Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

Turning to Jonathan Privet-Mendoza now, who is, I think it's wonderful, a master's student from the University of York.

00:00:06 Speaker 1

So it's great that Jonathan is presenting to us.

00:00:09 Speaker 1

And I guess we're going to go a bit further back in time.

00:00:13 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:00:14 Speaker 1

So have we got Jonathan's car point up?

00:00:17 Speaker 1

Great.

00:00:18 Speaker 1

Over to you.

00:00:18 Speaker 1

Okay.

00:00:19 Speaker 2

Hello, and thank you all so much for coming and for the wonderful first day of the workshop yesterday.

00:00:24 Speaker 2

I especially want to thank Dr.

00:00:26 Speaker 2

Rowena for having me and for the host of this event.

00:00:30 Speaker 2

and this collaboration between St.

00:00:32 Speaker 2

Anthony's College and Museum Pahang.

00:00:34 Speaker 2

Today I will be presenting my research piecing together the early history of Pahang through Imperial Chinese Scripture, which in many ways harkens back to some of the presentations in yesterday's panels.

00:00:45 Speaker 2

I specifically want to acknowledge the wonderful introduction to the topic of Pahang's wealth of resources covered in Her Royal Majesty, the Queen's opening lecture yesterday.

00:00:55 Speaker 2

So, the histories of Pahang and other modern Malaysian polities have often been framed through a Eurocentric lens.

00:01:02 Speaker 2

This perspective is rooted in a European essentialist view of the planet and has contributed to a portrayal of Asia, particularly Southeast Asia, as a stagnant entity.

00:01:14 Speaker 2

The long and rich history of Pahang has traditionally been depicted using broad strokes, which has obscured the finer details that are critical to understanding the region's historical dynamics.

00:01:25 Speaker 2

Today, I seek to apply a micro-historical lens to Han's pre-modern past, focusing specifically on the availability and exploitation of resources.

00:01:35 Speaker 2

By utilizing imperial Chinese documents, this investigation seeks to not only illuminate the complexities of Han's history, but also encourage further scholarly engagement with the region.

00:01:46 Speaker 2

In doing so, I hope to contribute to a more comprehensive of

00:01:50 Speaker 2

Pahang's role within the broader historical narrative of Southeast Asia, challenging the entrenched Eurocentric perspectives and highlighting the region's rich and dynamic past.

00:02:02 Speaker 2

These are the Imperial Chinese texts I will mainly be focusing on.

00:02:06 Speaker 2

One of the earliest references to Pahang in Imperial Chinese texts is the Zhu Fan period, completed in 1226 by Zhao Rukuo during the Song Dynasty, in which Pahang is called Fenghong.

00:02:21 Speaker 2

authored by Wang Daoyuan in the 1330s during the Yuan Dynasty, documents the trade between Chinese ports in Southeast Asia along the Maritime Silk Road.

00:02:32 Speaker 2

In this document, Hang is referenced to Pang Hang.

00:02:38 Speaker 2

The Taiping Yulan is a Song Dynasty encyclopedic work compiled under Emperor Taizong between 977 and 983.

00:02:47 Speaker 2

in which Pahang is referenced in The Four Barbarians Park Eight Southern Barbarians Chapter Three as Po Huang.

00:02:54 Speaker 2

Fei Xin's Xingcha Sheng Le, published in 1436, is a sailor's account of maritime trade and exploration, detailing the travels across the seas to Southeast Asia and beyond under Admiral Zhang He.

00:03:08 Speaker 2

In this text, Pangkeng is used to refer to Pahang.

00:03:12 Speaker 2

And finally, the Mingshi

00:03:14 Speaker 2

is the final volume in the 24 Histories of Chinese Historical Text compiled during the Qing Dynasty.

00:03:21 Speaker 2

It chronicles the history of the Ming Dynasty, and Han Han is again used to refer to the Han in the Ming Shu.

