### THE ASIAN RESURGENCE IN WORLD HISTORY PERSPECTIVE

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## INTRODUCTION

This summer I spent a month in China, travelling around on the world's most advanced high speed "bullet" trains that reflected China's rapid rise to a world powerhouse. But several of these trains have had horrific crashes, indicating some of the pitfalls of rapid development. This is not the first time that China and some other Asian countries have enjoyed a leading role in the world, only to see things fall apart and progress stall. Whether their current resurgence stalls or crashes remains to be seen. As we contemplate the resurgence of various Asian societies, let me begin with a controversial quote by two American scholars of East Asia: "The high noon of European and American industrial supremacy has passed, bringing to an end the brief period of a few hundred years in which Asia, especially the eastern part..., did not dominate the world." For the past several centuries most people took for granted a world dominated by the economic, political, military and even cultural power of the United States and Western Europe, whose peoples have generally enjoyed the highest standards of living. Yet, as the quote argues and many scholars of Asian and world history have confirmed, that domination by the West did not exist 500 or 1000 years ago, when several Asian societies were arguably far more developed and prosperous than Europe, occupying positions in the world not unlike the Western nations of the past 200 years.

Today some of these same Asian societies, often grouped together as the Pacific Rim or Pacific Asia nations, have enjoyed resurgent economic power and increasing influence in the wider world. Some observers have even talked of a Pacific Century or Asian Century replacing the American Century of the later twentieth century as Asian power grows while Western power, including that of the U.S., ebbs, a perspective that seems more plausible as the recession that began in 2007-2008 and political gridlock undermines Western economies. Several decades ago it was Japan that seemed the major challenge to the U.S. in the world economy; between the 1960s and 1980s Japan's economy grew three times faster than any other industrialized nation, giving the nation the world's second largest economy. But beginning in 1989 Japan has faced severe economic problems and unsettled politics. In recent years North Americans and Western Europeans increasingly worry less about Japan but now marvel at and fear the rise of China, India, and other Asian countries. Yet, in the light of world history their rise is hardly a surprise. We may be seeing a case of "déjà vu all over again."

For decades most Western historians believed that the European lead in the world was longstanding, going back to Post-Classical (Medieval) times if not even much earlier. After all, in school students in Europe and North America studied ancient Greece and Rome or Medieval England but may have learned little about China or Cambodia or Persia. But the increasing knowledge of world and non-European history since the 1960s has challenged, and perhaps even undermined, this somewhat triumphal view. Hence, how, why and when Europe and North America rather than China, India or the widespread Islamic civilization eventually came to dominate the world remain two of the principle and most controversial questions of modern world history.<sup>2</sup> To many historians the rise of Europe was surprising and needs explaining,

because history could have turned out very differently. As one historian writes, "How and why this happened remains a prime question of modern history, if only because the development was so improbable. A neutral observer in the 1400s could hardly have predicted such an astonishing future.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, many think that it may be starting to turn out very differently.

What I want to examine here are some of the historical roots of the modern Asian resurgence. I will argue that the recent rise of various Asian societies, and especially China, represents a coming full circle, a return to a center stage in world affairs that they occupied earlier in world history. In this scenario, the resurgence of Asia represents not an aberration but continuity with the past. In particular, and drawing parallels with modern times, I will concentrate on two periods and places when some Asians demonstrated more dynamism than the rest of the world, occupying a place in the world economy not unlike the United States in the twentieth century and a resurgent Pacific Asia today: 1. China during the Tang and Song dynasties from the seventh through thirteenth centuries; 2. and the maritime trading world, or maritime Silk Road, of the South China Sea and Indian Ocean, particularly from the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries; 3. Finally, I will make some observations on the recent rise of the Pacific Rim and some of the consequences, and assess the notion of a forthcoming Pacific Century and dominant Asia.

#### THE SPLENDOR OF TANG-SONG CHINA

Today we think of the West as the world's industrial center but a few centuries ago it was Asia. Before 1500, the configuration of world power and wealth looked very different than it does today. Many world historians now agree that, like the United States, Russia, Germany, and Japan in the twentieth century, China and India were the great premodern centers of world

manufacturing, producing iron, steel, silk, cotton, and ceramics for both local and foreign markets. Together they accounted for well over half of all world manufacturing as late as 1800, compared to about a third for Europe and North America.<sup>4</sup> Their exports helped fuel the hemispheric trade system. Their industrial products might be transported thousands of miles. Hence, the work of a cotton weaver in India might be sold in China or East Africa, and Chinese ceramics might reach southern and western Africa.

William McNeill argues that it was Chinese commercial expansion that energized trade in Europe after 1000, as the Afro-Eurasian historical zone responded to Chinese innovations: "wealth and productivity shot upwards," McNeill writes. "New skills developed, making China the wonder of the rest of the world, as Marco Polo and other visitors from afar soon realized." For centuries China occupied a position in the Eastern hemisphere not unlike the United States in the twentieth century world, producing and exporting manufactured goods and culture while importing wealth and brainpower. Without Chinese and Arab naval technology that diffused to Europe, Christopher Columbus might never have sailed across the Atlantic in search of Asia, unexpectedly bumping in to the Americas.

Since the 1950s many historians have argued that the rise of the East was a major fact of the Medieval/Post-Classical/Intermediate era (ca. 600-1500 CE). <sup>6</sup> An observer from the moon surveying the earth 750 or 1000 or 1250 years ago might well have considered the Chinese the most advanced civilization, with the dynamic Islamic world and perhaps India not far behind. For centuries Europe was something of a backwater. Some world and Asian historians view the years between 600 and 1250 (the Tang and Song periods), possibly even extending to 1600, 1700, or even 1800, as the Chinese Millennium, with China as the largest, strongest and most

populous civilization in Afro-Eurasia. Historians highlight the technological breakthroughs of the Chinese Millennium, which they argue made modern history possible. Noble Prize-winning economic historian Amartya Sen, an Indian, writes that "no country in the history of the world has had as much dominance in "hi-tech" as China had at the beginning of the last millennium. One of the most honored historians of China, Jonathan Spence, claims that, in Tang and Song times, "there was nowhere else on the planet... that one could find such richness in both mental and material life, and in the ways that those two aspects intersected." Marco Polo described China "as the sea that salts all rivers that flow into it." These sound like descriptions of the U.S. in the later twentieth century.

