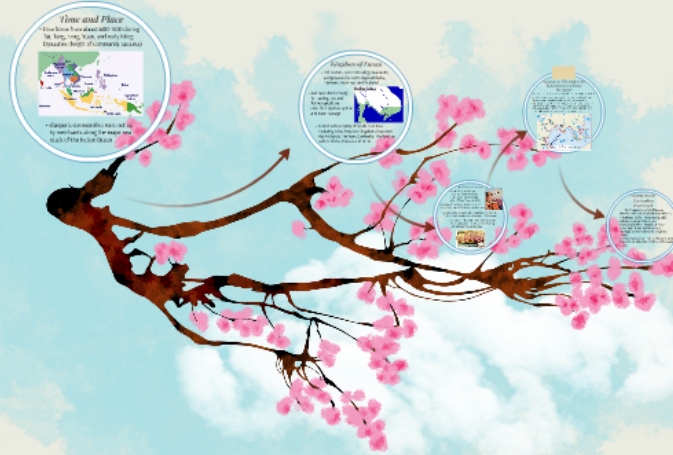


## Chinese Merchant Bank Harvard Case Solution & Analysis



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## *Time and Place*

- time frame from about 600-1450 during Tui, Tang, Song, Yuan, and early Ming Dynasties (height of community success)



- diasporic communities were set up by merchants along the major sea roads of the Indian Ocean



## *Kingdom of Funan*

- 3rd century, earliest trading community along coast of present-day Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand
- had own silver coinage for trading, rice and fishing agriculture; elaborate irrigation system and water storage
- traded with majority of South East Asia including tribes/empires/kingdoms in present day Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, as well as China, Taiwan, and India



## *Settlements and International Trade*

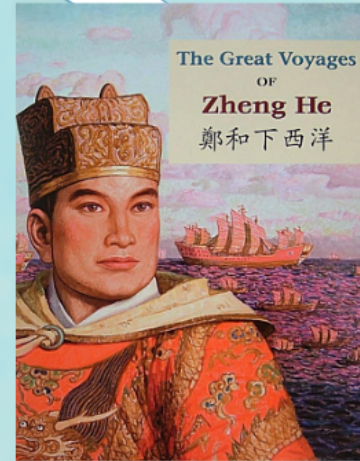
- settled port of Óc Eo (Kattigara), which allowed for connection to Indian Ocean



- German scholar Albrecht Dihle claimed that this port was a main location where Romans and Chinese met to trade
- while this may be his theory, there is evidence at hand as artifacts from ancient Rome, Persia, India, and Greece have been discovered

## *Ming Dynasty Voyages*

- in 1405, Emperor Yongle launched a fleet of over 300 ships and a crew of 27,000 of all different fields of study
- visited ports in Arabia, India, Southeast Asia, Eastern coast of Africa, and Indonesia
- captained by Zheng He, who sought to introduce the Tribute System across the Indian Ocean Trade Routes
- stopped this fleet after 1433, partially due to death of emperor and China's idea of being self-sufficient, Middle Kingdom





## *More diasporic communities during Ming*

- merchants continued to settle in Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Japan, and the Philippines
- men sometimes married local women and raised their own families within diasporic community
  - Buddhist ideas spread, communities would build temples and shrines as they knew them back at home in China



Figure 3.13  
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## *Significance: Why trade in the Indian Ocean as Chinese Merchants?*

- more respectable career outside of homeland and in diasporic communities
- was often profitable since ports could charge tax/fees, less risky since monsoons were predicatable, mostly peaceful trade, few pirates
- huge selection of goods from East Africa, India, China, Arabia, Southeast Asia; were not luxury goods, ships carried goods such as cotton, food stuffs, timber in bulks (was easier, more efficient, safer than traveling across Silk Road with a caravan, animals and fewer goods)

