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Paul B. Trescott, *Jingji Xue: The History of the Introduction of Western Economic Ideas into China, 1850-1950* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2007), pp. xxiv, 442, \$55. ISBN 978-962-996-242-5.

In this boldly conceived book, the author provides a convincing account of the introduction of Western economics into China between the end of the first Opium War in 1842 and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The introduction of Western economic ideas into China was "animated initially by a powerful motive to find the intellectual sources of western wealth and power and to harness those for China's improvement" (p. 44). The author argues that while Western economics had "real shortcomings . . . in providing useful guidance for the Chinese," the "Chinese often did not exercise good judgment in deciding which elements of western economics to pursue or ignore" (p. 315).

The author begins by surveying the intellectual antecedents of Western economics in China, including nineteenth-century translations of the classics of Western economic literature into Chinese by Western missionaries. Increasingly, Chinese scholars also began to study Western economic thought; the process of intellectual adaptation which they set into motion found its most overtly political expression in the writings of Sun Yat-sen on the political and economic development of China. Since Sun Yat-sen's writings were regarded as a source of political authority by both Nationalists and Communists, his developmental visions pervade much of Chinese economic literature in the first half of the twentieth century.

However, the earliest generation of Chinese economists trained in Western economics was educated abroad; the first Chinese student known to have received a PhD in economics in the United States was Chen Jintao, who graduated from Yale in 1906 (p. 68). In order to place their scholarship within its institutional context, the author surveys the experience of Chinese students studying economics at US and European universities. It is understandable that the author touches only lightly on the experience of Chinese students of economics returned from the USSR, given this work's focus. However, one wonders whether this work might not have benefited from a discussion of the experience of Chinese students in Japan, given that this was the most common destination of Chinese students abroad, and the influence of Western economics on Japanese university curricula.

In a number of thoroughly documented case studies, the author chronicles the teaching of Western economics at two missionary universities—Yanjing University (now amalgamated into Beijing University) and Nanjing University—and three

Chinese-run universities—Tianjin's Nankai University, Beijing University, and Qinghua University (also in Beijing). The author convincingly documents the significant role of missionary universities in introducing Western models of university education into China. While the "proportion of Western-trained economists in the Christian colleges was not higher than in the indigenous universities," Christian colleges "consistently accounted for a disproportionately large share of the Chinese going to the West for further study of Economics" (p. 143). Missionary universities also hosted some of the most important economic research projects of the period under review, such as John L. Buck's studies on China's agrarian economy.

Chinese-run universities differed somewhat in the composition of their faculties; here, the importance of the first generation of foreign-trained Chinese economists returned from abroad was even higher than in the missionary universities. Partly as a result of the less substantial foreign element, the economics departments of Chinese-run universities frequently maintained close ties to the Nationalist government. However, this is not to say that they were uncritical party hacks; no less prominent an economist and government official than He Lian (Franklin L. Ho), formerly the head of the Nankai Institute of Economics, wrote in 1941 that since China lacked a functioning "political machinery," a planned economy was an unrealistic aim (p. 221). Furthermore, economics departments in China also produced large-scale empirical data on China's economy.

In the most interesting chapter, the author brings together all his case studies to discuss "western economic ideas in relation to economic research in China prior to 1950" (p. 260) in terms of research techniques, research organizations, research themes, and individual scholars. One of his key findings is that the most prolific authors on China's economy had not usually been educated in the West (pp. 273–274). The author attributes this finding to the fact that many commentators on economic affairs in China had not been trained as economists, while many economists trained abroad entered into government service or business on their return to China (p. 274). Even more interesting, from the historian's point of view, is the wealth of evidence presented by the author that documents the progressive disillusionment of Chinese economists with the Nationalist government throughout the second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).

The last chapter provides a fascinating overview of the fate of western economics in China after 1950, encompassing the displacement of Western economics from Chinese universities and Chinese political discourse during the late 1950s, a time when a foreign doctorate in economics increasingly became a liability rather than an asset. Interestingly, the author's dismissal of the "western fads for imperfect competition and Keynesian economics" (p. 312) were shared by Marxist economists who argued that "Keynesian economic theories [were] anti-science and anti-people" (p. 303). In any case, Western economics were restored to prominence after the disasters of Maoist economic experiments from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s. In many cases, economists trained abroad and—at the very least—banned from publishing and removed from their university positions were restored to public positions which they had last held in the early 1950s.

This work would be even more important, were it more solidly grounded in recent historiographic writing on China. On a conceptual level, much of this work is phrased in terms of the impact–response paradigm which posits that Chinese modernization

occurred as a reaction to Western impact, an approach outdated since the early 1980s (e.g. p. 26). More recent studies have tended to emphasize Chinese agency within this modernization process. In this reviewer's opinion, the experience of Chinese economists demonstrates that the introduction of Western economics into China might also be understood as a process of cultural hybridization: the formation of new intellectual concepts from both Western and Chinese precursors (regardless of the practical applicability of these hybrid concepts).

On a factual level, it is surprising to find that the author has made no reference to Margherita Zanasi's recent monograph (2006) on a related topic, particularly as this would have allowed him to bypass at least some of the linguistic issues arising from his work. The author himself acknowledges that, in the case of Chinese-language primary sources, he has had to rely on translations; for the same reason, his exposure to Chinese-language secondary literature has been limited.

Regrettably, this book is also beset by a number of factual mistakes. These range from the embarrassing—the annexation of Austria by the German Reich took place in 1938, not 1936, as claimed by the author (p. 90)—to the grossly misleading, such as the author's contention that premodern China was marked by the “absence . . . of the vigorous development of town life which was significant in Europe by the fourteenth and fifteenth century” (p. 214), or that the city of Harbin, in Heilongjiang Province, was “essentially a Russian city” (p. 190).

This is an important book that provides a convincing account of the introduction of Western economic thought into China. In summer 2006, this reviewer interviewed Yang Jingnian, who had been a research assistant to Fang Xianting (H. D. Fong) in the late 1930s. Professor Yang suggested that China's economic backwardness had turned a generation of Chinese economists returned from the United States and elsewhere, and trained by leading free trade economists, into fervent advocates of protectionist policies. In Dr. Trescott's work we now have the entire story behind this process.

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D. E. Moggridge, *Harry Johnson: A Life in Economics*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. xxii, 486, \$90.00. ISBN 978-0-521-87482-3.

Don Moggridge has done historians of economics a great service in chronicling the life of Harry G. Johnson, the brilliant comet who passed over the economics landscape in the third quarter of the twentieth century. Johnson appeared on the horizon,