This Chinese dominance began with the great Tang dynasty (618-907); the 200 years of its greatest power began the Chinese centuries in Asia. They established patterns for China that would continue through the Song and Ming dynasties down to early modern times. Buddhism flourished, tying China more closely to a widespread religious community. Tang China was outward-looking, an open forum for people, ideas, and things from many cultures. Much as the prosperous twentieth century United States fueled the global economy, the wealth and power of Tang China was so great that it stimulated commerce throughout much of Eurasia. During these years China was open to the world. Just as U.S. forces have protected maritime trade routes, Tang military garrisons protected the Silk Road trade routes of Central Asia, encouraging the flow of goods, ideas and people between China and Western Asia. Along this vast network, Chinese products such as silk and porcelain reached the Middle East and Europe. There was also a dynamic sea trade which linked China with various Southeast Asian countries, India, Persia, and the Arabs. Just as entrepreneurial talent has flocked to the United States, merchants, skilled

craftsmen, and even scientists (including Indian astronomers) from all over Asia formed temporary or permanent communities in several Chinese cities. For example, perhaps two thirds of the inhabitants in the great southern port of Canton (Guangzhou), were immigrants, including many Arabs and Persians.

Diverse countries located in regions like Burma, Java and Nepal regularly sent embassies bearing gifts to the Tang court. Like the United States in this century, the Tang achieved superpower status through a combination of factors. China's huge population fostered a sophisticated urban civilization, which attracted talent from all over Eurasia. Modern superpowers are urban-based, with dynamic and creative cities. Tang China was the most urbanized civilization of that era, with the capital, Chang'an, the world's largest city and many other cities larger than any in Europe or India. The broad thoroughfares of Chinese cities like Chang'an were crowded with visitors and skilled immigrants from many lands. Just as the United States during the 20th century was the most creative technological civilization, Tang China led its world. Many significant scientific and technological achievements, especially in astronomy and mathematics, characterized the era.

The next great dynasty, the Song (Sung) (960–1279), presided over an even more sophisticated period of achievement. One of the major historians of the Song, Dieter Kuhn, writes that "the Song dynasty... [was] the most advanced civilization on earth. Its early emperors Initiated a transformation of China based on rationality, efficiency, predictability, and economic dynamism- in short, the most pronounced features of enlightened modern capitalism." Although lacking the Tang's empire building and world leadership, the Song was in many respects more refined in the arts of living and in technological development and material

richness. Described by some historians as premodern China's most exciting period, the Song was characterized by unprecedented innovation, economic dynamism, urban sophistication, and cultural flowering. Song China contained between a quarter and a third of the world's total population. Song China boasted commercialization, urbanization, a widening [local and overseas] market, rising demand and mechanical invention, reminding some historians of eighteenth-century Europe at the dawn of rapid industrialization.<sup>15</sup>

Song China boasted the world's largest cities, at least five cities having populations over a million, and nearly fifty other cities each containing over 100,000 people. In the later Song era, when the government had been pushed south of the Yangzi River by nomadic invaders, the capital was Hangzhou, a city of several million on the southern end of the Grand Canal. A later and well-traveled Italian visitor, Marco Polo, called it unquestionably the greatest city in the world. Standing along the shores of beautiful West Lake, Hangzhou could not help but charm the Italian. Polo wrote in the thirteenth century that "the city is beyond dispute the finest and noblest in the world in point of grandeur and beauty as well as in its abundant delights. The natives of this city are of peaceful character, thoroughly honest and truthful and accustomed to dainty living."16 The city boasted parks, a fire department, garbage collection, a pollution-control agency, and paved streets—all things nonexistent in Polo's much smaller Venice, then one of the major European cities. Indeed, China in this era was far more developed in many fields than the rest of Eurasia and probably had the world's highest standard of living. Polo noted, for example, that the Chinese took regular baths, astonishing information to medieval Europeans, who seldom if ever bathed. Hangzhou would be followed by Nanjing in the fifteenth century, and then Beijing from the sixteenth into the nineteenth centuries, as the world's largest cities.

The Song also marked the high point for Chinese commerce and foreign trade. The merchant class grew substantially, and tax revenues were three times higher than for the Tang. Song China also developed the world's first fully monetized economy, putting paper money and silver coins into wide use. In addition, Song China had the world's most advanced farming, with expanding productivity meeting the needs for agricultural products. Farmers doubled the rice crop and vastly increased the growing and marketing of sugar, once a minor crop. The flourishing foreign trade was increasingly carried on the maritime networks that connected China to the rest of Afro-Eurasia. Chinese and China-based merchants regularly visited Southeast Asia and traded around the Indian Ocean, and Chinese industrial and food products found markets as far away as Persia, East Africa, and Egypt. The cosmopolitan southern seaports of Guangzhou (Canton) and Quanzhou were home to thousands of foreigners, including many Arab, Indian, Persian, and even East African merchants. To accommodate these varied peoples, the cities contained numerous mosques and Hindu temples.<sup>17</sup>

Like the 20th century U.S., Song China's industry was the world's most advanced. China's world leadership was reflected in its export of manufactured goods (silks, porcelain, books) and import of raw materials (spices, minerals, horses). Chinese porcelain was traded all over Asia, the Middle East, and parts of Africa, and the name china became synonymous with the very finest porcelain products. China's iron industry was the world's largest before the eighteenth century, producing the finest steel for tools, weapons, stoves, ploughshares, cooking equipment, nails, building materials, and bridges. Mass production and metal-casting techniques supplied standardized iron products to the world's largest internal market, and the Song mined coal for fuel and produced salt on an industrial scale. Spurred by domestic and foreign trade, Song China

also developed a significant shipbuilding industry. Its huge compartmentalized ships had four decks and four to six masts and were capable of carrying five hundred sailors and extensive cargo. Thousands of cargo ships plied the rivers and canals. This maritime technology was the world's best at that time.

