Trần Cao) and Li Li (Lê Lo’i) of Đại Việt to the Xuan-de Emperor in 1427. In part, the memorial reads:

“...We humbly note that although Heaven and Earth, in their treatment of the myriad things, may display anger through lightning and thunder, their intrinsic will to foster life is constant. Although parents, in their treatment of their children, sometimes educate them with the cane, in such action is contained their fine intentions of training their children well. When persons suffer pain, there is thus none who does not cry out to Heaven and to his parents. Therefore, your ministers have to put forward these earnest words, advise of our grief and pray to the Court.”⁶²

The implicit idea of the Emperor/Court as the parent of the people of foreign lands shows that the memorial was either drafted by the Vietnamese writer to accord with the Chinese rhetoric in this respect, or “regularized” to the standards of court convention by the *MSL* compilers. In 1429, the Xuan-de Emperor is recorded as defining his function as follows: “I serve Heaven by treating the people as my children. In the 10,000 states within the four seas, I try to provide prosperity and abundance”.⁶³ Again, like the ideal father, the Zheng-tong Emperor (r. 1436-49) is recorded as stating: “The court does not anticipate deceit and cannot bear to punish you.”⁶⁴ An important function which the *MSL* ascribes to the Imperial incumbent was the preservation of order and the maintenance of peace. This is very clearly set down in the *Tai-zong shi-lu*, where Imperial orders sent to Ava-Burma in 1405 note: “When a ruler receives the mandate and becomes lord of all under Heaven, he must be clear in his laws and orders and must be constant in his sentiments so that the strong do not oppress the weak, the many do not harry the few and all are at peace in their lives.”⁶⁵ Ten years previously, when chastising Si Lun-fa of the Tai polity of Lu-chuan/Ping-mian, the Tai-zu Emperor (r. 1368-98) was anxious to describe how his own military actions against Yun-nan were in fact the result of his benevolence and concern for peace:

“China is surrounded by *yi* in the four directions and its land adjoins the territories of the various chieftains and headmen. However, I have never taken advantage of my strength to oppress them, bully them or eliminate them. The territory of Yun-nan is already ours. It may appear that it was taken by force. This is not so. The Liang Prince, who was the grandson of the Yuan Emperor Shi-zu, using his claim as a descendant of the Yuan court, gave shelter to our criminals, received our fugitives and lured away our frontier

guards. Thus there was no other way but to despatch an army to punish him.”⁶⁶

In 1414, Ming imperial orders were despatched to Cambodia and Champa “requiring” them to cease fighting, to look to their own affairs and develop friendly relations.⁶⁷ We also read, in 1431, of Melaka complaining to the court that Siam had obstructed it, and the Emperor accordingly instructing that orders be sent to the king of Siam requiring him to protect his own country and maintain good relations with neighbouring countries.⁶⁸ Again, in 1472, after Đại Việt’s decimating attack on the Cham capital of Vijaya, the Emperor ordered Annam (Đại Việt) to return all the people it had captured and to not encroach again into Champa.⁶⁹ This rhetorical concern is taken to a Biblical extreme in the *Tai-zong shi-lu*, with the Emperor being noted as declaring: “If even one person has lost his place, I am not at ease”.⁷⁰

Within this model, moreover, the emperor was assisted in his preservation of peace by Heaven, as seen for example in 1411, when it is noted that Zheng He’s forces had seized and brought back to China the ruler of Sri Lanka. In respect of this ruler, it was noted: “Heaven detested his evil and assisted in his capture”.⁷¹ The explicit expression of this role of peace preserver become increasingly rare in the later *shi-lu*, but the idea was still occasionally manifested. Following the Portuguese capture of Melaka in the early 16th century, the Ming court ordered that Portugal be commanded to return Melaka’s territory and that “Siam and the various *yi* should be instructed in the righteousness of assisting those in distress and showing sympathy to their neighbours”.⁷²

Efforts to preserve the *status quo* could not, however, be at the expense of Chinese security. Thus, rather than continuing to refuse to recognize the “rebel” Mạc regime in Annam which had taken control of the majority of that polity in the 16th century, the Chinese emperor took the initiative to “normalize” relations when, on the occasion of assigning a title to his grandfather, the Jia-jing emperor noted: “Annam is also covered by Heaven. We cannot fail to send an envoy to inform them just because they have been rebellious in recent years”.⁷³

To fulfill the function of maintaining peace, the Emperor/court and their agents had also to be benevolent inspirers of fear. The recording in the *MSL* of the fear supposedly felt by recalcitrant or castigated rulers stresses this aspect. A 1411 reference notes that Nang Guang, the ruler of Zhen-kang, a Tai polity in Yun-nan, who had previously “obstructed envoys from the court”, was sent imperial orders castigating him. “Nang Guang was frightened and thus he sent people to the Court to request forgiveness of his crime”.⁷⁴ When, in 1454, the commissioner-in-chief Hu Zhi of Yun-nan deployed troops to “soothe and instruct” Si Ken-fa and Dao Ban-fang of Mu-bang, “he instructed them as to what would bring calamity and what would bring prosperity. Si Ken-fa and Dao Ban-fang were frightened.”⁷⁵ Si Bu-fa of Meng-yang is recorded as stating to the Emperor in 1456: “I would not dare to act like my father or brother, and I stand in great fear of the Court’s laws”.⁷⁶ Regardless of whether Si Bu-fa actually wrote such words or whether they were invented by the court chroniclers, in either case they were serving the need for the court to be depicted as an inspirer of fear.