00:03:28 Speaker 2

Some indirect sources that I use are the Pingzhou Ketang, which was authored in the year 1116 by Zhu Yu during the latter part of the Northern Song Dynasty, and the Bencao Gangmu, which is also known as the Compendium of Materia Medica.

00:03:42 Speaker 2

It's a comprehensive medical text written by Li Shi Zhen during the Ming Dynasty in the 16th century.

00:03:49 Speaker 2

Natural resources such as aromatic woods and incense dominate materials traded from Bahang across multiple Tang, Song, and Yuan imperial Chinese texts.

00:03:59 Speaker 2

The Zhufen Zhu contains but may be the earliest mentions of the trade of Jiang Zhen Xiang or Kayu Laka, which is Laka wood, a product exclusive to the Malay world.

00:04:09 Speaker 2

The Zhu Fanzhu directly mentions Bahang as an exporter of lacquer wood or Jianzhen Xian.

00:04:16 Speaker 2

Bahang's export of lacquer wood occurs at least by 1226 when using the dating of the Zhu Fanzhu.

00:04:23 Speaker 2

Though Zhao writes of the widespread use and comprehensive knowledge of lacquer wood as incense in the coastal Southern Song provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi.

00:04:35 Speaker 2

indicating that lockerwood has been a foreign commodity present in the region prior to the Song period.

00:04:41 Speaker 2

Zhao provides a physical description of lockerwood in his Zhufanzhi, in which the export is described as vine-like with a purple color, and he notes as another name for the products of lockerwood.

00:04:55 Speaker 2

The term jiangzhen is later used to describe a stink product from jiangzhen xiang in the Daoyi Jilue, a century after the Zhufanzhi.

00:05:05 Speaker 2

In this text, Wang Gayuan denotes that Pahang now exported Jiangzhen instead of Jiangzhen Xiang.

00:05:12 Speaker 2

Jiangzhen drops the Xiang suffix and is classified as a separate product.

00:05:17 Speaker 2

And there are several possibilities as to the use of this product.

00:05:21 Speaker 2

Xiang as a suffix indicates aromatic products such as incense.

00:05:25 Speaker 2

And as the Yang Dynasty source omits the character,

00:05:29 Speaker 2

It was likely an unprocessed locker wood exporter or locker wood used for dye, carving, or carpentry.

00:05:36 Speaker 2

The Xing Cha Shenglan and the Ming Shi in their entries on Han, translated by Grunveld, state the use of fragrant wood to carve images of spirits, demons, and man.

00:05:48 Speaker 2

In the Xing Cha Shenglan, he writes, he translates, they are very superstitious regarding demons and spirits, making their images of fragrant wood.

00:05:57 Speaker 2

And in the meaning xi, he translates, They make human images of fragrant wood.

00:06:02 Speaker 2

Historian Dara Kang suggests that jiangzhen may have been used to refer to a black hardwood, citing the 16th century Portuguese chronicle Summa Orienta by Tone Perez, references to the export of black woods from the Malay peninsula to Chinese ports.

00:06:21 Speaker 2

He states that black wood by European writers was used as a blanket term for tropical hardwoods that ranged from dark red and purple dark hues in color.

00:06:29 Speaker 2

Another product that may have been exported under the name Jian Jin could have been wood used for dye textile creation.

00:06:36 Speaker 2

Work undertaken by historian Yam Vissiman Christie on textiles found the term laka being repeatedly used in medieval Javanese literature to describe certain hues of red dyes on cloth.

00:06:49 Speaker 2

And Fei Xin writes in the Xing Cha Shang Lan that Pahang produces a type of wood used for dyeing.

00:06:56 Speaker 2

Here you can see a species sample of Dalbergia parviflora, which is what I am choosing as the best candidate for Laka wood in historical sources.

00:07:11 Speaker 2

The many uses of the products exported from Pahang, known as Laka wood, give rise to the issue of determining

00:07:17 Speaker 2

what material lock of wood was.

00:07:19 Speaker 2

The Chinese naming convention of products largely depends on the physical characteristics.