The Song also maintained the Chinese technological and scientific tradition. Between the first and fifteenth centuries C.E., the Chinese produced a majority of the world's major inventions between 1-1000 C.E. Major Chinese inventions of the era that later spread throughout Eurasia included the magnetic compass (for naval navigation), the sternpost rudder, and the spinning wheel. Song craftsmen also made metal movable type, an invention that greatly facilitated the printing of books. Just as Americans invented cutting edge weaponry, Song technicians developed the fire lance, a bamboo tube filled with gunpowder that was the precursor of the metal-barrel gun. Song ships were fitted with missile launchers, flamethrowers, cannons, and bombs, all used to keep the coast free of pirates. Song engineers also invented a mechanized spinning process for the reeling of silk and later hemp thread. Developed over half a millennium before the Industrial Revolution began in western Europe, this was the world's first industrial machine. In many other ways, China was poised to foster an Industrial Revolution a half millennium before England.

Although the Song could have been a turning point in Chinese and world history, they did not foster a major transition. Unlike England's industrial revolution's transforming impact in the West, the commercial and agricultural dynamism never revolutionized Chinese society. Instead, these developments were contained and absorbed. For example, the Chinese had the technology to sail the seas and colonize other lands, but they lacked the incentive because China was largely

self-sufficient and had no missionary tradition. Since the highly bureaucratic empire easily adjusted to economic change, it could keep the merchants from disrupting China's social order. With an agriculture productive enough to feed a huge population, convenient transportation by water through canals, and many natural resources, the Chinese had no great need to develop additional mechanized technologies. The Mongol conquest of the Song in the later 1200s, as well as a cooler climate by the thirteenth century and the Black Death pandemic in the fourteenth, also undermined economic dynamism. Finally, population pressure became a growing burden as land available for farming filled up. After the Song demise, Confucian disdain of merchants also led to stagnation. In its domination of the merchants, the imperial government played a central role in containing economic growth. The Song government, more interested in economic than political growth and empire, was generally disinterested in military expansion. Prosperity, trade, and urban living made peace more attractive than conquest, a situation the aggressive Mongols would eventually exploit.

Borrowing from anthropology, the historian L.S. Stavrianos credits the "Law of the Retarding lead" for helping Europe: Nothing fails like success. This law holds that the best adapted and most successful societies have the most difficulty in changing and retaining their lead in a period of transition; they lose their dynamic thrust. Conversely, the backward and less-successful societies are more likely to adapt and forge ahead. In the late Post-Classical "this hobbled the advanced Chinese and favored the retarded Westerners." In 1500, he believes, China still had a significant edge over other civilizations and hence a stake in the traditional system.

China remained creative and economically powerful for several more centuries but less

Eastern inventions to flow westward, where they were gradually assimilated by Europe. While much of Europe was less developed economically and politically than the leading Asian societies during this period, by the fourteenth century some Europeans were showing increased dynamism, with restless human energy, influential merchants, and competing states, laying the roots for a later shift in the world balance of power during Early Modern times. Hence, after 1450 or 1500 the advantage gradually shifted to western Europeans, who laid the foundations for rapid growth and eventual world dominance. But some parts of Asia remained dynamic for several more centuries.

#### THE ASIAN MARITIME SYSTEM

The term "globalization" refers to the increasing interconnectedness of nations and peoples around the world through trade, investment, travel, popular culture and other forms of interaction. <sup>19</sup> Many historians have identified "globalization" as a twentieth century phenomenon connected to the rise of the Western-dominated international economy. But extensive interaction between widespread peoples as well as travel over vast distances came many centuries before these developments. By 1000 CE the seeds of globalization had already taken root in the Eastern Hemisphere, particularly in the lands bordering the Indian Ocean, Java Sea, and South China Sea. These were the most dynamic countries in the world at that time, and their interactions were extensive. The Eastern Hemisphere in the 1300s and 1400s had three centers: China, India, and the Islamic realm. In the 1400s, from Ottoman Turkey eastward to Japan, agricultural efficiency, consumer goods, social welfare, and civilian and military technology were generally the equal of, and often superior to, European counterparts.

The "Silk Road" through Central Asia provided the most outstanding example of overland interaction for many centuries, including in Tang times. Maritime trade also flourished. Now the Indian Ocean became the heart of the most extensive seagoing trade network in the premodern world. The maritime network grew more important between 1000 and 1500 CE, surpassing overland trade. The oceanic routes between Southeast Asia and the Middle East greatly expanded. Ultimately this network linked China, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaya and the Indonesian archipelago through the Straits of Melaka (Malacca) to India and Sri Lanka, and then westward to Persia, Arabia, the East African coast as far south as Mozambique, and the eastern Mediterranean, connecting to Constantinople, Venice and Genoa. Over these trade routes the spices of Indonesia and East Africa, the gold and tin of Malaya, the sugar of the Philippines, the textiles, sugar and cotton of India, the cinnamon and ivory of Ceylon, the gold of Zimbabwe in southeast Africa, the coffee of Arabia, the carpets of Persia, the silver of Japan, and the silks, porcelain, and tea of China traveled to distant markets. Many of these products reached Europe, sparking interest there in reaching the eastern sources of the riches. It was this dream that helped motivate both Columbus and the Portuguese explorers of the 1400s.

Islamic merchants dominated this system, spreading their religion far and wide. Islamic expansion formed a huge cultural world stretching across the entire Eastern Hemisphere. Trading ports such as Melaka on the southwest coast of Malaya became vibrant, "globalized" centers of international commerce and culture. The exchanges across Asia at this time, including the spread of Islam, were significant enough that we can speak of a globalized economy and culture. Muslim-dominated trade roots ultimately reached from the Sahara to Spain to the South China Sea, fostering travel. Various states and port cities around the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, and South China Sea were closely linked to maritime trade, prompting some historians to refer to these waters as an "Asian Mediterranean," a counterpart to the busy sea linking North Africa, Southern Europe, and Westernmost Asia. 20 Very much like dynamic port cities like Hong Kong,

Singapore, Dubai, and Los Angeles today, these earlier trading ports became vibrant centers of international commerce and culture, drawing populations from various societies. The thirteenth-century traveler Marco Polo, whose hometown was the leading European port, Venice, was fascinated by the coming and going of ships at Quanzhou in southern China, a city known as "the emporium of the world": "Here is a harbor whither all ships of India come, with much costly merchandise. It is also the port whither go the [Chinese] merchants [heading overseas]. There is such traffic of merchandise that it is a truly wonderful sight." A hemispheric trade system developed in which some people came to produce for a world market.