Chinese emperors were also recorded as displaying virtuous power (*de* 德) to a degree consistent with their exalted position. In 1427, despite the Chinese forces having been savagely defeated in

Vietnam and forced to withdraw, the Xuan-de Emperor described the events as follows: “In restoring a broken line, the Emperor is fulfilling the wishes of his ancestors, resting the troops and bringing peace to the people. With virtuous power as great as the Universe, I am especially issuing this proclamation in conformity with my great concern.”⁷⁷ The Ming concept of Imperial power and the role of the Emperor duplicated to some degree that of the “cakkavati” or “world ruler” seen in Southeast Asian polities. When Tambiah speaks of the archetypal “cakkavatti” being “loath to recognize geographic limits on authority” and noting the “obligation of the world ruler to supervise the morals and religious orthodoxy of subject principalities, while at the same time preserving the chastised kings on their thrones”,⁷⁸ it is as if reading of the Ming emperors and the policies they pursued on their southern borders. The ministers of the Chinese state, as representatives of the culture at “the centre”, are also often depicted by the *MSL* as being fully imbued with moral rectitude. Thus, when the Vietnamese, in their campaign to drive off the Chinese occupying forces in the early 15th century, captured Liang River Prefecture, the compilers of the *MSL* felt compelled to note that “the troops and people within the city all fought to the death and not one surrendered”. The prefect Liu Zi-fu, as a role model, also declared: “When the prefecture dies, so die I. Righteousness cannot be tainted.”⁷⁹ The details of the capture by the Vietnamese of He Zhong, another loyal minister of the Ming state, is recorded in the same account as that noted above. “Zhong looked at the bandits with blazing eyes and swore at them saying: ‘I am a minister of the Heavenly Court. If only I could behead you and take your head back to the court! How could I be willing to follow your rebellion just to save my life!’ He cursed them endlessly.” A third Ming official, Zhou An, was also captured by the Vietnamese and, so the *MSL* tells us, screamed at his captors: “I am a minister of the Heavenly Court. How can I die by a bandit’s hand!” Thereupon, he killed himself. Here then we see moralistic endings providing a positive aspect to events, a device used to both bolster Chinese pride and to shift attention away from the essence of the account, which was that China had suffered a military defeat. The same is seen in the *MSL* account of the decisive Vietnamese defeat of the Chinese at Ning Bridge in the same period, where the following was noted of the Chinese minister Chen Qia: “He was captured but did not submit and he died while continuing to curse the bandits.”⁸⁰ This element of Chinese historiography has quite ancient precedents. Backus has pointed out the similarity, in various Chinese accounts, of the righteous suicide by Chinese persons who had been captured by Tibetans in the eighth century, and the suicide by those who had been captured by Nan-zhao forces in the ninth century. He concludes: “These obviously are examples of another of the topoi of Chinese frontier historiography. As such they should be taken for their symbolic rather than their literal value.”⁸¹ I feel that a detailed reading of the *MSL*, and comparisons with earlier and later works will reveal that Backus’ observation is applicable to a far wider spectrum of elements in Chinese frontier historiography.

Moralizing by negative example is also found in the texts. A reference of 1428, again relating to Jiao-zhi (Đại Việt), notes that the Vietnamese had captured the Chinese official Cai Fu and were using him to seek the surrender of other Chinese officials. Predictably, we read of a righteous official Li Ren screaming down to Cai Fu from the city wall: “You, a senior minister, cannot kill bandits and instead

are employed by them. You are not even the equal of a dog or a pig.”⁸²

The need to maintain national “face” or dignity figures prominently in rhetoric and actions recorded in the *MSL*. In 1440, subsequent to the defeat of Chinese forces by the Tai Mao polity of Lu-chuan in 1439, imperial concern about “the shame brought to the country and the harm to authority” was expressed.⁸³ In 1457, Siamese envoys returning from Bei-jing purchased children from starving farmers in Shan-dong to take back to Siam as servants. Officials memorialized: “This is not only base and unprincipled, but it will result in them [the people in Siam] laughing at and deriding China.” The children were thus redeemed and returned to their parents.⁸⁴ The same reason was given for redeeming children in a similar case in 1481.⁸⁵ Observers of Chinese history over the 20th century will be well aware of how great a role this concept of “national dignity” and “redressing of shame” has remained in modern Chinese rhetoric and actions.

