EH207: China Since 1800: Culture, Institutions and Economic Growth

Instructor: Dr. Melanie Meng Xue

Readings for 2024–2025

Autumn Term

Week 1: Introduction

- Class Readings:
  - Kent G Deng. 2016. *Mapping China's Growth and Development in the Long Run, 221 BC to 2020.* Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, Chapter 6.
  - Loren Brandt, Debin Ma, and Thomas G Rawski. 2014. "From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China's Economic Boom." *Journal of Economic Literature* 52 (1), pp. 45–61.
  - Loren Bandt and Thomas G. Rawski. 2022. "China's Great Boom as a Historical Process." In *The Cambridge Economic History of China: Volume II, 1800 to the Present.* Cambridge Economic History of China
- Additional Readings:
  - Roy Bin Wong. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience.* Cornell University Press, Chapter 1.
  - Dwight Perkins et al. 1975. *China's Modern Economy in Historical Perspective.* Stanford University Press, Introduction: The Persistence of the Past.
  - Philip Richardson. 1999. *Economic Change in China, c. 1800-1950.* Cambridge University Press, Conclusion: The Legacy of the Past.
  - Nathan Nunn. 2009. "The Importance of History for Economic Development." *Annual Review of Economics* 1 (1): 65–92

Week 2: A Brief Overview of Pre-1800 China

- Class Readings:
  - Kent G Deng. 2016. *Mapping China's Growth and Development in the Long Run, 221 BC to 2020.* Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, Chapter 2.
  - Roy Bin Wong. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience.* Cornell University Press, Chapter 5.

- Additional Readings:
  - Pierre-Etienne Will, Roy Bin Wong, James Lee, Jean Oi, and Peter Perdue. 1991. *Nourish the People: The State Civilian Granary System in China, 1650-1850.* Michigan monographs in Chinese studies. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan
  - J.Z. Lee and W. Feng. 1999. *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities, 1700-2000.* Harvard University Press
  - Kent Deng and Sun Shengmin. 2019. "China's Extraordinary Population Expansion and Its Determinants during the Qing Period, 1644-1911." *Population Review* 58 (1)

Week 3: Great Divergence: Overview

- Class Readings:
  - Kenneth Pomeranz. 2000. "The Great Divergence, China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy." Princeton University Press, Chapters 1, 2 & 6.
  - Stephen Broadberry, Hanhui Guan, and David Daokui Li. 2018. "China, Europe, and the Great Divergence: A Study in Historical National Accounting, 980–1850." *The Journal of Economic History* 78 (4): 955–1000
- Additional Readings:
  - Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and Roy Bin Wong. 2011. *Before and Beyond Divergence.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
  - Robert Brenner and Christopher Isett. 2002. "England's Divergence from China's Yangzi Delta: Property Relations, Microeconomics, and Patterns of Development." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 61 (2): 609–662
  - Jutta Bolt and Jan Luiten Van Zanden. 2014. "The Maddison Project: Collaborative Research on Historical National Accounts." *The Economic History Review* 67 (3): 627–651
  - Kent Deng and Patrick Karl O'Brien. 2016. *China's GDP per capita from the Han Dynasty to Communist Times.* Working paper
  - Stephen Broadberry and Hanhui Guan. 2022. *Regional Variation of GDP per head within China, 1080-1850: Implications for the Great Divergence Debate.* Working paper

Week 4: Great Divergence: Agricultural Productivity, Wages & Living Standards

- Class Readings:

  - Robert C Allen. 2009. "Agricultural Productivity and Rural Incomes in England and the Yangtze Delta, c. 1620–c. 1820." *The Economic History Review* 62 (3): 525–550
  - Robert C Allen, Jean-Pascal Bassino, Debin Ma, Christine Moll-Murata, and Jan Luiten Van Zanden. 2011. "Wages, Prices, and Living Standards in China, 1738–1925: in Comparison with Europe, Japan, and India." *The Economic History Review* 64:8–38

- Additional Readings:
  - Bozhong Li. 2005. "Farm Labour Productivity in Jiangnan, 1620-1850." *Living Standards in the Past,* 55
  - Philip Huang. 2002. "Development or Involution in Eighteenth-Century Britain and China? A Review of Kenneth Pomeranz's the Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 61 (2): 501–538
  - Stephen Broadberry and Bishnupriya Gupta. 2006. "The Early Modern Great Divergence: Wages, Prices and Economic Development in Europe and Asia, 1500-1800." *The Economic History Review* 59 (1): 2–31

Week 5: The Political Economy of Late Qing

- Class Readings:
  - Loren Brandt, Debin Ma, and Thomas G Rawski. 2014. "From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China's Economic Boom." *Journal of Economic Literature* 52 (1), pp. 80–86.
  - Richard Von Glahn. 2016. *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 9.

