

Structure and Transformation of Local Market in Lower Yangtze River Delta: The Case of Zhenjiang 1868-1881

Takeshi Hamashita¹

Abstract

There are several important issues left for further investigation and discussion in modern Chinese economic history studies. Main points for discussion are as follows:

1. Relationship between Open port and inland market
2. Statistical analysis of the record in the Chinese Maritime Custom Report on inland market such as Zhenjiang and Jiujiang as crossroad ports between foreign trade and domestic trade
3. Model of Open port market zone and its relationship with hinterland
4. Comparison of open port market zone model with domestic market structure model raised by William G. Skinner

In order to understand the relationship between foreign trade and domestic trade, we need further focus on issue of Transit Pass. Transit Pass was originally planned to benefit for foreign merchants to avoid paying many different local taxes in the domestic market of China. However, issues of transit pass had many problems. In the Trade Report of Maritime Custom, Chingkiang(Zhenjiang) wrote in 1871 as follows:

“The Transit Trade as carried on at this port had degenerated into a mere traffic in Passes, the result of which was that several merchants established themselves whose only business was to apply for Passes and sell them to any native that could pay for them to the prejudice of those firms doing a reputable business in the port such traffic of course could not be of long duration and would not be tolerated again. Still it is desirable in the interests of foreigners and natives, that a regular system for Transit Passes Outwards be organized, affording the petty merchants of the interior a better market for their goods, and such no doubt would increase the general trade of the country.”

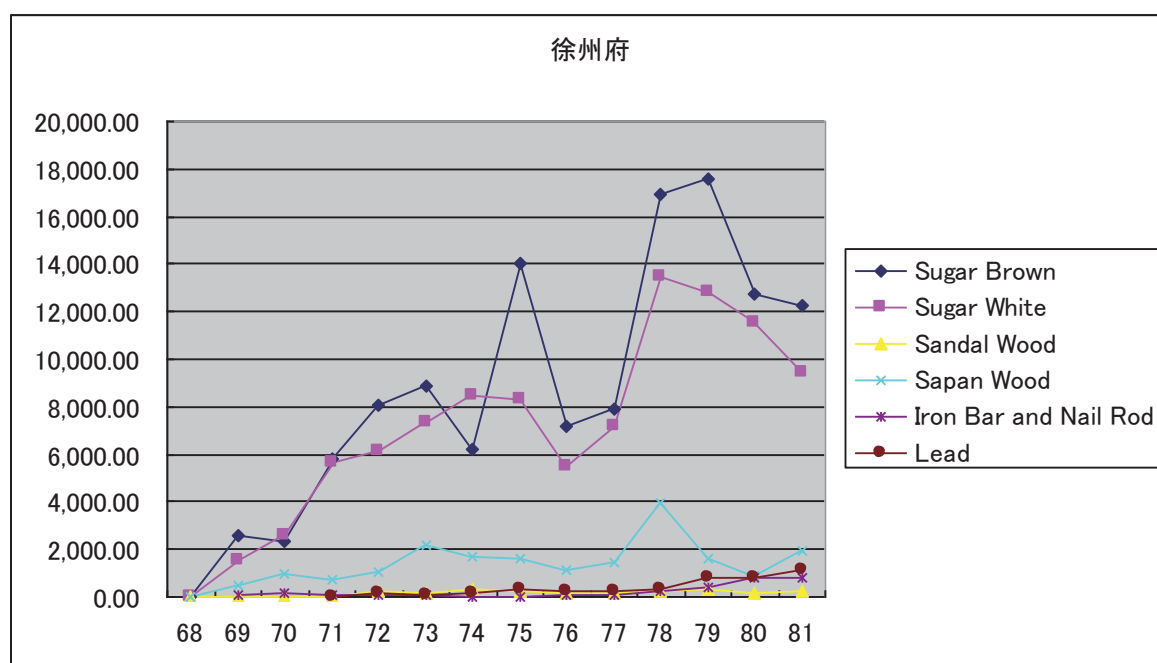
¹ Profesor and Dean, School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, China

Keynote Speech-1

By using detailed record of issuance of transit passes from 1868 to 1881, we can find the relationship among Chinese local customs, foreign commodity and local consumption. Statistically speaking, 237 inland market towns in 1871 had widely prevailed over Anhui, Shandong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Hunan provinces

As for foreign commodities for inland market, we can find 13 foreign commodities to inland market. They are 1) Textile: Shirting, Grey, T-Cloths, Drills, English, Dutch and American Lustres and Orleans, Spanish Stripes, Woolens, other sorts, 2) Others: Sugar Brown, Sugar White, Sandal-wood, Sapan-wood, Iron Bar and Nail Rod, Lead, Window Glass.

By statistical data, fluctuation of import at inland market of Xuzhou will be presented as follows:



1. frequency and continuation of names of market from Zhenjiang a. 1-3 times
(years): 171 as local level A

Assessing fluctuation of import in each local market, we will conclude the dynamic relations among different layers of regional markets. They are:

1. Three layers market structure: open port, mid-level and local-level
2. Changing local market in the relationship with mid-level market town
3. Interaction between open port market and mid-level local market

By using GIS we will discuss clearly the importance of mid-level of local market in the transformation of local market structure.