In the early fifteenth century Chinese ships would follow this vast trading network in undertaking the greatest oceanic explorations in world history to that point, a confirmation of the crucial role played by this Afro-Eurasian maritime commerce and the dynamism of some Asian civilizations.<sup>22</sup> The emperor of the new Ming dynasty (1368-1644) dispatched a series of grand maritime expeditions, led by Admiral Zheng He, to southern Asia and beyond that were the greatest and largest scale feats of seamanship and shipbuilding that the world had ever seen, placing China at the cutting edge. Five centuries later the United States would develop a similar reputation for technological innovation and adventurous behavior. Zheng He's extraordinary voyages carried the Chinese flag through Southeast Asia to India, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the East African coast. Had they continued, the Chinese ships may have had the technology to have sailed around Africa to Europe or to the Americas, but they had no incentive to do so. Historians still debate the precise reasons for the voyages but some see commercial motives as primary, since these voyages occurred at a time of increased activity by Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia. During the early Ming many thousands of Chinese visited or had settled in the Philippines, Malaya, Indonesia, Siam, and Vietnam, creating a closer commercial link to China, and Yuan and Ming porcelain was sold as far west as South-Central Africa.

Southeast Asia had long been a cosmopolitan region where peoples, ideas, and products met, and visitors and sojourners from many lands continued to reach the region. <sup>23</sup> For example, the intrepid Italian traveler Marco Polo passed through in 1292 on his way home from a long sojourn in China. His writings praised the wealth and sophistication of various states in Vietnam and Indonesia, arousing European interest in seeking direct trade connections with these seemingly fabulous lands. Polo wrote that "Java is of unsurpassing wealth, producing all kinds of spices, frequented by a vast amount of shipping. Indeed, the treasure of this island is so great as to be past telling." <sup>24</sup> Indeed, the Southeast Asia Marco Polo and other travelers encountered was one of the world's more prosperous and urbanized regions. Southeast Asians often enjoyed better health, more varied diets, and adequate material resources than most peoples.

Southeast Asians had long excelled as seafaring traders, traveling as far away as East Africa. In the 14th-16th centuries Southeast Asian port cities became essential intermediaries in the trade between China, India, and the Middle East. This trade brought Southeast Asians into contact with the Muslim Islamic merchants from Arabia, Persia, and India, who spread Islam along the Indian Ocean trading routes. This transformation in the international maritime economy created an unprecedented commercial prosperity, agricultural growth, and cosmopolitan culture in Southeast Asia. Some historians refer to an "age of commerce" in Southeast Asia between 1400 and 1650 in which increased trade with China and across the Indian Ocean, marked by increased demand for Southeast Asian commodities, encouraged commercial prosperity, the growth of cities and political changes. <sup>25</sup> Hence, Southeast Asia served as a major hub of international trade.

The Malayan city of Melaka became the region's economic power and the crossroads of Asian maritime commerce in the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Its rulers made their port a waystation for

the series of grand Chinese voyages to the western Indian Ocean. In exchange for Melaka's service, the Ming supported the young state in regional disputes. Soon merchants from around Asia began coming to the new emporium, rapidly transforming the port into the archipelago's major trading hub, as well as the southeastern terminus for the Indian Ocean maritime trading network. One of the major commercial centers in the world, Melaka rivaled other great trading ports such as Calicut, Cambay, Guangzhou (Canton), Hormuz, Alexandria, Genoa, and Venice. In 1468 Melaka's sultan Mansur wrote to the king of the Ryukyu Islands, "We have learned that to master the blue oceans people must engage in commerce. All the lands within the seas are united in one body. Life has never been so affluent in preceding generations as it is today." Five centuries later an American free market, free trade economist could not have said it better.

Melaka flourished until 1511 as a vital link in world trade. An early-sixteenth-century Portuguese visitor wrote that it had "no equal in the world" and extolled the importance of Melaka to peoples and trade patterns as far away as Western Europe: "Melaka is a city that was made for merchandise, fitter than any other in the world. Commerce between different nations for a thousand leagues on every hand must come to Melaka." Every year trading ships from around the Middle East and South Asia made the long voyage to Melaka, carrying with them grain, woolens, arms, copperware, textiles, and opium. Goods from as far north as Korea also reached Melaka.

The flourishing trading port attracted merchants from many lands, making it perhaps the world's most international city. By the late 1400s Melaka's 100,000 to 200,000 people included 15,000 foreign merchants, whose diversity reflected Melaka's global importance. The foreigners included Arabs, Egyptians, Persians, Armenians, Jews, Ethiopians, Swahilis, Burmese, and

Indians from lands to the west, and Vietnamese, Javanese, Filipinos, Japanese, and Chinese from the east and north. Some eighty-four languages were spoken on the city's streets, very much like New York or L.A. today. Visitors claimed that more ships crowded the Melaka harbor than in any other port in the world, attracted by a stable government and a free trade policy. Gold brought from various places was so plentiful that children played with it.