- Additional Readings:
  - Noam Yuchtman. 2017. "Teaching to the Tests: An Economic Analysis of Traditional and Modern Education in Late Imperial and Republican China." *Explorations in Economic History* 63:70–90
  - Pei Gao and Yu-Hsiang Lei. 2021. "Communication Infrastructure and Stabilizing Food Prices: Evidence from the Telegraph Network in China." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 13 (3): 65–101
  - Yu Hao and Melanie Meng Xue. 2017. "Friends from Afar: The Taiping Rebellion, Cultural Proximity and Primary Schooling in the Lower Yangzi, 1850–1949." *Explorations in Economic History* 63:44–69

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Economic Growth During the Republican Period

- Class Readings:
  - Loren Brandt, Debin Ma, and Thomas G Rawski. 2014. "From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China's Economic Boom." *Journal of Economic Literature* 52 (1), pp. 86–92.
  - Thomas G Rawski. 1975. "The Growth of Producer Industries, 1900–1971." *China's Modern Economy in Historical Perspective,* 203–221
  - Kang Chao. 1975. "The Growth of a Modern Cotton Textile Industry and the Competition with Handicrafts." *China's Modern Economy in Historical Perspective,* 167–201
- Additional Readings:
  - Debin Ma. 2008. "Economic Growth in the Lower Yangzi Region of China in 1911–1937: a Quantitative and Historical Analysis." *The Journal of Economic History* 68 (2): 355–392
  - Dwayne Benjamin and Loren Brandt. 1995. "Markets, Discrimination, and the Economic Contribution of Women in China: Historical Evidence." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 44 (1): 63–104
  - Andrew J Nathan. 1983. "A Constitutional Republic: The Peking Government, 1916–28." *The Cambridge History of China* 12:1912–1949

Week 8: What Caused The Great Famine?

- Class Readings:
  - Dali L Yang. 1996. *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change Since the Great Leap Famine.* Stanford University Press, Introduction.
  - Justin Yifu Lin. 1990. "Collectivization and China's Agricultural Crisis in 1959–1961." *Journal of Political Economy* 98 (6): 1228–1252
- Additional Readings:
  - Xin Meng, Nancy Qian, and Pierre Yared. 2015. "The Institutional Causes of China's Great Famine, 1959–1961." *The Review of Economic Studies* 82 (4): 1568–1611
  - James Kai-sing Kung and Justin Yifu Lin. 2003. "The Causes of China's Great Leap Famine, 1959–1961." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 52 (1): 51–73

- Shuo Chen and Xiaohuan Lan. 2017. "There Will be Killing: Collectivization and Death of Draft Animals." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 9 (4): 58–77
- Wei Li and Dennis Tao Yang. 2005. "The Great Leap Forward: Anatomy of a Central Planning Disaster." *Journal of Political Economy* 113 (4): 840–877
- Yuyu Chen and Li-An Zhou. 2007. "The Long-Term Health and Economic Consequences of the 1959–1961 Famine in China." *Journal of Health Economics* 26 (4): 659–681

Week 9: The Human Impact of the Cultural Revolution

- Class Readings:
  - Andrew G Walder and Yang Su. 2003. "The Cultural Revolution in the Countryside: Scope, Timing and Human Impact." *The China Quarterly* 173:74–99
  - Lucian W Pye. 1986. "Reassessing the Cultural Revolution." *The China Quarterly* 108:597–612
- Additional Readings:
  - Yi Chen, Ziying Fan, Xiaomin Gu, and Li-An Zhou. 2020. "Arrival of Young Talent: The Send-Down Movement and Rural Education in China." *American Economic Review* 110 (11): 3393–3430
  - Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals. 2009. *Mao's Last Revolution.* Harvard University Press
  - Richard Curt Kraus. 2012. *The Cultural Revolution: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford University Press

Week 10: Post-1978 Economic & Political Reform

- Class Readings:
  - Loren Brandt, Debin Ma, and Thomas G Rawski. 2014. "From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China's Economic Boom." *Journal of Economic Literature* 52 (1), pp. 94–102.
  - Justin Yifu Lin. 1992. "Rural Reforms and Agricultural Growth in China." *The American Economic Review,* 34–51
  - Chenggang Xu. 2011. "The Fundamental Institutions of China's Reforms and Development." *The Journal of Economic Literature* 49 (4): 1076–1151
- Additional Readings:

  - Yingyi Qian and Barry R Weingast. 1997. "Federalism as a Commitment to Reserving Market Incentives." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 11 (4): 83–92
  - Yingyi Qian and Gerard Roland. 1998. "Federalism and the Soft Budget Constraint." *American Economic Review,* 1143–1162
  - Ravi Kanbur and Xiaobo Zhang. 2005. "Fifty Years of Regional Inequality in China: A Journey Through Central Planning, Reform, and Openness." *Review of Development Economics* 9 (1): 87–106
  - Barry Naughton. 1995. *Growing Out of the Plan: Chinese Economic Reform, 1978-1993.* Cambridge University Press, Introduction

Week 11: Economic Growth in China After 2000

- Class Readings:
  - Xiaodong Zhu. 2012. "Understanding China's Growth: Past, Present, and Future." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 26 (4): 103–124
  - World Bank. 2020. *Innovative China: New Drivers of Growth.* Washington, DC: World Bank Publications
- Additional Readings:
  - Barry Naughton. 2007. *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth.* MIT press, Chapters 13–15.
  - Barry Naughton. 2021. *The Rise of China's Industrial Policy, 1978 to 2020.* Universidad Nacional Autónomica de México, Facultad de Economía México
  - Justin Yifu Lin. 2011. *Demystifying the Chinese Economy.* Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1 and 13.
  - OECD. 2019. *OECD Economic Surveys: China 2019.* Paris: OECD Publishing

Winter Term

Week 12: Geography

- Class Readings:
  - Eric Jones. 2003. "The European Miracle: Environments, Economies, and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia," 225–238. Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press

  - Mark Koyama, Chiaki Moriguchi, and Tuan-Hwee Sng. 2018. "Geopolitics and Asia's Little Divergence: State Building in China and Japan After 1850." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 155:178–204

- Additional Readings:

  - J. Diamond. 1999. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies.* W. W. Norton
  - Quamrul Ashraf and Oded Galor. 2011. "Dynamics and Stagnation in the Malthusian Epoch." *American Economic Review* 101 (5): 2003–41
  - Stelios Michalopoulos. 2012. "The Origins of Ethnolinguistic Diversity." *American Economic Review* 102 (4): 1508–39
  - Philip T. Hoffman. 2015. "Why Did Europe Conquer the World?," 1–4. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Week 13: Institutions

- Class Readings:

  - Douglass C North. 1991. "Institutions." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5 (1): 97–112
  - Avner Greif and Guido Tabellini. 2010. "Cultural and Institutional Bifurcation: China and Europe Compared." *American Economic Review* 100 (2): 135–40

- Additional Readings:

  - Melanie Meng Xue. 2021. "Autocratic Rule and Social Capital: Evidence from Imperial China"
  - Avner Greif. 1989. "Reputation and Coalitions in Medieval Trade: Evidence on the Maghribi Traders." *The Journal of Economic History* 49 (4): 857–882
  - Elinor Ostrom. 1990. *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action.* Cambridge University Press
  - Taisu Zhang. 2017. *The Laws and Economics of Confucianism: Kinship and Property in Preindustrial China and England.* Cambridge University Press

Week 14: Culture

- Class Readings:

  - Nathan Nunn. 2012. "Culture and the Historical Process." *Economic History of Developing Regions* 27 (sup-1): 108–126
  - Timothy Brook and Hy V Luong. 1999. *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia.* University of Michigan Press, Introduction.

- Additional Readings:
  - Stelios Michalopoulos and Melanie Meng Xue. 2021. "Folklore." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 1:54
  - Melanie Meng Xue. 2024b. *Values of China: Towards a Cultural Map.* Working paper
  - Robert D Putnam et al. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.* Simon & schuster
  - Joel Mokyr. 2016. "A Culture of Growth: the Origins of the Modern Economy." Princeton: Princeton University Press, Chapters 14, 16 & 17.
  - Armin Falk, Anke Becker, Thomas Dohmen, Benjamin Enke, David Huffman, and Uwe Sunde. 2018. "Global Evidence on Economic Preferences." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 133 (4): 1645–1692

Week 15: Gender

- Class Readings:
  - Mark Elvin. 1984. "Female Virtue and the State in China." *Past & Present* 104 (1): 111–152
  - Melanie Meng Xue. 2024a. *High-Value Work and the Rise of Women: The Cotton Revolution and Gender Equality in China.* Working paper
- Additional Readings:
  - Nancy Qian. 2008. "Missing Women and the Price of Tea in China: The Effect of Sex-Specific Earnings on Sex Imbalance." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123 (3): 1251–1285
  - Francesca Bray. 1997. *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China.* Berkeley: University of California Press
  - Tine De Moor and Jan Luiten Van Zanden. 2010. "Girl Power: the European Marriage Pattern and Labour Markets in the North Sea Region in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period." *The Economic History Review* 63 (1): 1–33
  - Alberto Alesina, Paola Giuliano, and Nathan Nunn. 2013. "On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128 (2): 469–530

Week 16: Education and Human Capital

- Class Readings:

  - Benjamin A Elman. 1991. "Political, Social, and Cultural Reproduction via Civil Service Examinations in Late Imperial China." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50 (1): 7–28
  - Evelyn Sakakida Rawski. 1979. *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China.* Vol. 6. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, Chapters 7

- Additional Readings:
  - Melanie Meng Xue and Boxiao Zhang. 2021. *The Short- and Long-Run Effects of Affirmative Action: Evidence from Imperial China.* Working paper
  - Carol H Shiue. 2017. "Human Capital and Fertility in Chinese Clans Before Modern Growth." *Journal of Economic Growth* 22 (4): 351–396
  - Ying Bai. 2019. "Farewell to Confucianism: The Modernizing Effect of Dismantling China's Imperial Examination System." *Journal of Development Economics* 141:102382

Week 17: Reading Week

Week 18: Social Mobility

- Class Readings:
  - Ping-Ti Ho. 1962. "The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368–1911," 92–125, 168–221. New York, NY: Columbia University Press
  - Bijia Chen, Cameron Campbell, Yuxue Ren, and James Lee. 2020. "Big data for the Study of Qing Officialdom: The China Government Employee Database-Qing (CGED-Q)." *Journal of Chinese History* 4 (2): 431–460

- Additional Readings:
  - Carol H Shiue. n.d. "Social Mobility in the Long Run: A Temporal Analysis of Tongcheng, China, 1300 to 1900." Forthcoming, *Journal of Economic History*
  - Cameron Campbell and James Lee. 2008. "Kin Networks, Marriage, and Social Mobility in Late Imperial China." *Social Science History* 32 (2): 175–214
  - Yuyu Chen, Suresh Naidu, Tinghua Yu, and Noam Yuchtman. 2015. "Intergenerational Mobility and Institutional Change in 20th Century China." *Explorations in Economic History* 58:44–73
  - Qin Jiang and James Kai-sing Kung. 2020. "Social Mobility in Late Imperial China: Reconsidering the 'Ladder of Success' Hypothesis." *Modern China*
  - Gregory Clark. 2014. *The Son Also Rises.* Princeton University Press

Week 19: State Capacity

- Class Readings:
  - Philip A Kuhn. 2002. "Origins of the Modern Chinese State," 80–113. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press
  - Roy Bin Wong. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience.* Cornell University Press, Chapters 4 & 5.
- Additional Readings:
  - Roy Bin Wong. 1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience.* Cornell University Press, Chapters 7 & 10.
  - Wenkai He. 2013. *Paths Toward the Modern Fiscal State.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
  - Debin Ma and Jared Rubin. 2019. "The Paradox of Power: Principal-agent Problems and Administrative Capacity in Imperial China (and Other Absolutist Regimes)." *Journal of Comparative Economics* 47 (2): 277–294
  - Charles Tilly. 1975. "Reflections on the History of European State-Making." In *The Formation of National States in Western Europe,* vol. 38. Princeton University Press
  - Timothy Besley and Torsten Persson. 2009. "The Origins of State Capacity: Property Rights, Taxation, and Politics." *American Economic Review* 99 (4): 1218–44

Week 20: Trade & Markets

- Class Readings:
  - Morgan Kelly. 1997. "The Dynamics of Smithian Growth." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112 (3): 939–964
  - Richard Von Glahn. 2016. *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 6, 7 & 8.
- Additional Readings:
  - Carol H Shiue. 2002. "Transport Costs and the Geography of Arbitrage in Eighteenth-Century China." *American Economic Review* 92 (5): 1406–1419
  - Carol H Shiue and Wolfgang Keller. 2007. "Markets in China and Europe on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution." *American Economic Review* 97 (4): 1189–1216
  - J.K. Fairbank. 1964. *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842-1854.* Harvard historical studies. Harvard University Press

  - Timothy Brook, Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, et al. 2000. *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952.* Univ of California Press

Week 21: Disasters & Shocks

- Class Readings:
  - Geoffrey Parker. 2013. "The 'Great Enterprise' in China, 1618–84." In *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century.* Yale University Press, Chapters 1 & 5.
- Additional Readings:
  - Frederic Wakeman. 1985. *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China.* Vol. 1. Berkeley: University of California Press
  - Lillian M. Li. 2007. *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market, and Environmental Decline, 1690s-1990s.* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press
  - Kenneth Pomeranz. 1993. *The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853-1937.* Berkeley: University of California Press
  - Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley. 2008. *Tears from Iron.* University of California Press
  - Mark Elvin. 2004. *The Retreat of the Elephants: An Environmental History of China.* Yale University Press
  - Timothy Brook. 2023. *The Price of Collapse: The Little Ice Age and the Fall of Ming China.* Princeton University Press

Week 22: Guest Lecture