00:07:24 Speaker 2

Thus, Jiang Zhen and Jiang Shen Xiang, used as terms, may have been used to refer to not just a species of wood, but a category.

00:07:34 Speaker 2

Zhao's description of the physical appearance of Jiang Zhen Xiang, when combined with the product's prominence in Pahang, as well as Zhao's use of Xiang,

00:07:43 Speaker 2

In the material described would be the Leona species of Dumpergia parviflora.

00:07:48 Speaker 2

The appearance of parviflora matches the description of slender vine-like branches and red-purple wood, along with Zitang Xiang.

00:07:57 Speaker 2

which is purple wood fragrance, and the character tang means vine, matching Zhao's description that Belvergian Parvi Flora would be the most likely species.

00:08:10 Speaker 2

Further, strips of rough-cut lengths of lockerwood were found in a strip wreck alongside other fragrant woods used for incense, such as sandalwood and garwood, indicating that this was the Jiang Zhenxiang product.

00:08:26 Speaker 2

The use of jiangzhen as hardwood would, though would disqualify Delbergio harviflora as a species vine-like and would be unsuitable for carpentry.

00:08:36 Speaker 2

Though, due to the naming convention used by the Chinese traders, jiangzhen would be able to be identified as a different species.

00:08:44 Speaker 2

For this, I suggest Indentera pavomina, or false red sandalwood, which would be a very likely candidate for jiangzhen.

00:08:54 Speaker 2

as tropical hardwoods such as sandalwoods and rosewoods were in high demand by Chinese traders between the late Song and Yuan dynasties.

00:09:01 Speaker 2

The timber of Adentera Pavonina has a comparable dark red hue to that of Delbergia parviflora and shares a similar scent of fresh wood.

00:09:11 Speaker 2

This wood is also utilized for making red dyes, which may have caused Song and Yuan merchants to assume that these

00:09:17 Speaker 2

Looking that these look-alike goods originated from the same tree, particularly with the hardwood being crafted into and the remaining wood being .

00:09:29 Speaker 2

Pahang is posited by previous historians such as William Linan to have been or a vassal or tributary state to Langkasuka and later Shibujaya.

00:09:40 Speaker 2

allowing for the possibility of the Pahang exports to be classified as Srivijayan exports in the early and late Northern Song texts due to vassal status or due to Pahang's goods passing through Srivijaya.

00:09:54 Speaker 2

Though Srivijaya is noted to be a particularly desolate country in terms of their own exports, so the sandalwood and frankincense, which are not endemic species, do Pahang.

00:10:09 Speaker 2

they would instead be imported into Pahang and later exported out to China again.

00:10:16 Speaker 2

Here I have a map that I created of mineral resources in Pahang, collated through mineral surveys in the region.

00:10:23 Speaker 2

The yellow dots represent significant gold deposits with gray representing tin and blue representing iron.

00:10:32 Speaker 2

The singular dark gray is cassiterite or tin oxide, which is used

00:10:38 Speaker 2

in the production of tin.

00:10:42 Speaker 2

In 1936, William Linan claimed that the region's name, Pahang, was derived from a Khmer word for tin.

00:10:49 Speaker 2

Though he posits this due to tin mining in the region dating to prehistoric times at the Sungai Lembing mines, though sociologist Geoffrey Benjamin offers what may be more plausible to the region's name being that

00:11:02 Speaker 2

Majapahit and other Pimalakan sources apply the name Pahang to the whole of the southern part of the peninsula.

00:11:09 Speaker 2

While the origins of the namesake remain controversial, the region's association with tin cannot be denied and can be further explored through Imperial Chinese text.

00:11:18 Speaker 2

Fei Xin writes of tin being one of Pahang's major exports in the Xing Cha Sheng land, mentioning tin as a product of the region consistent with the resource distribution of known tin deposits in Pahang.

00:11:30 Speaker 2

Major deposits are concentrated in Huantuan and Bichang, with outliers being a major tin deposit in Lipis and Kasidere in Bantong.