Both the Chinese and Arabs proved particularly skillful in seagoing technology and were active in Southeast Asian trade. The trade between China and various Southeast Asian states around the South China Sea continued to grow, China remaining the major market for Southeast Asian goods. However, this Southeast Asian-China trade became part of a much larger commercial exchange as the Indian Ocean routes between Southeast Asia and the Middle East became the heart of the most extensive trade network in the world between 1000 and 1500. Many opportunistic and adaptable Chinese merchants and sailors, mostly Hokkiens from Fujian province in southeastern China, went to Southeast Asia to trade between around 1400 and 1750, with or without official Chinese government support. <sup>29</sup> Hokkiens traveled regularly between Southeast Asia and China, others sojourned or settled down permanently in Southeast Asian seaports to solidify and expand the trade connections, and a third group came to specialize in trade links between Southeast Asian ports or between Southeast Asia and the Ryukyu Islands or Japan. They were by no means the first Chinese to trade or settle in Southeast Asia; this process had been going on for centuries, albeit in small numbers, and regular Sino-Southeast Asian maritime trade had certainly begun by the ninth century. Chinese merchants were already prominent in various Javan ports by the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The Hokkiens sometimes enjoyed official support, sometimes cleverly evaded or ignored

sporadic imperial restrictions on trade. Fearing enemies at home and abroad, the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) ended the Zheng He voyages and banned Chinese emigration and private maritime trade from the 1430s to 1567 but could not prevent Hokkien traders, often with the connivance of local officials and leading families in Fujian, from circumventing the poorly-enforced ban. Many governments employed local Chinese merchants to lead or accompany their tribute missions to the Ming court. Over the centuries some Chinese who settled or sojourned abroad, often marrying local women, served as cultural brokers between China and Southeast Asia and fostered hybrid communities; a few even became government officials in and diplomats for their new communities. Chinese trading communities sprung up from Japan to India. Today's royal family in Thailand descends from an eighteenth century Chinese immigrant. The exchange of products between China and various Southeast Asian states continued to grow, fueled in part by Chinese population increase and hence demand for imported goods. Hence, long before the era of Western dominance, Asian merchants, among them Chinese, had linked these cities and their hinterlands to the world trade nexus.

Southeast Asia's connections to the wider world, as well as its famed wealth and resources eventually attracted arrivals who were not welcome. <sup>30</sup> By the beginning of the sixteenth century a few Portuguese explorers and adventurers, with deadly weapons, state-of-the-art ships, Christian missionary zeal, and desire for wealth, reached first India and then Southeast Asia seeking "Christians and spices." The Portuguese standard of living was probably inferior to that of Siam, Vietnam, Melaka, or Java, but the Portuguese were the forerunners of what became a powerful, destabilizing European presence that gradually colonized and altered much of the region between 1500 and 1914. Yet, while the Southeast Asian "age of commerce" now changed

it did not end. Rather it extended through much of the 1600s and even into the 1700s. During this time both local Southeast Asian— especially Malay and Javanese-- and foreign merchants-- Chinese, Indian, Arab, Persian, and, for a time, Japanese, as well as, after 1511, Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, English, and French-- were active in the region, acquiring, exporting, importing, and transporting manufactured goods and natural resources. These changes transformed Southeast Asia from a transfer point to a core in the Eurasian trade network.

In the face of fierce European competition Chinese trading activities and networks actually picked up in the second half of the eighteenth century as maritime trade began changing in emphasis from luxury goods, such as spices and gold, to bulk goods such as rice. Increasing numbers of Chinese migrants and traders ushered in what one historian termed a "Chinese century" in the Southeast Asian economies from around 1700 into the mid-1800s, by which time there may have been one million Chinese in Southeast Asia. Thousands of Chinese junks sailed up and down the China coast and to Japan and Southeast Asia by 1700. Rather than traveling between China and Southeast Asia increasing numbers of Chinese ships carried goods from one Southeast Asian port to another, playing a key role in the interregional trade. Chinese enterprise was the driving force in this regional trade.

Between 1800 and 1940 millions of Chinese immigrated to Southeast Asia, many as merchants, many more as laborers; eventually they became the backbone of the Southeast Asian economies. Today some 25 million ethnic Chinese live in Southeast Asia, part of an Overseas Chinese population worldwide of nearly 30 million.<sup>33</sup> Ethnic Chinese dominate the retail trade and industry in most Southeast Asian cities and towns and Chinese entrepreneurs provide much of the energy and capital for the rapid economic growth and development in Singapore,

Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia over the past three decades. Chinese businessmen were also prominent in many South Pacific and Indian Ocean islands, some Caribbean and Latin American countries, and North America.

The transition to a European-dominated trading system took place over several centuries in Asia. Before the 1800s, when the transition was completed, Asia still boasted the bulk of world economic activity. Asians produced some 80 percent of goods as late as 1775, and this production had probably increased since 1500. The industries of China and India remained the twin pillars of Asian commerce well into the 1700s. Indian textiles such as cashmere and cotton cloth were so popular in Asia, Africa, and Europe that they almost constituted a form of currency. The economies of India and China dwarfed those of any other country. The most economically developed regions within China, Japan, India, and northwestern Europe may have enjoyed roughly comparable standards of living, including health and income levels.<sup>34</sup>

It is hardly surprising that Chinese and Indian traders are so astute and competitive today. Between 1500-1800 shrewd Asian merchants could often outcompete those from Europe. For example, Indian merchant maintained and even expanded commercial networks over vast distances. The Indian maritime trade network stretched from Arabia, Persia, Northeast Africa, and the Red Sea to Melaka, Sumatra, Siam, and China. Meanwhile, Indian overland trade networks extended across Central Asia, Afghanistan, Tibet, Persia, the Caucasus states, and much of Russia. Many wealthy Asian trading magnates had huge capital resources. Some Indian traders were as rich as Europe's wealthiest merchant families. A European visitor was amazed at the competition provided by fabulously rich Indian merchants: "We [Europeans] believe ourselves to be the most astute men that one can encounter, and the people here surpass

us in everything. And they can do better calculations by memory than we can do with the pen."<sup>36</sup> Similarly the Spanish in the Philippines depended on the Chinese merchant class to supply many consumer goods. A Spanish friar observed in the mid-1600s that although Manila "is small, and the Spaniards are few, nevertheless, they require the services of thousands of Chinese."<sup>37</sup> European merchants competed best when they were, like the Dutch East Indies Company traders, supported by military force.

