

**HUMA 1420**  
**Imperial China from Yuan to Qing**

**Lecture: Monday 12:00-13:50**

**Tutorial: 14:00-14:50**

**I. Introduction**

When people think of “imperial China” or “traditional China” or “premodern China,” the images and tropes that come to mind are usually from the Ming-Qing periods. The history of this late imperial period is of critical importance because it encompasses a time when China was the most advanced civilization in the world and maintained the international order in Asia by the so-called tributary system. However, China suffered from the two opium wars and launched its modernization program in the 1860’s. The empire was finally collapsed and ended in the 1911 Revolution.

This course is a broad survey of key social, economic and cultural patterns that shaped the history of China from 1271 to 1911. Students who successfully complete this course will understand the basic structures of state and society during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and the long-term development of Chinese society, economy and external relationship. Students will be acquainted with case studies that help them to understand transformation of Chinese society, commerce and culture during the Ming and Qing periods. They will be able to identify points of continuity or historical resonance between Ming, Qing, and 21<sup>st</sup> century China. Finally—last but certainly not least—they will develop their skills in reading, writing, presenting their ideas in public, and thinking critically.

**II. Lecturer:**

Prof. Lee Pui Tak is born in Hong Kong. He is trained as a modern economic historian. He graduated from the Department of Oriental History, University of Tokyo. He was the Hong Kong Fulbright Scholar in 2003-04, for conducting a research on Shanghai bankers in Republican China in Cornell University. He has been Research Assistant Professor at HKU’s Centre of Asian Studies and Visiting Associate Professor at University of Tokyo’s Faculty of Economics. He is currently Honorary Professor at HKU’s School of Modern Languages & Cultures. He is working on two book manuscripts, one on economic history of Hong Kong and the other on banking history of Republican China.

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### **III. Learning outcomes**

This course offers a history of imperial China in Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties with particular emphasis on the social and economic transformation. Our emphasis lay on the socio-economic history of the dynasties with less discussion on intellectual and military history. While looking at the differences of various aspects between the dynasties, the course takes the similarities and continuity into account. As the agricultural economy including the international trade of agricultural goods and the mobilization of people changed along with the climate, and factors outside China, new social and economic arrangements were made to the lives of the people and the world became global. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs): This course helps students build various skills including:

1. The understanding of China's process to globalization from a historical perspective.
2. The ability of read and understand historical accounts and relate them to current political and social affairs.
3. The ability of explain with clarity about history.

### **IV. Assessment**

1. Mid-term exam, 20%;
2. Final exam, 20%;
3. Tutorial presentation, 30%;
4. Tutorial report, 30%.

### **V. Lecture topic and assigned reading**

Students have to read the assigned readings prior to each lecture. These readings will help consolidate your understanding of the major themes in the lecture and all of them can be downloaded from CANVAS.

Lecture topic, assigned reading and schedule:

1<sup>st</sup> week (1 Feb 2021)

Lecture 1:

Introduction and organization

1. Richard von Glahn, "Imagining pre-modern China," in Paul Jakov Smith & Richard von Glahn (eds.), *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), pp. 35-60. CALL#DS750.72.S88.2003. E-file available in CANVAS
2. Timothy Brook, "Dragon spotting" and "Scale," in Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 6-49. E-Book. E-file available in CANVAS

2<sup>nd</sup> week (8 Feb 2021)

Lecture 2:

Silver China: How silver was made the currency of China for 700 years?

1. Richard von Glahn, "Transition to the silver economy, 1000-1435," in Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000-1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 48-82. CALL#HG1282.V66.1996. E-file in CANVAS
2. Richard von Glahn, "Cycles of silver in Chinese monetary history," in Billy K.L. So (ed.), *The Economy of Lower Yangzi Delta in Late Imperial China: Connecting Money, Markets and Institutions* (London & New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 17-61. E-Book. E-file in CANVAS

3<sup>rd</sup> week (15 Feb 2021)

No class (Public holiday)

4<sup>th</sup> week (22 Feb 2021)

Lecture 3:

Maritime China: How overseas trade transformed the Chinese society and economy for about 300 years in the Ming dynasty?