The *MSL* also contains many references to Chinese envoys returning gifts offered to them by foreign rulers, as a way of demonstrating the moral integrity and cultural superiority of the Chinese. The same morality is suggested by an account of 1396, which notes that Si Lun-fa of the Tai polity of Lu-chuan/Ping-mian requested that the Chinese envoys sent there remain and serve him, and then properly records their righteous refusal of his proposal.⁸⁶

In the *MSL*, the historical record was constantly cited as validation of, or a basis for, certain actions. In 1448, in a warning, the court referred to the actions of Ma Yuan and Zhu-ge Liang 1,000 or more years previously in destroying non-Chinese forces as evidence that the Chinese state was quite capable of crushing refractory *yi* when the need arose.⁸⁷ Many other examples are observed, with the general characteristic of such citation being that the past provided a mirror for the present. When, in 1537, Tang Zhou remonstrated against the Ming court’s intention to launch an invasion of Annam, he noted that the fall of the Tang dynasty had begun with an expedition against Nan-zhao.⁸⁸ Almost a century later, when the Censor You Feng-xiang was urging against allowing the Dutch who had occupied the Peng-hu islands to remain, he drew a parallel with the situation during the Song dynasty, whereby the granting of permission to the Mongols to establish a trading base in Chinese territory led to the demise of the Southern Song dynasty.⁸⁹

However, historical precedents were not always considered a suitable basis for determining a mode of action. When, in 1440, policies were proposed based on the actions of Yao and Shun (the rulers of the Chinese golden age), the Ying-guo Duke Zhang Fu noted that: “In the time of Yao and Shun, the Emperor only ruled nine *zhou*. Now, our nation has unified the four seas and, among the Chinese, the *yi*, the *man* and the *mo*, there is none who does not accord”.⁹⁰ Thus, while actions could still be validated by history when relevant historical precedents were available, the claim that the passage of time had changed the world could also provide a basis for the employment of policies untested by history. Here, again we see a very pragmatic element of Chinese frontier/foreign policy lying just below the surface of the rhetoric.

3.2 THE CIVILIZING ROLE OF CHINESE CULTURE

The desire to dominate politically, by spreading those aspects of culture which defined the “Chinese”, was obvious in much of the policy pursued, at both central and provincial levels, in Ming China. The agents of such cultural influence varied, but the emperor/court was assigned a major role by the model. Thus, soon after the commencement of his reign, the Yong-le Emperor had printed 10,000 copies of “Biographies of Exemplary Women” (烈女傳) to be distributed to the various non-Chinese polities for their moral instruction.⁹¹ When reports from the Confucian schools in Jiao-zhi (the occupied Đại Việt) reached the Ming capital in 1425, advising that little progress had been made in education and suggesting the appointment of qualified instructors, the *MSL* records the Emperor as noting: “Using Chinese ways to change *yi* ways—there is nothing more important than this.”⁹² Again, in 1493, when a Tai woman from Meng-lian in Yun-nan was being rewarded for remaining chaste for 28 years following the death of her husband, the Imperial words recorded were: “Upright actions and excellent reputations educate people and change the *yi* customs. How can those who move towards propriety and righteousness not be rewarded and encouraged!”⁹³

In 1425, the emperor/court’s role in educating and fostering students sent to the Chinese capital is stressed. With the arrival of students from the province of Jiao-zhi (the occupied Đại Việt), the Emperor noted: “We must educate them and foster them properly. If they do well in their studies, we can look forward to them becoming able officials.”⁹⁴ Much play is also given to the fact that the male relatives of the Ryukyu rulers were educated in the Chinese capital. If one compares this with the rhetoric of the modern Chinese state, as set down, for example, in the article on fostering socialist students so that they can serve the state and modernization,⁹⁵ one is struck by how directly this role of the emperor/court has, today, been taken on by the Communist Party of China (CPC). The court aimed, and the CPC aims, at educating people in a unified doctrine which would override existing ethnic/cultural differences and strengthen the Chinese state’s control over areas not yet fully Chinese.

The desire to “civilize” and bring within the Chinese administration the peoples of Yun-nan was also an occasionally-voiced concern of the Ming administration. Following a 1481 proposal that the heirs of “native officials” in Yun-nan be sent to study at Confucian schools so that they would learn filial piety, propriety and righteousness, the Cheng-hua Emperor (1465-87) noted: “In this way, the habit of the *man* and the *mo* of struggling for succession will gradually die out and the civilizing influences of Chinese propriety and righteousness will reach to the distance. How wonderful this will be!”⁹⁶ Here we see a very obvious example of the “urge to civilize” being part of a wider Chinese urge to dominate.

The officials of the Ming bureaucracy were also depicted, and possibly saw themselves, as agents in this “civilizing” process. In a memorial submitted to the court in 1449 by an official from Dong-guan in Guang-dong, the official noted that the people of Qin Subprefecture (in Southern Guang-dong, bordering Vietnam) wore clothes and spoke like the people of Jiao-zhi (Vietnam). He proposed that officials be sent there to encourage the people to change their mode of dressing “so that they dress like people in China”, and that village schools be established “so that they change their language and all speak Chinese.”⁹⁷ Here we see the perceived need by the Chinese elite for a uniformity of action, that

which James Watson calls “orthopraxy,”⁹⁸ to delineate the Chinese from the *yi*.⁹⁹ The *MSL* also records the spread of the accoutrements of “culture” with, for example, Siam “requesting” the conferral of standard Chinese weights and measures in 1404,¹⁰⁰ and later with the appointment of Chinese clerks to carry out the Chinese language duties in the native offices of Yun-nan.¹⁰¹ However, as will be suggested below, most of the rhetoric centring on China’s “civilizing” role and most of the actions taken on this basis, were intended to validate and assist Chinese political expansion and assimilation. An important element in this was the way in which non-Chinese persons and polities were perceived.