Like today European-Asian trade relations often favored Asians. Since Asians had little interest in European manufactured goods such as clothing, which they considered inferior in quality to their own goods, Europeans bought Asian goods and resources with American silver and gold. Vast amounts of American silver ended up in China, where it served as the basis of the monetary system and promoted economic growth. Like today Asian goods found a ready market around the world. Chinese goods transported from the Philippines were so much cheaper than Spanish ones in Peru that the Spanish viceroy complained it was "impossible to choke off the trade since a man can clothe his wife in Chinese silks for 25 pesos, whereas he could not provide her with clothing of Spanish silks with 200 pesos." European merchants accounted for only a small proportion of trade from India and China.

Unfortunately for Asians, Western colonialism and neocolonialism took hold between 1500 and 1914, thwarting local merchants and industries while giving advantages to the West.

Political, economic, and military power in most of Asia had shifted to the Western nations by the later nineteenth century.

### THE CONTEMPORARY ASIAN RESURGENCE

In 1941 Henry Luce, the publisher of *Time* magazine, declared that the 20th century would

be the American Century and that Americans, citizens of the world's most powerful nation, must accept their duty and opportunity to exercise Influence in the world, by whatever means they could. Luce believed that America's idealistic Bill of Rights, magnificent industrial products, and technological skills would be shared with all peoples. His view, while arrogant, reflected American's extraordinary belief in the exportability of their country's institutions and values. But in the American Century U.S.-style capitalism and democracy proved difficult to implant where they had no roots, as the U.S. learned In Vietnam and Latin America. Yet, for several decades, as the U.S. economy soared, the notion of an American Century seemed realistic. In 1950, the U.S. accounted for 27% of world economic output. The economic boom lasted until the late 1960s and helped finance an activist foreign policy. The U.S. became the supplier and engine of the world economy with unmatched world power. By 2000 the United States produced nearly a third of the world's goods and services; Japan, with the next largest economy, accounted for around a sixth. International observers described U.S. leadership metaphorically: when the United States sneezes, the rest of the world catches cold. But by the later 1970s U.S. dominance was declining for a variety of reasons, including an unsuccessful and unpopular war in Vietnam, the resurgence of Europe, the costs of the Cold War, and the rise of the NICs. Since 2001 the economic, political, and social costs of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, severe financial problems, and other challenges have made a return to an American Century unrealistic any time soon. Another factor has been the Asian resurgence.<sup>39</sup>

Various Asian countries, much like Japan in the late 1800s, have combined market economies, cheap labor, and powerful governments to promote industrialization. China is only the most prominent.<sup>40</sup> Inspired by Japan's industrialization in the late nineteenth century and

rapid recovery from World War II, leaders encouraged their people to "Look East" to Japan by mixing capitalism and activist government to spur economic expansion. By repressing opposition, at least for a time, they have ensured political stability and attracted foreign investment. These countries have favored export-oriented growth, producing consumer goods—clothing, toys, housewares, electronics, automobiles—for sale abroad, especially in Europe and North America, and fostering high growth rates and the import of industrial jobs from other, often Western, countries. Some have also become centers of high technology.

Beginning in the 1980s China as well as the dragons- South Korea, Taiwan and the tigers-Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore- and eventually India and Vietnam created the world's fastest-growing economies and considerable prosperity, their major cities boasting wellstocked malls, freeways, diverse restaurants, and luxury condominiums. The Little Dragons-Taiwan and South Korea- industrialized and then diversified into high technology, making computers and other electronics products and thereby posing an economic challenge to Japan and the West. Even Japanese companies outsource jobs to China and other Asian nations. In Southeast Asia local entrepreneurs of Chinese ancestry provided much of the initiative and capital. Economic growth had drawbacks: for example, industrial activity and the expansion of agriculture, mining, and logging caused widespread environmental destruction. Yet, migrants crowding into cities rubbed elbows with other peoples, encouraging cultural mixing. Even though governments often squashed dissent and repressed personal liberties, expanding education systems fostered larger middle classes, who sought more political influence and often liberalization. By the 1990s Indonesians, South Koreans, Taiwanese, and Thais had replaced dictatorships with democratic governments.

Americans have been the major proponent of globalization, arguing that open markets, investment, and trade foster prosperity. By the 1990s the United States and China were gaining the most from removing trade barriers and fostering competitive markets worldwide. Both sucked in investment capital, aggressively acquired natural resources from around the globe, and supplied diverse products to foreign markets. But not all countries enjoyed such success. By the 1990s Japan and some European nations struggled to compete in the globalizing economy, while many Asian, African, and Caribbean nations fell deeper into poverty.

Like Tang China the Peoples Republic takes advantage of trade to enhance their global power. China surpassed Germany and now Japan to become the world's secpnd largest economy as Chinese factories turned out clothing, housewares, and other consumer goods. The Chinese also began investing in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East and buying U.S.-based companies. China became the world leader in using wind and solar power. However, not all Chinese benefited. China's less-efficient state-owned enterprises often closed down, while peasants protested as their farmland was bulldozed to build foreign-owned factories, private housing developments, and golf courses for affluent Chinese.

Since 1976 China has pursued a pragmatic foreign policy designed to win friends and trading partners but to also avoid entangling alliances. China gradually improved relations with the United States and USSR, as well as with once-bitter enemies such as South Korea and anticommunist countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Australia, which view China as the future regional power and hence seek friendly relations. China became increasingly active in the world community, joining international institutions such as the World Trade Organization.

To enhance China's competitive stance, some 200 million children study English. Like the U.S.

at its zenith, China now enjoys tremendous influence in the world economy, importing vast amounts of capital and natural resources, such as Zambian copper and Venezuelan oil, while exporting industrial products of every kind. Thousands of foreign investors have come from the West, Japan, Southeast Asia, South Korea, and even Taiwan, opening factories and negotiating joint ventures with Chinese firms. Meanwhile, China has supported the U.S. economy, becoming the major buyer of the treasury bonds that financed the growing U.S. national debt in the early 2000s. Chinese enterprises have also begun buying up companies in other nations. Hundreds of Chinese companies operate in Africa and Latin America. Many thousands of Chinese have followed them as workers or to open small enterprises. In addition, China provides investment and loans to governments but expects cooperation in return. In many Asian and some African and Latin American countries, large numbers of people are learning Chinese, and some 90,000 foreign students study in China.

