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TANG KAIJIAN – *Aomen kaibu chuqi shi yanjiu*. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999.
ISBN 7-101-02275-8. 2 + 8 + 319 pages

This book by Tang Kaijian, one of China's leading specialists on Sino-Portuguese relations, contains eleven scholarly studies on the pre-Macau period and the early years of that city. Some of these essays have appeared elsewhere, in journals and books, but they are all very fine pieces, therefore bringing them out in a Zhonghua shuju volume, was an excellent idea because in this way they will become better known to the public.

The book opens with an introductory chapter on the issue of «Macau Studies» (*Aomen xue*), which tries to define this area of research by identifying its «coordinates» and linking them to other fields of investigation. Although the exercise Tang goes through may not be the last word, neither in China nor in any other country where historians work on Macau, it could be the beginning of a fresh discussion, perhaps somewhat similar to other debates which have contributed to the gradual emergence of new scholarly «identities» – and eventually, the recognition of new «disciplines» by both the scholarly world and the «general» readership.

The first two articles deal with very «familiar» themes: the geographical position of Tamão and Fernão Mendes Pinto's description of Liampo. Regarding the first question, Tang lists various references in early Western and Chinese sources, examining, among other things, recent research on these materials (presented, for example, by Stephen Zhang). His own conclusion is that the toponym Tamão stood for two different places: in the context of the voyages made by Jorge Alvares, Fernão Peres de Andrade and Simão de Andrade it should be identified with Da'ao, a location in the northwestern section of Shangchuan Island (São João); later, in 1520/21, it was used for Tunmen in the Pearl River estuary. The article also comments on the famous Xicaowan incidence and the role of Dianbai (a small town or anchorage). Tang thinks it very possible that the *Ming shilu* and *Ming shi* references to early Portuguese activities in that region are not necessarily wrong (as was usually assumed by earlier writers). Furthermore, he shows that later texts, for example Huang Zuo's *Guangdong tongzhi* (1561) and Zhang Xie's *Dongxiyang kao* (1617/18), have confused various details in their respective sections on the Portuguese; therefore these works should be read with caution.

The article on Liampo is less exciting. Basically, it compares Pinto's inflated account with the data contained in Zhu Wan's *Piyu zaji* (known to the Western reader through the studies by Wiethoff, So Kwan-Wai, Jin Guoping/Zhang Zhengchun, and others). Suffice it to say here that only some Western works on the *Peregrinação* were cited. A few more Chinese publications could also be added to the notes; in n. 72, for example, a reference to Nie Dening's «Mingdai Jiajing shiqi de nada», which came out in *Nanyang yanjiu lunwenji* (Xiamen 1992), would have been appropriate. Finally (and most unfortunately), Jin Guoping's Chinese translation of the *Peregrinação* was only printed in 1999, otherwise Tang might have used it with great profit.

The third article deals with a number of old Chinese names related to Macau and is arranged in a very skillful manner. We learn, for example, that the well-known term *haojing* can already be found in the *Yongle dadian* of the Yuan period. The earliest Chinese text using it as a name is Huang Zuo's *Guangdong tongzhi*. Interestingly, *Haojing* (Tomé Pires' Oquem) can also be linked to the Ryūkyū trading network (here a discussion on the collaboration between Fujianese and Ryūkyūan merchants plus their competition against or cooperation with the early Portuguese might have been tied in). However, a careful distinction has to be made between that name, its application to the Macau peninsula, the «greater» Macau area, and other toponyms such as Jiu'aoshan (Coloane). Prior to the foundation of Macau in the 1550s, says Tang, *Haojing* probably only designated the islands of Coloane (and Taipa). If so, then the *Ming shilu* and *Ming shi* may not be entirely wrong in stating that some Portuguese had already entered *Haojing* (i.e., Coloane/Taipa and *not*

the Macau peninsula) in 1535. Another important name, Xiangshan'ao, went through a similar metamorphosis. Initially it was a general name for the various anchorages in the Xiangshan region, later it came to be used for the Macau peninsula. Other names related to Macau were Longyamen and Longjiaoshan.

The fourth article discusses the date of Macau's foundation. Tang thinks the Portuguese first moved to the Macau peninsula in 1554. The year 1553 (given in Guo Fei's edition of the *Guangdong tongzhi* [1602] and some later works) would be wrong. In 1557, he adds, moving to Macau became more «official». Moreover, the first migrants to that place included merchants from Southeast Asia, Japan and the overseas Chinese communities. The fifth essay is a very important one. It discusses the question of possible Portuguese assistance in combat against pirates just prior to the foundation of Macau. Many Chinese historians rejected this possibility, simply stating the Portuguese had bribed their way in. Dai Yixuan, an ultra-leftist writer, was particularly critical, heavily attacking many Western authorities in very impolite ways. Tang tries to give a more balanced picture. Quoting Huang Zuo's *Guangdong tongzhi* and other materials, he argues the Portuguese had indeed fought against a Wokou group under the general command of He Yaba. This gang, it appears, was in frequent touch with the port of Patani. One of its subordinate leaders may have been the legendary Zhang Xilao (often called Chang Si-lao). Most likely, then, says Tang, there was a joint Luso-Chinese action, with the Cantonese moving against He Yaba and others, while the Portuguese subdued Zhang Xilao. Once again, this raises the question of Sino-Fujianese competition and possible rivalries within China – a point which would urgently need to be treated in a more thorough manner. Other observations in this excellent article concern the Ming court's efforts to obtain ambergris from Xiangshan'ao in 1555 (reported, for example, in *Dongxiyang kao*). According to Tang, the central authorities certainly knew about the presence of foreigners in Macau/Xiangshan; therefore it would be inappropriate to say that local officials in Guangdong had admitted the Portuguese without imperial consent. China, he concludes, had allowed the Portuguese to stay in Macau – after the joint anti-pirate campaign – without, however, giving up sovereignty rights. These views put Tang at some distance from many of his mainland colleagues, who have not yet escaped the labyrinth of nationalistic sentiments and Marxist thought.