3.3 GENERAL ATTITUDES TO NON-CHINESE PERSONS

Despite the claims of the Chinese “world-view” rhetoric noted above, where the emperor/court looked on all equally and treated all with equal benevolence, there appears to have been quite a degree of differentiation between Chinese and non-Chinese, and even among non-Chinese, both at the official level and the popular level. In general, non-Chinese persons, who were referred to variously as *man*, *yi*, *di*, *mo* or *fan*, were depicted in somewhat non-human terms throughout the *MSL*. In 1412, we read that “*Man* and *yi* are just like birds and animals. There is no point in severely punishing them,”¹⁰² while in 1425 the Xuan-de Emperor enquired: “What point is there in punishing *man*?”¹⁰³ The ultimate denunciation in Chinese terms was that expressed in 1537: “The *yi* and the *di*, like the birds and the beasts, are without human morality (無人倫).”¹⁰⁴ They were also seen as being deceitful and untrustworthy, with it being noted in 1430 that “the *man* and the *yi* are wily and deceitful. They cannot be easily trusted,”¹⁰⁵ and Mu Cong, the regional commander of Yun-nan, advising in 1486 that “the various *yi* of Yun-nan are barbarous, rebellious and perverse.”¹⁰⁶ Such rhetoric has a long tradition in China. Wang Gungwu has cited Tang rhetoric on the Xiong-nu (Hsiung-nu) people: “The Hsiung-nu, with their human faces and animal hearts are not of our kind....their nature is such that they have no sense of gratitude.”¹⁰⁷ However, the *man* and *yi* of areas which today are known as South China and Southeast Asia were considered to not be a danger to the Ming state, unlike the *hu* and *rong* of areas to the North and West who were considered a threat to the Chinese borders.¹⁰⁸

The depiction of outsiders as less than human validates action against them which would otherwise be considered immoral or unjust. This is a strategy which has been adopted in many ages by many societies, often in times of war and sometimes in times of peace, to allow policies of expansion, genocide or oppression. The importance of this rhetoric in the policies pursued by the Ming state should not be under-stated. A more subtle form of derision can be seen in the characters used in the official record to represent the names of some non-Chinese persons. A few examples will suffice:

1. Many “Yun-nan” persons had names containing the syllable “pa”. This was very usually represented by the character “怕”, meaning “frightened”.
2. The first two characters used to represent the name of Die-dao Mang-pa (跌倒莽怕) of Di-wu-la mean “slip or fall over”.¹⁰⁹

3. The last two characters in the name of Dao Kong-lue (刀控掠) of Yun-nan mean “controller of plunder”.¹¹⁰

4. The first character used in the name Chou-le (臭勒), a person from Champa, means “stinking”.¹¹¹

5. The name of a member of a Javanese mission to China in 1429 was rendered as “Mo-jia-shi” (墨加虱), which literally means “black with fleas”.¹¹²

These attitudes were certainly not restricted to the elite. In regulations promulgated in Bei-jing in 1500, the following provision is included: “In future, when *yi* persons coming to offer tribute arrive at the capital, if any military personnel or civilians dare to gather in the street and stare at them, make fun of them, throw potsherds or tiles at them, or strike and injure the *yi* persons, they shall be placed in a cangue on public display.”¹¹³

3.4 THE PLACE OF OTHER POLITIES AND PEOPLES

“I am the Emperor, and having received Heaven’s great mandate, I rule the Chinese and the *yi*. The one language/culture (文) provides a norm for the 10,000 places, while cultural influence educates beyond the four quarters. Of all who are contained under Heaven or supported by Earth, there is none who does not submit in heart”.¹¹⁴ So wrote the Tian-shun Emperor (r. 1457-1464) of the Ming in a letter to Li Hao (Lê Hao), the ruler of Annam in 1462, to explain the model relationship between China and its tributary states. The Emperor, by his intrinsic virtuous power, was depicted as drawing the peoples of the four sides towards the centre of culture constituted by the Chinese court, as well as spreading the influence of Chinese culture so as to change/civilize those people. As the gunboats of Zheng He brought envoys back to China in the first decades of the 15th century, the Minister of Personnel Jian Yi explained their arrival to the Yong-le emperor as follows: “The *yi* from the four directions long to emulate the virtuous power (德) of the Sage and that is why they come to Court. Their great respect for Your Majesty is limitless.”¹¹⁵

A very strict concept of order and precedence (based essentially on the degree of “Chineseness” demonstrated by outsiders) which distinguished between the various foreign polities is apparent throughout the *MSL* accounts. We see that, despite the *MSL* record detailing Champa as being the first to come to “offer tribute” to the Ming court, this was not congruent with the Chinese world view and it is thus that the Annamese ruler Chen Ri-kui (Trần Dụ-tông) and Annam are constantly lauded throughout the earlier chronicles for being the first to come to offer tribute.