Thus China has become perhaps the world's most successful newly industrializing economy, buttressed by a vast resource base, a huge domestic market, and a resourceful labor force.

China's tremendous size, population, natural resources, military strength, national confidence, and sense of history have placed it in an unusual position of being a major global power while still having a much lower overall standard of living and far more poverty than North America, Western Europe, Japan, and several industrializing Asian nations

China's recent economic success shows the challenges ahead. By the early twenty-first century a China rushing toward development had become a huge consumer of the world's industrial, agricultural, and natural resources, energizing global trade but causing shortages elsewhere. For example, world oil prices have soared since 2000 in part because of China's

increasing energy appetite as Chinese switch from bicycles to cars and motor bikes. Try to safely cross a street in Beijing! If the Chinese consumed as much oil per capita as Americans, their demand would exceed the present world production. By 2006 the Chinese consumed nearly twice as much meat and more than twice as much steel as Americans. China's living standards remain far below those of Japan and South Korea. Should they rise to that level, however, in the next decade or two, China will import vastly more resources than it does today, further stressing supplies.

Assuming China does not experience a revolution, civil war, or economic collapse, all of which are possible due to increasing socioeconomic and political stresses, experts expect it to move far past Japan in the next few years and to have the world's largest economy by 2035 or 2040, eclipsing the United States. As occurred in the industrializing West earlier, rapid Chinese development, including the growing use of polluting fossil fuels, has also led to environmental degradation, including dangerous air pollution and perpetually hazy skies. People in nations once poor but becoming developed, such as China, India, and Brazil, do not believe that the industrialized Western peoples have any more right to consume the world's resources than they do, and they want their fair share.

By the 1980s observers referred to the Pacific Rim, the economically dynamic Asian countries on the edge of the Pacific Basin: China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and several Southeast Asian nations. Many predicted that the twenty-first century would be the Pacific Century, marked by a shift of global economic power from Europe and North America to the Pacific Rim, whose export-driven nations seemed poised to dominate a post–Cold War world where economic power might outweigh military might. The center of gravity of world economic

life, for centuries located in the eastern half of Eurasia, had shifted to Europe and North America, and then in the 1990s had moved back toward a resurgent Asia. But in the late 1990s the economies of many Asian nations, among them Japan, crashed and only slowly rebounded, only to be damaged again in 2008–2009 as the U.S. economic crisis affected Asia and the rest of the world. Factories closed and revenues declined, causing massive unemployment and hardship. By later 2009 some Asian nations, including China and India, re-established strong growth.

Some trends suggested that the Pacific Rim nations were becoming an Asian counterpart to the European Community, the free-trade zone formed by western European nations, thus foreshadowing the possible Pacific Century in which Asian nations might dominate the world economy. Many East and Southeast Asian nations forged closer economic cooperation, with Japan and China forming the hubs. APEC was formed in 1989 and now includes 21 nations including the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Chile, and Peru. A global economy that had been based on the tripod of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan now has to accommodate China, India and the tigers and dragons.

China, rather than the United States, led global recovery from the 2008–2009 recession, suggesting that the world's economic center of gravity may be shifting to East Asia. Perhaps China has been returning to its historical leadership as the Asian dragon and a major engine of the global economy. Experts debated whether either China or India might replace the United States as the major world power by 2050 or 2100. Some argued that India had advantages, such as democracy, a free press, and a sounder financial system, while others thought China had the better prospects, especially if the growing middle class fosters a more open political system. Still others doubted that a decline of U.S. power was imminent or even inevitable. As during the long

period of Chinese power and prosperity between 600 and 1800, China is once again a major force in world affairs. But bullet trains can and do crash. Thus both the Pacific Rim and the United States face uncertain futures, and China, Japan, and the United States will undoubtedly play major roles in the years to come. Yet in many respects, East Asia had returned to its historical role as a key engine and center of gravity of the world economy.

The rise of the Pacific Rim in the late twentieth century reshaped the global system. Hence, in a recent survey Americans now consider Asia more important to US national interests than Europe. <sup>42</sup> And this points up how history could have been very different. If Song China had maintained their dynamism perhaps China would be credited with launching the Industrial Revolution and capitalism. If the Ming had continued the great voyages and Chinese ships had explored more of the world, perhaps even sailing around Africa into the Atlantic Ocean and on to Europe, and the maritime trading world of Asia had continued to expand, Chinese rather than English might now be the world's lingua franca.

### **ENDNOTES:**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R. Hofheinz and K.E. Calder, The Eastasia Edge (1982)]], quoted in Eric Jones, et. al., *Coming Full Circle: An Economic History of the Pacific Rim* (Boulder: Westview, 1993), p. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For more discussion of this topic see Craig A. Lockard, "Global Historians and the Great Divergence," *World History Bulletin*, 17/1 (Fall, 2000), 17, 32-34; Lockard, *Societies, Networks, and Transitions: A Global History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston: Cengage, 2010), especially pp. 373-379, 497-506.

<sup>3.</sup> Daniel Chirot, Social Change in the Twentieth Century (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), p. 19.

<sup>4.</sup> Robert Strayer, et al. *The Making of the Modern World: Connected Histories, Divergent Paths 1500 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p. 125.

<sup>5.</sup> McNeill, "The Changing Shape of World History," in Philip Romper, et. al. eds., *World History: Ideologies, Structures, and Identities* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998), p. 36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For a survey of some of this literature see Lockard, *Societies*, 373-379 and "Global Historians". See also John Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Robert Marks, *The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Ecological Narrative* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and

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Littlefield, 2002); Andre Gunder Frank, *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