00:11:42 Speaker 2

The historical writing regarding the peninsula often highlights the significance of tin from the west coast, rarely acknowledging the reserves found in Baham and the peninsula's east coast, with only a handful of scholars like Jacques

00:11:55 Speaker 2

Pergalak, addressing the tin deposits located in the east and west regions of the peninsula.

00:12:02 Speaker 2

This is despite Sundan Lambing once being the largest mine in Malaysia, with over 50 veins of ore.

00:12:09 Speaker 2

The Malay Peninsula has also been associated with a wealth of gold since the 2nd century CE, in which it was dubbed the Golden Khersonese in Ptolemy's Geographia.

00:12:20 Speaker 2

The prominence of gold resources in the peninsula continuously expanded upon through numerous explorers, writers, and nations taking note of Malay gold production.

00:12:29 Speaker 2

Pahang possesses a majority of the identified gold deposits in Malaysia.

00:12:33 Speaker 2

The state has six out of the nine significant gold deposits in peninsular Malaysia.

00:12:38 Speaker 2

The survey is showing that principal gold deposits run sideways in a strip that runs along the southern part of the peninsula from the region of Patani to Malacca.

00:12:46 Speaker 2

Many of these deposits reside inland through

00:12:49 Speaker 2

though these gold fields would be accessible by medium-sized vessels through the rivers in Pahan.

00:12:56 Speaker 2

Though some historians, such as Bennett Bronson, have discounted this possibility due to technological and economic development away from the coast being unlikely, though these claims are unconvincing due to textual evidence originated from Chinese sources, which are able to paint a picture of gold availability and use in Pahan.

00:13:15 Speaker 2

Specifically in the Ming Shi,

00:13:18 Speaker 2

It's translated that in the year 1378, the King Maharaja Tajau sent Banhois with a letter written on a gold leaf, and bringing as tribute 6 foreign slaves and products of the country, they were received according to the established rules.

00:13:34 Speaker 2

Later in the Mingshi, it's also written that the people of Pahang have gold mountains, and these mountains coincide geographically with the interior of Pahang.

00:13:45 Speaker 2

in the valleys and the eastern foothills of the mountain range in the Rau district, which was known as the gold capital of Malaysia.

00:13:53 Speaker 2

Though Rau was not completely exploited until the modern period, it was likely very much used for gold harvesting in pre-modern times.

00:14:06 Speaker 2

The examination and analysis of

00:14:08 Speaker 2

Chinese imperial sources, and reveal a wealth of significant insights that contribute greatly to our understanding of the complex history surrounding the abundant sources and foreign trade of Pahang.

00:14:18 Speaker 2

Pahang's pre-modern productivity is highlighted through these accounts, elucidating the state's historical relevance in the wider economic context.

00:14:26 Speaker 2

While these texts provide a foundational framework for comprehending the historical development of Pahang as a significant trading hub,

00:14:33 Speaker 2

It is important to recognize that there exists nuances in the accuracy and reliability of the authors during this period due to many of them referencing each other.

00:14:42 Speaker 2

Though certain aspects of these complex relationships of these narratives still ultimately show the rich and varied resources of Baha'i and empower us to construct the details and nuanced trade and economic micro-history illustrating the intricate interplay between local production practices and the broader regional trade networks.

00:15:03 Speaker 2

underscoring the notable significance of Baha in the context of regional commerce during the pre-modern era and highlighting its pivotal role in facilitating trade across the region.

00:15:13 Speaker 3

Thank you.

00:15:19 Speaker 1

Thank you very much, Jonathan.

00:15:21 Speaker 1

Really excellent presentation and kept time as well.

00:15:25 Speaker 1

I find that absolutely fascinating.

00:15:27 Speaker 1

Brilliant use of text, if I may say, and

00:15:31 Speaker 1

What a remarkable story, the long-term resource exploitation of Pahang and actually fitting in with Rudolph's paper as well, the non-marginality, if you like, the importance of Pahang in that wider intra-Asian trading realm.