Subsequently, Annam’s prominence as a cultural model was superseded by that of Korea which, even more, manifested the modes of behaviour desired by the Chinese elite. When, in 1457, the ruler of Annam requested a robe and crown like those which had been conferred upon the ruler of Korea, the request was refused, as it would have implied equal status between Annam and Korea and thus negated the importance of Chinese culture, which the Chinese elite saw as the element distinguishing Korea

from Annam. The same request was refused again in 1464.¹¹⁶ The rationale behind such distinction was more succinctly spelled out in 1495, when it was noted that, “Although Annam follows the Court’s calendar and brings tribute to the Court, its people are, in the end, still foreign *yi*.”¹¹⁷ But these “*yi*” still had characteristics which set them apart from the Japanese and the the Mongols. It was noted, towards the end of the 16th century that although Annam had been “rebellious”, its leaders could still be restrained, “unlike the Japanese and the *lu* (Mongols).”¹¹⁸

There were also distinctions made between Annam/Vietnam and the other polities of Southeast Asia. During the Jing-tai reign (1450-56), of the various Southeast Asian countries, only Annam was considered sufficiently important to be advised of the capture by the Mongols of the Zheng-tong Emperor.¹¹⁹ With the accession of the Zheng-de Emperor in 1505, Annam was the only Southeast Asian country to which a court envoy was sent to promulgate notice.¹²⁰ Other polities were sent advice through their own envoys. Again in 1521, only Annam of all Southeast Asian polities was sent an envoy to advise of the accession of the Jia-jing emperor.¹²¹ Annam also held a special position, in the Chinese ritual hierarchy in other ways. Whilst, in the early years of the Ming, Chinese officials were sent to “offer sacrifices” on the death of rulers in most of the major polities, Annam was the only Southeast Asian polity for which this remained a practice throughout the Ming dynasty.

The Japanese and the peoples to China’s north were consistently cast, throughout the *MSL*, as dangerous. As the Japanese resided in part of the maritime realm, there were thus efforts by some officials to distinguish the Japanese from other maritime peoples (the peoples of maritime Southeast Asia). In 1612, the Ministry of War noted that “the Luzon people [here referring to the Spanish and their subjects in Luzon] are not as crafty and cunning as the Japanese...Luzon and such countries are the places where San-bao [Zheng He] went when he travelled to the Western Ocean...The Japanese however, reside, in the east. There must be no confusion between them.”¹²² In the same year, however, Guang-dong officials were noting that the “*bay yi*” [the Portuguese] were “guileful, cunning and unpredictable.”¹²³

When the aims of expansion so demanded, however, not only was the relative status of polities adjustable, but the absolute status of a polity could also be swiftly re-defined. Thus, we first hear of the “country of Yun-nan” in the early part of the Ming dynasty,¹²⁴ but then, when an expedition was launched to capture it in the 1370s, it was declared that Yun-nan had long been part of China. Despite Annam (Đại Việt) being treated as a “country” (*guo*- 國) throughout the first 30 years of the dynasty, in 1406 the demands of Chinese expansion resulted in the Yong-le emperor launching an attack against the polity and declaring: “Annam is secluded in a little cranny in the ocean. Since ancient times, it has been an administrative division (郡縣) of China.”¹²⁵ The point was further stressed in 1416, when it was claimed that “Jiao-zhi (Đại Việt) has always been Chinese territory and its people are the children (赤子) of the Court.”¹²⁶ The restoration of “country” status did not occur until well after Yong-le’s death, and yet by 1481, the Cheng-hua Emperor was again stating that: “The two countries of Annam and Champa have been administrative divisions of China since the Qin and Han dynasties.”¹²⁷ Yet again in 1541, after Mo Deng-yong (Mạc Đăng-dung) submitted a memorial of surrender to the

Chinese forces, the Jia-jing emperor claimed: “Annam has since ancient times belonged to China.”¹²⁸ The claims that the Viet polity constituted an integral and historic part of the Chinese state did re-surface intermittently as and when the Chinese state required validation of an impending attack or when Vietnamese rulers or pretenders were in dire straits and requested Chinese recognition.

The existence of a large number of Chinese persons in a particular overseas polity precluded the possibility of that polity being considered a “country” (國). Thus, in the early 15th century, we see Old Port (舊港), the base of several thousand Chinese from Guang-dong and Fu-jian in Palembang, Sumatra, being referred to as a pacification superintendency (宣慰使司) and as sending “chieftains” (頭目), rather than “envoys” (使臣), to the Ming court. Despite the long sea distance separating it from China, because of the dominance of Chinese persons in that polity, the relationship between it and the Chinese court, as defined by the rhetoric of that court, duplicated the relationship between the court and entities within the more formal borders of the Chinese state.

The importance assigned to various foreign polities in the *MSL* record also differed with the various reigns. While the Yong-le emperor sought to dominate in the early part of the 15th Century through the sending of heavily-armed gun-boat missions to encourage the offering of “tribute” to the Ming by foreign polities, the situation had greatly changed by the 1440s. Even a formal request by the ruler of Hormuz that a Chinese envoy be sent there inspired no response from the Ming court. By the end of the 15th century, the importance of the relations with foreign lands had declined to the degree where provincial administrations were dealing directly with the rulers of countries abroad. In 1480, Guang-xi was sending orders to Annam,¹²⁹ while, in 1501, we observe that Guang-dong was communicating directly with Java.¹³⁰