- 7. See, eg, Mary Kilbourne Matossian, Shaping World History (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), p. 64.
- 8. "Choosing Freedom," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 27, 2000, p. 40. For an excellent compilation of knowledge about premodern Chinese science and technology, see Robert Temple, *The Genius of China: 3,000 Years of Science, Discovery and Invention* (London: Prion Books, 1986).
- 9. "Paradise Lost," Far Eastern Economic Review (April 15, 1999), 40.
- <sup>10</sup> Quoted in John Merson, *The Genius That Was China: East and West in the Making of the Modern World* (Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1990), p. 14.
- <sup>11</sup> This discussion on the Tang is largely based on Lockard, Societies, 274-279 and "Tang China and the Chinese Millennium," World History Essay Series, *Encarta Encyclopedia* (Microsoft, 1999). See also, eg., S.A.M. Adshead, *China in World History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 54-18; Adshead, *Tang China: The Rise of the East in World History* (New York: Palgrave, 2004); Mark E. Lewis, *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Charles Benn, *China's Golden Age: Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Denis C. Twitchett, ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 3: Sui and T'ang China, 589-906 AD* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- <sup>12</sup> On the Silk Road see, eg., Frances Wood, *The Silk Road* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Xinru Liu, *The Silk Road in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- <sup>13</sup> This discussion on the Song and its aftermath is largely based on Lockard, *Societies*, 279-289. See also, eg., Dieter Kuhn, *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion*, 1250-1276 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962); Merson, *Genius*, pp. 14-65; Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith, eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, *Vol. 5 Part One: The Five Dynasties and Sung China and its Predecessors*, 907-1279 AD (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- <sup>14</sup> Kuhn, Age of Confucian Rule, p. 277.
- 15. Rhoads Murphey, "The Historical Context," in Robert E. Gamer, ed., *Understanding Contemporary China* (Boulder: Lynn Rienner, 1999), p. 47; Rhoads Murphey, *A History of Asia*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Pearson, 2009), pp. 148-155.
- <sup>16</sup> R.E. Latham, trans., *The Travels of Marco Polo* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 184-187.
- <sup>17</sup> On Quanzhou see, eg., Angela Schottenhammer, ed., *The Emporium of the World: Quanzhou, 1000-1400* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); John Chaffee, "At the Intersection of Empire and World Trade: The Chinese Port City of Quanzhou (Zaitun), Eleventh-Fifteenth centuries," in Kenneth R. Hall, ed., *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm, c. 1400-1800* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2008), pp. 99-121.
- 18. The Promise of the Coming Dark Age (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1970), p. 181.
- <sup>19</sup> This section is based largely on Craig Lockard, *Southeast Asia in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Lockard, *Societies*, 339-340, 342-345, 482-484; Lockard, "'The Sea Common to All': Maritime Frontiers, Port Cities, and Chinese Traders in the Southeast Asian Age of Commerce, ca. 1400-1750" *Journal of World History*, 21/2 (2010), 219-247; Lockard, "The Seeds of Globalization," World History Essay Series, *Encarta*

Encyclopedia (Microsoft, 1999). See also, eg., Patricia Risso, Merchants of Faith: Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian Ocean (Boulder: Westview, 1995).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> For an assessment of this argument, see Lockard, "Sea", 220.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Quoted in Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 125.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See, eg., Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405-33* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994); Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433* (New York: Pearson, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> On Southeast Asia see Lockard, *Southeast* Asia. For an interesting recent study of Southeast Asia in a broader historical context, see Geoffrey C. Gunn, *History Without Borders: The Making of an Asian World Region, 1000-1800* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Quoted in Kenneth Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), p. 210.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> See, eg., Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, 2 volumes (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988 and 1993). For a survey of this argument and its critics see Lockard, "Sea."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> On Melaka see, eg., Lockard, "Sea", 228-234, and *Southeast Asia*, 65-68; Kernial Singh Sandhu and Paul Wheatley, eds., *Melaka: The Transformation of a Malay Capital, c. 1400-1980* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1983).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Quoted in Reid, Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, vol. 2, p. 10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Quoted in Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese Studies in the Historical Geography of the Malay Peninsula Before A.D. 1500* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1966), p. 313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> This discussion on Chinese traders in Southeast Asia is based largely on Lockard, "Sea" and "Chinese Emigration Before 1948," in Immanuel Ness, ed., *Encyclopedia of Human Migration* (Malden, Ma.: Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> See Lockard, *Southeast Asia*, 74-117 and *Societies*, 394-395, 474-483, 488-490.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> See Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Carl Trocki, "Chinese Pioneering in Eighteenth-Century Southeast Asia," in Anthony Reid, ed., *The Last Stand of Asian Autonomies: Responses to Modernity in the Diverse States of Southeast Asia and Korea, 1750-1900* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997), pp. 83-102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), p. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> See, eg., Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Pomeranz and Steven Topik, *The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the Present* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999); Frank,

*ReORIENT*. For an assessment of this argument, see Lockard, "Great Divergence," and David Buck, "Was it Pluck or Luck That Made the West Grow Rich? *Journal of World History*, 10/2 (Fall, 1999), 413-430.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> See, eg., Sushil Chaudhury and Michael Morineau, eds., *Merchants, Companies and Trade: Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Quoted in Risso, *Merchants and Faith*, p. 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Quoted in Christine Dobbin, *Asian Entreprenurial Minorities: Conjoint Communities in the Making of the World-Economy, 1750-1940* (Richmond, U.K.: Curzon, 1996), p. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Quoted in Marks, *Origins of the Modern World*, p. 81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> On the rise and decline of the American century see, eg., Lockard, *Societies*, 832-840.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Much of the discussion which follows is based on Lockard, Societies, 745-751, 774-794, 906-907, 911-912, 920-929, 931-939. See also, eg., Mark Borthwick, *Pacific Century: The Emergence of Modern Pacific Asia* (Boulder: Westview, 2007), pp. 231-316, 407-472, 523-562; Jones, *Coming Full Circle*, 159-170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> On APEC see, eg., Lok Sang Ho, *APEC and the Rise of China* (World Scientific Publishing, 2011); Mark Beeson, *Institutions of the Asia-Pacific: ASEAN, APEC and* Beyond (New York: Routledge, 2008); Sandra L.Downing, ed., *Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation APEC: Current Issues and Background* (Nova Science, 2003); Peter Drysdale and David Vines, eds., *Europe, East Asia and APEC: A Shared Global Agenda* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); John Ravenhill, *APEC and the Construction of Pacific Rim Regionalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Judy Dempsey, "Survey Shows Americans Now Considering Asia More Important Than Europe," *New York Times*, Sept. 15, 2001.