1. Richard von Glahn, "The 'monetary crisis' of the seventeenth century," in Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000-1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 207-245. CALL#HG1282.V66.1996. E-file in CANVAS
2. William Atwell, "Ming China and the emerging world economy, c. 1470-1650," in D. Twitchett and Frederick Mote (eds.), *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 8* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 376-416. CALL#DS735.C3145. E-file in CANVAS

5<sup>th</sup> week (1 Mar 2021)

Lecture 4:

Chinese comprador: What implication for China's connection with the West?

1. Yen-ping Hao, "A 'new class' in Chinese treaty ports: The rise of comprador-merchants," in *Business History Review*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Winter 1970), pp. 446-459. E-file in CANVAS
2. 李培德，〈19世紀買辦的壟斷地位和延伸網絡〉，《國家航海》，第3輯（2012年12月），頁64-76。E-file in CANVAS

6<sup>th</sup> week (8 Mar 2021)

Lecture 5:

Robert Hart: The foreign adviser or official in China?

1. Richard Horowitz, "Politics, power and the Chinese maritime customs: The Qing Restoration and the ascent of Robert Hart," in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2006), pp. 549-581. E-file in CANVAS
2. Catherine Ladds, "Introduction: The Customs, China and the empire world," in Catherine Ladds, *Empire Careers: Working for the Chinese Customs Service, 1854-1949* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 1-23. CALL# HJ7071.L33.2013. E-file in CANVAS

7<sup>th</sup> week (15 Mar 2021)

Mid-term exam (Covers readings in weeks 2-6)

8<sup>th</sup> week (22 Mar 2021)

Lecture 6:

Global China: Chinese global tea trade

1. Robert Gardella, "Extensive growth without structural change: The tea boom of 1842-1888 in Fujian and Taiwan," in Robert Gardella, *Harvesting Mountains: Fujian and the China Tea Trade, 1757-1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 48-83. E-Book. E-file in CANVAS
2. Andrew B. Liu, "No sympathy for the merchant? The crisis of the Chinese tea and classical political economy in late Qing China," in Andrew B. Liu, *Tea War: A History of Capitalism in China and India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), pp. 152-187. E-Book. E-file in CANVAS

9<sup>th</sup> week (29 Mar 2021)

Lecture 7:

The intrusion of foreign capital in China: The case of HSBC in nineteenth century

1. Ian Phimister, "Foreign devils, finance and informal empire: Britain and China c. 1900-1912," in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (July 2006), pp. 737-759. E-file in CANVAS
2. Qing Lu, "Government control, transaction costs, and commitment between the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) and the Chinese government," in *Enterprise & Society*, Vol. 9, Issue 1 (2008), pp. 44-69. E-file in CANVAS

10<sup>th</sup> week (5 Apr 2021)

No class (public holiday)

11<sup>th</sup> week (12 Apr 2021)

Lecture 8:

The formation of the first Chinese business corporation: The government-supervised and merchant-managed enterprise in nineteenth-century China

1. Albert Feuerwerker, "The kuan-tu shang-pan system: 'official supervision and merchant management,'" in Albert Feuerwerker, *China's Early Industrialization: Sheng Hsuan-huai (1844-1916) and Mandarin Enterprise* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 1-30. CALL#HC427.7.F4.1958. E-file in CANVAS
2. 李培德，〈論「包、保、報」與清末官督商辦企業——以光緒二十二年盛宣懷接辦漢陽鐵廠事件為例〉，《史林》，2009年1期，頁28-38。E-file in CANVAS

12<sup>th</sup> week (19 Apr 2021)

Lecture 9:

The Chinese views of network: The Ma Tsui Chiu's network in Taishan-Hong Kong-and North America in the early of the twentieth century

1. K.C. Fok, "Lineage ties and business partnership: A Hong Kong commercial network," in Shinya Sugiyama & Linda Grove (eds.), *Commercial Networks in Modern Asia* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), pp. 159-170. CALL#HF3752.I58.1994. E-file in CANVAS
2. Pui-Tak Lee, "Linking global and local networks of credit and remittances: Ma Tsui Chiu's financial operations in Hong Kong, 1900s-1950s," in Ulbe Bosma and

