

SOSC 1190 China and the World: China's Development in Historical and Comparative Perspectives, 1550-1911

Fall Semester 2017

Classroom: LTF

Time: Wednesday and Friday, 16:30 - 17:50

Instructor:

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Course Description and Objectives:

The rapid economic development in China after 1978 and particularly the high-speed growth after the mid-1990s have attracted increasing attention to the historical background of this great economic transformation. Scholarship in recent decades has demonstrated the emergence of a vibrant market economy in China between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries, many key characteristics of which were similar to those of the market economy in pre-Industrial Revolution Western Europe. Why, then, didn't an industrial breakthrough occur in late imperial China?

This course focuses on the interactions between the state and economy in late imperial China from comparative and social science perspectives. In the first two weeks of the course, we will introduce some basic historical background and critically examine the causal structure of "growth without development". Upon this basis, we will explore specific topics in agrarian economy, city and market, merchant ethics, state-market interactions in famine relief, industrial development and capital formation, and monetary system and public finance. Beyond observing parallels between pre-Industrial Revolution Western Europe and late imperial China, we will also examine some of the institutional defects of the Chinese economy (state?) and how they affected the transformation of China into a modern economy in the late nineteenth century.

Methodologically, this course will expose students to the basic concepts and analytic tools in political economy such as market economy, the state, conflict of interests, correlation and causality, and selection bias. The aim is to illustrate the importance of

causal explanations in social scientific inquiry and encourage students to make comparisons with similar causal reasoning in science and engineering.

Requirements:

Read the assigned readings before the class and participate in class discussion.

Grading:

Three response papers; each counts for 15% of the total grade. Each response paper should be about 3 pages (double-spaced), and involves reading primary documents that have been translated into English.

One in-class exam (3 November), which will up 25% of the final grade. The exam consists mainly of factual questions and a few essay questions.

Final essay: 30%. The final essay should be 8 pages (double-spaced) and written on topic that will be provided at the end of the semester. Students will have one week to work on it.

Readings:

Week 1: Introduction: The connection of late imperial China to the world

Gang Zhao, *The Qing Opening to the Ocean: Chinese Maritime Policies, 1684-1757* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2013), pp. 116-36.

Week 2: Commercial development in China: 1684-1820

Susan Naquin and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 138-216.

Week 3: Growth without Development?

John K. Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History*, enlarged edition (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 167-86.

Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), pp. 298-315.

Week 4: The land issue: Cause or effect?

Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Chapter 3, "The Agricultural Revolution"

Philip C.C. Huang, *The Peasant Family and Rural Development in the Yangzi Delta, 1350-1988* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 44-92.

Week 5: Business ethics and development

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), "Author's Introduction", pp. 13-27 and Chapter 2 "The Spirit of Capitalism," pp. 47-78.

Richard J. Lufrano, *Honorable Merchants: Commerce and Self-Cultivation in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 1-98.

Week 6: Famine relief in late imperial China: State and Economy

Lillian M. Li, *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market, and Environmental Decline, 1690s-1990s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), Chapter 8, "Famine Relief: The High Qing Model," pp. 221-49.

Pierre-Etienne Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine in Eighteen-Century China*, translated by Elborg Forster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), Chapter 12, "The Evolution of the State's Economic Means," pp. 289-301.

Response Paper 1: "A memorial on grain prices, the grain trade, and government-controlled brokerages," by Yang Yingju, the governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu in 1763, in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, second edition, volume II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 168-172.

Week 7: A revisionist view of the pre-20th century Chinese economy

Madeleine Zelin, *The Merchants of Zigong: Industrial Entrepreneurship in Early Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), Chapters 1 and 2.

Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), "Technology?" pp. 43-68.

Week 8: The deadly good: The opium trade and the Opium War

Chen Li, *Chinese Law in Imperial Eyes: Sovereignty, Justice, and Transcultural Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), Chapter 5.

Response Paper 2: Lin Zexu's letter to Queen Victoria in 1839, in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, second edition, volume II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 198-205.

Week 9: The state and industrial transformation: 1860-1895

Ting-ye Kuo and Kwang-Ching Liu, "Self-strengthening" the pursuit of Western technology," in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, eds., *The Cambridge History of China, Late Ch'ing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 491-542.

Week 10: The public finance and the state capacity

Wenkai He, *Paths toward the Modern Fiscal State, England, Japan, and China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), Chapter 6.

Week 11: The public-ness in Chinese society, 1870-1894

William T. Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community in a Chinese City, 1796-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 283-316.

Response Paper 3: Browse through some major newspapers such as *Shenbao* (published in Chinese) or *North China Herald* (published in English) from 1870 and 1894. Please select two examples: one that suggests Chinese society at the time was very similar to contemporary society and one that suggests it was very different and which is difficult for you to understand. Please discuss the reasons for your selection and what each tells you about late imperial China.

Week 12: The tributary system or international law: China's relations with Korea and Japan, 1860-1895

Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present*, second edition (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), pp. 241-65.

Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 423-41.

Peter H. Lee, ed., *Sources of Korean Civilization*, volume II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), Chapter 28, "Development of Enlightenment Thought," pp. 347-54.

Week 13: Reform or Revolution: 1895-1911

Xiaowei Zheng, *The Politics of Rights in the Republican Revolution of 1911* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017), chapters to be assigned.