

King's University College  
2016-2017

Department of Economics, Business and Math

**Economics 2199G: Economic History of Early Modern East Asia**

Instructor: Dr. Adam Bohnet

Office: South Annex 059.

Office Hours: Thursday, 11:30-12:30

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Class: Monday, 4:30-6:30, LH105C. Wednesday, 4:30-5:30, LH105A

**Course Description:** This course will explore the economic history of East Asia during the early modern period, for the purposes of the course, approximately 1400 to 1800CE. Japan and Vietnam are both interesting cases, but on account of limits of time we will focus largely on Ming and Qing China and Chosōn Korea. Questions to be asked include: What was the relationship of the East Asian with the rest of the world, especially the maritime empires of Europe? How did economic growth in East Asia compare to that of Western Europe? How should early modern East Asian economies be characterized, and how did officials in East Asian countries attempt to manage economic problems? How did economic developments in East Asia relate to broader social and political structures? And, finally, considering the importance of East Asia to the early modern world economy, why did England, and not China, experience the industrial revolution?

**Course Goals:** The course seeks to provide students with a deeper understanding of the economic history of East Asia, and to provide background to the dynamic East Asian economies of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. At the same time, it aims to provide a clear introduction to economic history, exploring such themes as historical demography, price history, trade, currency and merchant communities. Additionally, it hopes to provide an intensive writing course for students in Economics and BMOS programs at King's, as well as to strengthen student understanding of the economic history a very important region of the world.

This course also counts for the Global/Comparative requirement for History majors.

**Language:** The only language students need for this class is English, which is the language of the lectures and the readings, but I also encourage students to make full use of all their talents, including knowledge of languages other than English. Wherever possible, I will also provide additional readings in Asian languages to students – these are supplementary readings (i.e., students still need to read the English-language required readings), but will perhaps give new and useful points of view to students with knowledge of East Asian languages.

I endeavor to make my classes accessible both to unilingual English-speakers with little knowledge of East Asian history and to those who speak English as a foreign language but who have considerable experience of the world outside of London.

### **Course Texts:**

**Required:** Von Glahn, R. (2016). *The Economic History of China: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Weekly readings have been posted to OWL.

### **Marking Scheme:**

Reading Responses: 10%

Article review: Due Week 5 during Thanksgiving Reading Week (10%)

Midterm – 20% : Week 8.

Final Essay: 30 – due on last day of classes.

Final Exam: 30% (final exam period).

***Reading Responses (10%):*** Every week a link will be provided to students to comment on the readings. Each reading response on the readings should be approximately 1 page single-spaced. Each reading response is worth 2.5 points. Thus, students only need to complete 4 reading responses to get the full 10 points. Because students can finish their reading responses any time during term, no extensions will be granted.

***Midterm (20%):*** There will be a midterm taken in class on the eighth week, which will cover the first term's materials. It will be made up of a mix of short answer questions and an essay question.

***Final (30%):*** There will be one final exam (worth 30%) during the April exam period. It will involve a mix of short-answer responses to readings and longer writer responses.

I follow the policy of King's Department of History in preventing the use of any electronic aids during the tests. I also follow policy in allowing absences from tests only if documentation establishing extenuating circumstances is provided before the test. Even when extenuating circumstances are established, students will be required to write make-up tests, which will always be more difficult and marked more harshly.

**Cheating** (looking at somebody else's work, writing answers on your hand, having answers sent to your cell-phone) is very unlikely to improve your mark even if not detected, and will result in very severe consequences to both your mark and academic career if detected. See the King's University College Statement on Academic Dishonesty, attached.

**Take-home assignments:** There are two written assignments.

One article review (10%): This is due on Week 5

Essay (20%): Students will be requested to write an 8-10 page essay on a topic to be announced.

**Note also that** the essay will be penalized 5% for the first day late, and 1% for each following day. As this is a writing course, students who fail to complete the essay will not be allowed to pass this course.