Anthony Webster (eds.), *Communities, Ports and Asian Maritime Trade since 1750* (London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 165-178. E-file in CANVAS

13<sup>th</sup> week (26 Apr 2021)

Final exam (Covers readings in weeks 8-12)

14<sup>th</sup> week (3 May 2021)

Lecture 10: Course conclusion and sharing

## **VI. Tutorial presentations:**

A total of four tutorial presentations will be organized. Students will take turn to play the roles of presenter, discussant and observer. Themes for presentation will be an extension of discussion in the weekly lectures.

The tutorial presentation is aimed at inviting diverse ideas and perspectives that students may bring to class, for creating a learning environment in which all students are comfortable enough when sharing their views. Themes for tutorial presentation constitute extensions of discussions in weekly lectures. Students are expected to actively participate in the presentations. A written **presentation report** of not more than **3,000 words** has to be distributed **at least two days prior to the day of the presentation**. Tutorial participation is evaluated based on the quality of the oral presentation and the wrap-up of discussion in the tutorial report. It is important that students divide themselves into different groups and be prepared for the discussions by reading the recommended reference materials and sharing with other group members. Team spirit plus group cooperation is highly encouraged. Guidelines for preparation can be downloaded from CANVAS.

Topics and schedule:

1. To what extent silver was important to China? (Feb 22 & Mar 1)
2. What was the boom and bust of the Chinese tea trade in the late nineteenth century? (Mar 8 & 15)
3. Why HSBC was successful in China? What are the key factors accounted for the HSBC's success? (Mar 22 & 29)
4. What are the Chinese concepts of 'capital' and 'business network'? How Chinese developed businesses in Hong Kong and what are their socio-economic characteristics? (Apr 12 & 19)

## VII. Additional references

- Jonathan Spence, *The China Helpers: Western Advisers in China 1620-1960* (London, Sydney & Toronto: The Bodley Head, 1969). CALL#DS740.4.S59.1969
- Charles O. Hucker, "Society and economy," in Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 329-336. CALL#DS735.H88.1975.
- Frederick Mote, "Chinese society under Mongol rule, 1215–1368," in H. Franke & D. Twitchett (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 6* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 616-664. CALL#DS735.C3145
- Takeshi Hamashita, "The tribute trade system and modern Asia," in J.H. Latham & Heita Kawakatsu (eds.), *Japanese Industrialization and the Asian Economy* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 91-106. CALL#HC462.J377.1994
- Richard von Glahn, "Foreign silver and China's 'silver century.' 1550-1650," in Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000-1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 113-141. CALL#HG1282.V66.1996.
- Pui-Tak Lee, "Understanding and practice of 'new business' in the nineteenth-century China," in Rajeswary A. Brown (ed.), *Chinese Business Enterprise: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management, Vol. 1* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 453-480. E-file in CANVAS
- Gang Deng, "Trade types and agents," in Gang Deng, *Chinese Maritime Activities and Socioeconomic Development, c. 2100B.C. – 1900 A.D.* (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1997), pp. 85-139. CALL#HE894.D46.1997
- Wang Gungwu, "Ming Foreign Relations: Southeast Asia," in D. Twitchett and Frederick Mote (eds.), *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 8, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 301-332. E-Book
- Michael Dillon (ed.), *China: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998). CALL#DS733.C35.1998
- R. Bin Wong, "Chinese views of the money supply and foreign trade, 1400-1850," in Sally M. Miller, A.J.H. Latham & Dennis O. Flynn (eds.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Pacific Rim* (London & New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 172-180. E-file in CANVAS
- Frederick Mote, "China's legacy in a changing world," in Frederick Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 949-973. CALL#DS750.64.M67.1999
- John Lee, "Trade and economy in preindustrial East Asia, c. 1500- c. 1800: East Asia in

