



China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience

By Bin Wong

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"This bold, intellectually ambitious, and wholly original book challenges the way in which Western social science understands China. . . . It will set the standard for all future comparative and theoretical research on China."?Timothy Brook, Stanford University
"This is a most extraordinary book. Wong's approach is to explore carefully similarities and differences between Chinese and European development over the long term, highlighting themes related to state-making and popular action. This is by far the most sophisticated, extended discussion of imperial and modern China in comparative perspective that I have seen."?Peter C. Perdue, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
The assumption still made in much social science research that Europe provides a universal model of development is fundamentally mistaken, according to R. Bin Wong. The solution is not, however, simply to reject Eurocentric norms but to build complementary perspectives, such as a Sinocentric one, to evaluate current understandings of European developments. A genuinely comparative perspective, he argues, will free China from wrong expectations and will allow those working on European problems to recognize the distinct character of Western development.

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Review

"An extraordinary thematic discourse on the similarities and differences of Chinese and European developments."?Choice

"A surprisingly easy read with contents well laid-out and cases well presented. . . . Wong's work serves as a good reference."?Journal of Economic History

"Never before has a China historian produced a book of such vast scope that carefully and deliberately brings China and Europe into a single framework of analysis, one that evenhandedly addresses both ends of Eurasia with no prior assumptions about the universality of European themes. . . . This is an inquiring, thoughtful, large-spirited, and sharply thought-provoking work. . . . China scholars, from apprentices deciding on dissertation topics to experienced researchers thinking about their next project, will find gold in these pages and a friendly guide to ore. . . . One could not wish for a more stimulating read."?China Review International

"This new work by R. Bin Wong is much more than just another important historical monograph on China. . . . It is nothing less than a bold and inspiring manifesto which spells out plainly for us why conducting broad comparisons with different historical arcs traced in other parts of the world can be so essential to our writing better histories of China. . . . Engaging and accessible."?Journal of Asian Studies

"Wong is very eloquent indeed. . . . It is impossible to summarize all the book's riches or insights. . . . The book is enormously praiseworthy for its ambition, erudition, and resourcefulness."?American Historical Review

"This masterful study. . . is much needed and deserves a wide audience. As Wong says himself, his intention is to 'persuade people to ponder these problems and formulate additional solutions.' He has performed an admirable task."?Michael Tsin, International Labor and Working Class History, Fall 1999

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"Many people talk about similarities and differences between China and Europe, but no one with the wisdom, acuity, and East Asian perspective of Bin Wong. China Transformed makes us rethink many well-established ideas about Chinese history and culture." ?Charles Tilly, Columbia University

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