### **Tentative Weekly Schedule of Topics & Readings:**

**Week 1** Introduction to the course. Warring-States and Early Imperial Chinese theories of statecraft and economics. Readings (Unusually, this week the Reading Journal will be due on September 14, a Wednesday): **(1)** von Glahn, “From City-State to Autocratic Monarchy (707- 250BCE),” pp. 44-83 and “Economic Foundations of the Universal Empire (250- 81BCE),” pp. 84-128.

**Week 2:** Classical Chinese theories of statecraft and economics continued. The Tang-Song transition and the rise of a market-oriented China. **Readings:** **(1)** von Glahn, “Economic Transformation in the Tang-Song transition (755-1127),” pp. 208-254; “The Heyday of the Jiangnan Economy (1127-1550),” pp. 255-294.

**Week 3 (September 26):** Mid-Ming Economic Transformation. Rise of the Silver Economy. **Readings:** **(1)** von Glahn, “The Maturation of the Market Economy, (1550-1800),” 295-347; **(2)** Fei, S. (2007). "We must be taxed": a case of populist urban fiscal reform in Ming Nanjing (1368–1644). Late Imperial China 28 (2), 1-40, DOI: 10.1353/late.2008.0004

**Week 4:** Overseas trade during the Ming and Qing. **Readings:** (1) Flynn D.O. & Giraldez, A. (1995). Arbitrage, China, and world trade in the early modern period. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 38 (4), 429-448. doi: 10.1163/1568520952600308; (2) Chia, L. (2006). The butcher, the baker, and the carpenter: Chinese sojourners in the Spanish Philippines and their impact on southern Fujian (sixteenth-eighteenth century). *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 49 (4), 509-534. doi: 10.1163/156852006779048435.

**Week 5: Thanksgiving holiday. No class. Article Review to be submitted to dropbox in South Annex and to OWL link by October 12.**

**Week 6:** Abortive Industrialization? Coal and Iron in China, from Song to Qing. **Readings:** (1) Chen, H. (2014). Fueling the boom: coal as the primary source of energy for processing zinc in China and comparison with Europe, ca. 1720-1820. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57, 76-111. doi: 10.1163/15685209-12341343 (2) - Recommended reading, if you enjoy it (it provides useful context, but some might find it boring): Wright, T. (2007). An economic cycle in imperial China? Revisiting Robert Hartwell on iron and coal. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 50 (4), 398-423. doi: 10.1163/156852007783244963

**Week 7 :** Firms and Finance in Early Modern China. **Readings:** (1) Von Glahn, "Domestic Crises and Global Challenges: Restructuring the Imperial Economy (1800-1900)," pp. 348-399; (2) Pomeranz, K. (1997). "Gentry merchants' and partnership revisited: Family, firm, and financing in the history of the Yutang Enterprises of Jining, 1779-1956. *Late Imperial China* 18, (2), 1-38. DOI: 10.1353/late.1997.0008

**Week 8 : Midterm exam, in class. No reading response due.**

**Week 9: Consumption Culture**

**Readings:** (1) Zurndorfer, H. (2011). Cotton textile manufacture and marketing in late imperial China and the 'great divergence.' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011): 701-738.

**Week 10:** Agriculture in early modern China and Korea. **Readings:** (1) Xue, Y. (2007). A "fertilizer revolution"?: A critical response to Pomeranz's theory of "geographic luck."

*Modern China* 33, no. 2, 195-229; (2) Lewis, J., Jun S.H., & Kang, H.R. (2008). Korean expansion and decline from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century: A view suggested by Adam Smith. *Journal of Economic History* 68, no. 1, 1-40.

**Week 11:** The Chosōn economy and State Policy. **Reading:** (1) Karlsson, A. (2005). Famine, Finance and Political Power: Crop Failure and Land-Tax Exemptions in Late Eighteenth-Century Chosōn Korea. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 48, no. 4, 552-592.

**Week 12:** Chosōn and international trade between Japan and China. **Reading:** (1) Kwon N.H. (2015). Choson Korea's trade with Qing China and the circulation of silver. *Acta Koreana* 18, no. 1, 163-185.

**Week 13** (December 5): Wrap up and review. Final paper due.