In considering the classes into which the Chinese state and its officials divided peoples and polities, it is necessary to see such distinctions not as discrete categories, but rather as divisions which could be varied, within bounds, depending on the situations and agendas of the persons making the assessments. The obligations of polities which China considered its subjects were manifold. Symbolic or actual submission was an important aspect of this. Thus, accounts of polities which initially demurred but subsequently realized the power and superiority of the Ming court are essential to the *MSL* record. In 1411, we read of Si Xing-fa, the ruler of Lu-chuan/Ping-mian (the Tai polity of Mong Mao) who, having been castigated for having failed to accord appropriate ritual to the Ming court envoy who had been sent to his polity, “became frightened and thus sent an envoy to the Court.”¹³¹ To ensure that a ruler of an “enfeoffed state” was fully aware of his subordinate position, the court issued to him, in addition to ceremonial robes, a set of very ordinary gauze clothing, so that he would recognize that he was a minister of, and served, the Chinese court.¹³² Ava-Burma was advised in 1444 that “those who respect Heaven, serve the superior and protect all living things will certainly receive Heaven’s support.”¹³³ The requirements placed on “native offices”—those Yun-nan and Guang-xi polities which the Chinese state considered to fall under semi-formal Chinese administration—were rather less stringent, as evidenced in a reference from 1478: “The native officials are people outside culture. Since the time of the ancestors, they have only been required to offer tribute at regular intervals, as a way

of restraining them.”¹³⁴ A further requirement placed on the Southeast Asian countries was that they abide by the ritual regulations set down by the Chinese. When, in 1503, a despatch arrived from Siam signed by Pu-ba-la-zhi-cha, an official of the Palace Service Department in Ayudhya, the Ministry of Rites complained of the gross violation of ritual, noting: “The correspondence between this Ministry and the king of Siam has always been carried out directly between us through despatches. There has never been a case where an attendant minister has dared to arrogate to himself the right to send despatches to this ministry.”¹³⁵

The Imperial instructions sent to Mo-he Bi-gai (Mahavijaya?), king of Champa, in 1441 on his enfeoffment¹³⁶ and those sent in 1443¹³⁷ reflect, in a succinct manner the demands made of tributary rulers under the Chinese model. Such rulers were required to:

1. Respect Heaven and serve the superior. (敬天事大)
2. Respectfully carry out their duties as ministers. (敬效臣職)
3. Respectfully fulfil tribute obligations. (恭修朝貢)
4. Excel in soothing the people of their country. (善撫國人)
5. Maintain good relations with neighbouring states. (和睦鄰境)
6. Protect their territory. (保境)

When a subject country of the Court failed in its obligations, the model required that actions to castigate and demean the country be taken. Thus, on occasions when Annam failed to accord with the Court’s expectations, orders were sent to it through Champa, as a way of belittling Annam. At other times, the perceived recalcitrance of the Viet polity on various matters resulted in the revival in official documents of the term “Jiao-zhi”. This was the name assigned to the new “province” when Vietnam was occupied by the Chinese over the period 1407 to 1427, and its revival was a means of reflecting the subordinate status of that entity.¹³⁸ In 1487, the Vietnamese envoys were allowed to present a memorial but were not allowed music at their banquet as a way, while maintaining diplomatic interchange, of demonstrating displeasure at actions by the Vietnamese state.¹³⁹ When rulers did act in “model” ways, such as when during the mid-16th century Mạc Đăng-dung of Annam “advised his willingness to hand over the people and the land [of Annam] and to obey the Court’s arrangements for them,”¹⁴⁰ the *MSL* accounts were laudatory.

However, the exigencies of political and security demands were sometimes reflected in the *MSL* in statements or actions which seemed to violate the ideal of an all-encompassing and all-caring Emperor. In response to the proposal that the Court should mediate in the dispute between Champa and Annam, the Grand Secretary Xu Pu, quoting from the Spring and Autumn Annals, noted that “a ruler

does not [directly] govern the *yi* or the *di*” and that “the way of governing the *yi* is different from the way of governing the inner territory.”¹⁴¹ Again pragmatism to the fore!

As an example of the overall employment of much of the rhetoric detailed above, we can look at the Imperial orders of instruction sent by the Yong-le emperor to the ruler of Siam in 1419.¹⁴² The orders contained the following points:

1. The emperor has the mandate of Heaven (天命) and thus has the divine right to rule the Chinese and the *yi* (君主華夷).
2. The emperor embodies Heaven and Earth’s love for all things (體天地好生之心).
3. The emperor shows equal benevolence to all and does not differentiate between those near and those far away (一視同仁, 無間彼此).
4. It is required of enfeoffed rulers that they:
 - a. Respect Heaven (敬天).
 - b. Serve the superior (事大).
 - c. Fulfil their duties and offer tribute (修職奉貢).
5. The Emperor had heard that the king of Siam was intending to send troops against Melaka, and as the Emperor loved all things, he was thus required to castigate the king for wanting to use troops, who would hurt people with their weapons.
6. It was noted that Melaka was also a subject of the Court (朝廷之臣).
7. The king of Siam was urged to cultivate good relations with neighbours (輯睦鄰國).

Hidden behind this verbiage, much of which can be traced back to classical texts, was the fact that the Chinese state was employing Melaka as a base for its forays into the Indian Ocean and that any attempt by Siam to capture the port would have ended in hostilities between China and Siam. While the implicit threat here is masked by the rhetoric of ritual, in other instances the Ming court had no compunction about both directly threatening and launching assaults on other polities.