- the age of global integration,” in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Feb 1999), pp. 2-26. E-file in CANVAS
- Francesca Bray, “Towards a critical history of non-Western technology,” in Timothy Brook & Gregory Blue (eds.), *China and Historical Capitalism: Genealogies of Sinological Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 158-209. CALL#HC427.C444.1999
- R. Keith Schoppa, “The decline of the traditional state, 1780-1901,” in R. Keith Schoppa, *The Columbia Guide to Modern Chinese History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp. 3-49. CALL#DS755.S35.2000
- Ramon H. Myers & Yeh-chien Wang, “Economic developments, 1644-1800,” in Willard J. Peterson (ed.), *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 9, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 563-645. CALL#DS735.C3145
- Richard von Glahn, “Imagining pre-modern China,” in Paul Jakov Smith & Richard von Glahn (eds.), *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), pp. 35-70. CALL#DS750.72.S88.2003
- Li Bozhong, “Was there a ‘fourteenth-century turning point’? Population, land, technology, and farm management,” in Paul Jakov Smith & Richard von Glahn (eds.), *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), pp. 135-175. CALL# DS750.72.S88.2003
- Robert Bickers, “Purloined letters: History, and the Chinese Maritime Customs Service,” in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2006), pp. 691-723. E-file in CANVAS
- Takeshi Hamashita, *China, East Asia and the Global Economy: Regional and Historical Perspectives* (London & New York: Routledge, 2008). CALL#HF3834.H35.2008
- Timothy Brook, “The South China Sea,” in Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 213-237. E-Book
- Kent G. Deng, “Why shipping ‘declined’ in China from the middle ages to the nineteenth century,” in Richard W. Unger (ed.), *Shipping and Economic Growth 1350-1850* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 207-221. E-Book
- Kent G. Deng, “The continuation and efficiency of the Chinese fiscal state, 700 BC – AD 1911.” In Bartolome Yun-Casalilla & Patrick K. O’Brien (eds.), *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 335-352. E-Book
- R. Bin Wong, “Formal and informal mechanisms of rule and economic development: The Qing empire in comparative perspective,” in Huri Islamoglu & Peter C.



- Perdue (eds.), *Shared Histories of Modernity: China, India and the Ottoman Empire* (London, New York & New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), pp. 231-254. E-file in CANVAS
- Kent G. Deng, "The Qing state and its success," in Kent G. Deng, *China Political Economy in Modern Times: Changes and Economic Consequences, 1800-2000* (London & New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 13-24. CALL#HC427.7.D46.2012
- R. Bin Wong, "Taxation and good governance in China, 1500-1914." In Bartolome Yun-Casalilla & Patrick K. O'Brien (eds.), *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 353-377. E-Book
- Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013). CALL#DS735.W695.2015
- Madeleine Zelin, "Chinese business practice in the late imperial period." In *Enterprise & Society*, Vol.14, No. 4 (Dec 2013), pp.769-793. E-file in CANVAS
- Benjamin A. Elman, "Cultural transfers between Tokugawa Japan and Ch'ing China to 1800," in Willard J. Peterson (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 9, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 234-263. CALL#DS735.C3145
- Richard von Glahn, "The maturation of the market economy (1550-1800)," in Richard von Glahn, *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 295-347. CALL#HC427.6.V66.2016
- Richard von Glahn, "Domestic crises and global challenges: Restructuring in the imperial economy (1800-1900)," in Richard von Glahn, *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 348-399. CALL#HC427.6.V66.2016
- Pui-Tak Lee, "The Cantonese emigration and family business networks in Hong Kong, South China and North America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early of 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: A research note," in *Journal of Global and Area Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Busan: The Institute for Global and Area Studies, Pukyong National University and Association of International and Area Studies, Dec 2017), pp. 35-44. E-file in CANVAS
- Timothy Brook, "Interpolity relations and the tribute system of Ming China," in Timothy Brook, Michael van Walt van Praag & Miek Boltjes (eds.) *Sacred Mandates: Asian International Relations since Chinggis Khan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 57-89. E-file in CANVAS
- Timothy Brook, "Transitions to the modern state system," in Timothy Brook, Michael van Walt van Praag & Miek Boltjes (eds.) *Sacred Mandates: Asian*

*International Relations since Chingg's Khan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 155-182. E-file in CANVAS

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