The sixth article – on Pang Shangpeng and his memorial of 1564 – also appeared in Tang Kaijian's *Ming Qing shidafu yu Aomen* (Macau 1998); only some details were modified. This piece contains several arguments in support of the ideas presented above. A brief discussion may be found in *Mare Liberum* 15 (1998), p. 249. The seventh study highlights the role of Li Xian. Tang shows how Li cooperated with the Dutch and other pirates against the Portuguese. His undue behaviour vis-à-vis Macau was probably motivated by financial pressures. In all likelihood, he also stirred the troubles in which the city was caught in 1608. Generally, this is a very informative essay because it throws fresh light on many points overlooked by previous writers. A further study one might wish to consult in this context (not cited in Tang's notes), is Leonard Blussé's article in *Modern Asian Studies* 22.3 (1988), which does of course follow a Dutch perspective, but – nonetheless – will be of some value to those working on early Luso-Dutch relations in the Far East.

The eighth paper investigates various Ming government posts associated with the Macau peninsula. This concerns both the military and the civil administration. So far, readers had to rely on the work by Huang Qichen and others for these issues. Tang furnishes additional data, thereby also correcting several mistakes found in earlier writing. In sum, he deals with the following posts and titles: *shou'aoguan*, *tidiaosi*, *xunji*, *beiwo*, *haidao fushi* and *shibo tijusi* (in Xiangshan), *haifang tongzhi* (in Yongmo), *bazong* (at the border gate), and *canjiang* (in Qianshan). We are told what functions these officials fulfilled in the context of Macau and Xiangshan and how their posts had evolved in the course of time. The ninth essay presents a problem which has mostly come up in recent research – namely, whether Macau can be seen as yet another version of the so-called *fan fang*, or «foreign quarters», already existing under the Tang and Song. Tang deviates from some of

the «standard» views normally associated with these ideas. One important point in the debate concerns the jurisdiction under which foreigners had to live in China. Consideration is also given to the role of political intentions. Different ruling houses followed different concepts when trying to accommodate foreign communities, but the results were often similar from one period to the next. Historians interested in theories may find the *fan fang* approach suitable to explain Macau's past; to me these ideas are questionable because they oversimplify many issues and can easily be abused to downgrade the historical importance of Macau. Therefore, I would agree with several of Tang's critical explanations, but certainly not with all.

The tenth article looks at the early stages of Macau's urban development. Demographic issues, streets, the city wall, some public buildings, churches and temples (including the famous Barra shrine dedicated to Mazu and the less well-known Yongfu gushe) are briefly described. Many more Western publications could have been quoted in the text and notes, but perhaps one ought not to be too critical in this case because Chinese scholarly works on purely local aspects of Macau's past do not abound (some exceptions are the recent studies by Guo Yongliang, Li Dechao, Zheng Weiming, etc.). The last paper is again a very useful piece. It examines the Mazu shrine in Wangxia village (Mongha) and, once again, the Yongfu gushe. The origins of Wangxia are also dealt with at some length. Ana Maria Amaro's «Os primeiros contactos dos Portugueses com Macau segundo o Chôk Pou da família Sam», in *Estudos Orientais* 3 (1992), can be profitably read together with the relevant paragraphs in Tang's article. Further comments relate to the villages of Longtian, Longhuan and Shalitou. Some scholars believe they emerged under the Song, but Tang dismisses these claims as being wrong. Chinese sources, he adds, do not refer to any local Chinese administrative structures on the Macau peninsula in pre-Ming times. On the contrary, these places only began to emerge after the arrival of the Portuguese. As to the Wangxia and Barra areas, they were almost certainly settled by small groups of Fujianese (and others?) under the early Ming, but no details are known.

The book ends with a bibliographical note. There is no summary or general conclusion. What then do we learn from Tang's articles? They show, first of all, that Chinese primary materials have to be used with care. In many cases, the editorial history of a particular source must be considered. Furthermore, reading «between the lines» is essential to understand why a certain chain of events was presented in full, distorted, shortened, or omitted altogether. In other words, philological expertise (and not a model or some theory) will be required to throw light on the distant past. Tang has already demonstrated in his earlier collection *Ming Qing shidafu...* (cited above) how this can be achieved. Recently, analogous approaches were undertaken by Portuguese scholars and mainly with respect to Portuguese materials, the most outstanding example being Rui Manuel Loureiro's *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins. Portugal na China no século XVI* (Lisbon 2000). Like Tang, Loureiro has penetrated the available documentation at great depth and in unprecedented ways, more than anyone else. Since Tang is mainly occupied with Chinese texts and Loureiro with Portuguese sources, the next step should be the one of bringing together both sides. This is easily said, but difficult to accomplish – especially in view of the many philological and linguistic obstacles normally associated with such endeavours.

My overall impression of Tang's work is positive. It makes good reading, all articles are well-structured, and one ought to be pleased with the many interesting facets of Macau's past Tang was able to verify, correct, or present in a new gown. More important still, it seems to me that Chinese historians may now be prepared to leave behind the old dust. Clearly, Tang Kaijian looks at Macau from a Chinese view, and he will continue to do so, but he is fair, critical, and innovative in many ways. Several Zhonghua shuju publications can be credited for their authoritative character; this one, I am inclined to think, will be another candidate.

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