

Source: [\[KBhHIST201KennedyCh1\]](#)

## 1 | Ming China in the 1500s

### China has a lot going for it

- Population 100-130 Mil (Europe has 50-55)
- Complicated and remarkable culture
- Large irrigated and fertile land

### Riches in technology

- Huge, state organized libraries
- Movable type printing
- Compass
- Large ships

### Advanced trade

- Stimulated by canal-building and pop. pressures
- Large iron industry for army and government
- Gunpowder
- Larger cities than medieval Europe

### Zheng He + Seafaring

Famous official overseas official expedition

- Sought tribute and coordination from other nations
- Forced others to acknowledge Beijing
- Ships returned with great gifts/weird things
  - Giraffs — as... entertainment
  - A chief — for he did not acknowledge the emperor
- Apparently never plundered/murdered + killed only on Emperor's orders

### Decline in Seafaring

- China never had a free market?? #why
  - Banned overseas trade
- Order in 1433 from new emperor apparently banned these missions

### Why China stopped seafaring

- Seafaring was costly, and did not help the Northern Mongol invasions (duh)
- Japanese pirates did show up, but so did the Portuguese, but apparently they didn't care, so why?
- The answer... CONFUCIANISM!
  - China is a conservative, Confucian country

- Merchants are disliked
- So are private capital
- Armies are too!
- A side note about tech
  - Confucianism actually does encourage tech
  - Simply requires building for knowledge or state purposes, and not for armies/private property
- China attempted to emulate their “old ways”, especially after the mongol clearing

## **Germs + Steel**

- Intensive farming caused depletion of land => but pop. is growing
- Per Malthus, this results in **Plague! Floods! War!**