It should also be recognized that some officials of the Ming state were more inclined than others to seek pragmatic rather than ritually-satisfying resolutions to problems. In 1537, in a debate on the attitudes to adopt in respect of the various contenders for power in Annam, the Ming court official Yu Guang suggested that it did not matter who was in power in foreign polities or how they got there. He

proposed that as long as they admitted their subject status and promised to bring tribute, they should be recognized.¹⁴³

It must be stated in conclusion that the above model is in very many ways only a symbolic representation of the Chinese state's perception of its own place and the positions of the polities on its borders and abroad. It was, as Wang Gungwu has suggested, a necessary rhetoric which any regime aiming to bolster and/or attain its position as supreme power of China had to adopt.¹⁴⁴ The reader of the *MSL* needs to bear this in mind and must be fully aware that often the Chinese rhetoric (and thus the frame of *MSL* historiography) reflected more "that which the Ming thought it should be" rather than that which the Ming was.¹⁴⁵ It is hoped that this brief overview will assist users of the *MSL* to read beyond the rhetoric in the references translated in this database.

ENDNOTES

¹ For a wide-ranging chronological study of the Ming dynasty, see Mote and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol 7: *The Ming Dynasty 1368-1644*, Part I (Cambridge Mass., 1988).

² Wu Han, 1948.

³ W. Franke, "Der Kompilation und Überlieferung der Ming Shi-lu", *Sinologische Arbeiten* I (1943); *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, 1968.

⁴ Mano Senryu, 1979.

⁵ W. Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, pp. 8-23.

⁶ Mano Senryu, pp. 3-6, 6-69, 70-90, 90-119 (in sequence).

⁷ Xie Gui-an, 2003.

⁸ Wu Han, 1948, pp. 401-4.

⁹ Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*.

¹⁰ Huang Chang-chien, 1972.

¹¹ Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, p. 19.

¹² A system which combines two numerical systems — the ten Heavenly Stems (*tian gan* 天干) and the twelve Earthly Branches (*di zhi* 地支) — to formulate a sexagesimal cycle. These sixty permutations are applied to days, months and years.

¹³ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 23.2b-3a.

¹⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 163.3a-b.

¹⁵ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 245.4b, 246.2a.

¹⁶ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 130/31.

¹⁷ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 294.4a.

¹⁸ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 298.5a.

¹⁹ Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, pp. 18-20.

²⁰ Wu Han, 1948, pp. 385-89.

²¹ Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, p. 19.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²³ Wang Ch'ung-wu, 1948.

²⁴ Wu Han, 1934; O.W. Wolters, *The Fall of Srivijaya in Malay History* (Ithaca, 1970).

²⁵ L. Carrington Goodrich and Fang Chaoying, (ed.), *Dictionary of Ming Biography* (2 Vols.) (Columbia, 1976), pp. 64-7.

²⁶ Mote and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, p. 743.

²⁷ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 73.3a-b.

²⁸ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 229.4a.

²⁹ *Wu-zong shi-lu*, juan 2.19a.

³⁰ Quoted from *Tai-ping Xian-zhi* (1811), 39.a-b.

³¹ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 29.4a.

³² *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 69.7a-b.

³³ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 79.11a.

³⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 175.8b.

³⁵ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 179.7b-8a.

- ³⁶ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 148.6b-9a.
- ³⁷ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 136.5b-6a.
- ³⁸ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 143.6b-7a.
- ³⁹ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 145.4b-5a.
- ⁴⁰ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 195.1b.
- ⁴¹ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 190.14b.
- ⁴² *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 192.4a-b.
- ⁴³ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 41.2b.
- ⁴⁴ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 79.6b-7a.
- ⁴⁵ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 268.3a-b.
- ⁴⁶ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 44.5b-6b.
- ⁴⁷ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 34.1a-b.
- ⁴⁸ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 53.3b.
- ⁴⁹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 86.3a.
- ⁵⁰ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 43.2b.
- ⁵¹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 80.3b-4a.
- ⁵² *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 33.1a-b.
- ⁵³ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 248.1b-5a.
- ⁵⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 190.12b-13a. Such pronouncements can be observed throughout Chinese history, and it is this feigned benevolence that was the target of the pen of the 20th century Chinese writer Lu Xun when, in the year 1918, he wrote the short story, "Diary of a Madman" 《狂人日记》. In it, when the madman tried to read a Chinese history book, he found: "There were no dates in the history, but scrawled this way and that across every page were the words "benevolence", "righteousness" and "morality". Since I couldn't get to sleep anyway, I read that history very carefully for most of the night, and finally I began to make out what was written between the lines; the whole volume was filled with a single phrase: eat people!" Lu Xun was here highlighting how the rhetoric of Chinese historiography often obscures a reality far removed from the humanistic ideals it suggests.
- ⁵⁵ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 82.7b-8a.
- ⁵⁶ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 183.1a-2a.
- ⁵⁷ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 72.1a-b.
- ⁵⁸ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 22.15a.
- ⁵⁹ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 76.6b, *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 19.9a, 104.3b-4a, 142.7b-8a, 319.4b.
- ⁶⁰ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 268.3a-b.
- ⁶¹ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 219.6a-7b; 230.3b-4a.
- ⁶² *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 40.3a-4a.
- ⁶³ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 52.10b-11b.
- ⁶⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 46.6a-b.
- ⁶⁵ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 57.2b-3a.
- ⁶⁶ *Tai-zu shi-lu*, juan 244.2b-4a.
- ⁶⁷ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 149.2b.
- ⁶⁸ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 76.6b-7a.
- ⁶⁹ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 108.3b-4a.
- ⁷⁰ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 44.5b-6b.
- ⁷¹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 130.1b-2a.
- ⁷² *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 4.27b.
- ⁷³ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 220.9a-b.
- ⁷⁴ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 114.4a-b.
- ⁷⁵ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 241.4b-5a.
- ⁷⁶ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 265.2a-b.
- ⁷⁷ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 33.1a-b.
- ⁷⁸ S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror World Renouncer* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 46-7.
- ⁷⁹ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 43.8a-10b.
- ⁸⁰ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 57.7b-8a.
- ⁸¹ Charles Backus, *The Nan-chao Kingdom and T'ang China's Southwestern Frontier* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 115.
- ⁸² *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 43.14b.
- ⁸³ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 67.6a.
- ⁸⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 279.1a.
- ⁸⁵ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 217.4a.

- ⁸⁶ *Tai-zu shi-lu*, juan 244.2b-4a.
- ⁸⁷ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 164.1a-b.
- ⁸⁸ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 195.2a.
- ⁸⁹ *Xi-zong shi-lu*, juan 37.19a-20a.
- ⁹⁰ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 75.4a-5a.
- ⁹¹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 34.3a.
- ⁹² *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 3.12b-13a.
- ⁹³ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan *juan* 80.1b.
- ⁹⁴ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 4.2b.
- ⁹⁵ *Qiu-shi*, 1990, No. 23.
- ⁹⁶ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 212.6a-b.
- ⁹⁷ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 177.6b-7a.
- ⁹⁸ James L. Watson, *The Renegotiation of Chinese Cultural Identity in the Post-Mao Era*. Social Sciences Research Centre Occasional Paper 4 (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1991), pp. 12-5.
- ⁹⁹ James L. Watson, *The Renegotiation of Chinese Cultural Identity in the Post-Mao Era*. Social Sciences Research Centre Occasional Paper 4 (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, 1991), pp. 12-5.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 34.3a.
- ¹⁰¹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 35.2b.
- ¹⁰² *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 130.1b-2a.
- ¹⁰³ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 7.10a.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 199.6b-7b.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 64.4a-5b.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 273.2a.
- ¹⁰⁷ Wang Gungwu, "The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire: Early Sung Relations With its Neighbours", in *China Among Equals*, ed. Morris Rossabi (Berkeley, 1982), p. 49.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Tai-zu shi-lu*, juan 68.4a-b.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 9.12a.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 34.1b-2a.
- ¹¹¹ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 46.4b.
- ¹¹² *Xuan-zong shi-lu*, juan 59.8b.
- ¹¹³ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 159.5b-6b.
- ¹¹⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 337.4b.
- ¹¹⁵ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 117.4a-b.
- ¹¹⁶ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 3.5b-6a.
- ¹¹⁷ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 105.6b-8a.
- ¹¹⁸ *Shen-zong shi-lu*, juan 301.7b-8a.
- ¹¹⁹ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 205.12b-13a.
- ¹²⁰ *Wu-zong shi-lu*, juan 4.11a-b.
- ¹²¹ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 5.14b.
- ¹²² *Shen-zong shi-lu*, juan 498.2a-4a.
- ¹²³ *Shen-zong shi-lu*, juan 499.3b.
- ¹²⁴ *Ming Tai-zu shi-lu*, juan 39.1b. Another reference to Yun-nan as a country can be found at *Tai-zu shi-lu*, juan 53.9a-b.
- ¹²⁵ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 58.1a.
- ¹²⁶ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 185.2a-b.
- ¹²⁷ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 219.6a-7b.
- ¹²⁸ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 248.1b-5a.
- ¹²⁹ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 206.1b-2a.
- ¹³⁰ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 172.3a-b.
- ¹³¹ *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 117.3a.
- ¹³² *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 175.5b-6a.
- ¹³³ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 116.11a-b.
- ¹³⁴ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 174.8a-b.
- ¹³⁵ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 200.5b-6a.
- ¹³⁶ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 81.5b-6a.
- ¹³⁷ *Ying-zong shi-lu*, juan 104.3b.
- ¹³⁸ *Xian-zong shi-lu*, juan 284.3b.
- ¹³⁹ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 2.14a.

¹⁴⁰ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 268.3a-b.

¹⁴¹ *Xiao-zong shi-lu*, juan 105.6b-8a.

¹⁴² *Tai-zong shi-lu*, juan 217.1a-b.

¹⁴³ *Shi-zong shi-lu*, juan 205.2a-3a.

¹⁴⁴ Wang Gungwu, "The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire".

¹⁴⁵ Another overview of the *topoi* of imperial Chinese historiography is provided in Geoff Wade, "Some Topoi in Southern Border Historiography During the Ming (and Their Modern Relevance)" in Sabine Dabringhaus and Roderich Ptak (eds.), *China and Her Neighbours: Borders, Visions of the Other, Foreign Policy 10th to 19th Century*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997, pp. 135-159.