

Session III: China and the World

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Retrospect and Prospect: the Rise of China's Economic Historiography¹

The past twentieth century has witnessed the rise of economic historiography in China. During the century, the discipline has gone through the stages of budding, formation, transformation and prosperity, and is facing unprecedented challenges today. In this paper, I will make a review of the process of evolution of the discipline and an analysis of major characteristics of the discipline in these stages. Finally I will make a prospect for the future of the discipline in the twenty first century.

Before I get to business, I'd like to make a brief expiation of the term of "economic historiography" in the Chinese academic circles. In China, "economic history" includes both of social history and economic history in most of the twentieth century. For this reason, the terms of "economic history," "social history" and "socio-economic history" were often used without differentiation, in particular in the earlier periods. Only from the late 1980s on, has some sort of divergence appeared and more specialized social history and economic history have emerged. But even so, the majority of scholars still have been working in the socio-economic history that is similar, in some sense, with the "economic and social history" which has risen in the West since 1960s.² In sum, the term of "economic historiography" in this paper refers to "socio-economic historiography," not "economic historiography" in a strict sense.

The Budding (1904-32)

Though economic historiography appeared as an academic discipline in China in the twentieth century, it has its Chinese origin which can be traced to two millennia ago. In *Shiji* (Historical Records of the Grand Historian), the first general history of China, Sima Qian (ca. 145-ca. 86 B.C), the founding father of Chinese historiography, paid a special attention to economic events and activities which had happened before and accordingly contributed two special volumes, *Pingzhun Shu* (Treatise of Equalizing Agronomical Matters) and *Huozhi Liezhuan* (Collective Biography of the Profiteers, or Collective Biography of Great Merchants), to deal with these events and activities. A century later, Ban Gu (32-92 AD), following Sima Qian's example but making important improvements, created *Shi-Huo Zhi* (Treatise on Food and Money), a history, when he wrote *Han Shu* (Book of Han, or History of the Western Han Dynasty). Since the words of *shi* and *huo* ("food and money"³) in *Han Shu* refer to the performances of agriculture and commerce which were almost the whole of Chinese economy of the day, the history of "food and money" is a general history of economy of China from the ancient times to the end of the Western Han Dynasty. Taking *Han Shu* as example, most of the following *zheng-shi* ("Official Histories") of China, have their own *Shi-Huo Zhi*⁴. The major source of materials of these *Shi-Huo Zhi* was the government documents and archives and considerably reliable and complete.

Besides the *Shi-Huo Zhi* in the "Official Histories," similar "history of food and money" also existed in another sets of official compilations—the *Shi-Tong* series (The Ten General Series⁵), which were compiled by individual scholars in the early periods and by the state in the later periods. The volumes of *Shi-Huo* in the *Shi-Tong* are much bigger than those in the "Official Histories," containing more materials on economic history, and the materials are better categorized. These volumes are particularly important in recording systematically the systems, regulations and policies of the state finance, taxation, disaster relief and other major events, and their changes.

There are some other kinds of systematically organized collections of economic documents and records in *Huidian* (Collected institutes and precedents), *Huiyao*

(Collected Statutes) which were compiled by the central government of each dynasty. Detailed records on economic practices of the government, at the central and provincial levels, were kept in *Zeli* (Regulations and precedents).⁶ Local economic activities and events were recorded in gazetteers (or local histories) under the categories of "Local products," "Customs," "Water control activities," "Taxation," "Population registration," "Philanthropy," "Disaster relief" and so on.⁷

It is obvious that by the twentieth century China had had a two millennia-long tradition of systematical and continual recording and describing of economic activities, events and institutions. At the core of the tradition is the Chinese *Shi-Huo* Studies which is the origin of Chinese economic historiography.

But the *Shi-Huo* Studies is not the economic historiography in the modern sense. The basic difference lies in that the *Shi-Huo* Studies mainly focuses on recording and describing of economic activities, events and institutions. In contrast, modern economic historiography does not only deal with the recording and describing, but focus on analyzing what really had happened before and the "scientificness" of the analysis mainly comes from social sciences.

In spite of its Chinese origin of the *Shi-Huo* Studies, Chinese economic historiography is not indigenous; instead, it was introduced from the modern West. In the early stage, the introduction was mainly through Japan. In 1903, under the influence of *General Introduction to History* by Ukita Kazutami,⁸ Liang Qichao (1873-1929) published his famous article titled "New History,"⁹ calling for a "revolution of historiography" and creating a "New Historiography." One of the major characteristic features of the "New Historiography," according to Liang, was to adopt "principles and laws of other disciplines," and use them in the study of history. In Liang's idea of "New History," economic history occupies a central position. His *History of Chinese National Debt*, which was published in 1904, marked the appearance of Chinese economic historiography. Following his example, a few works on Chinese economic history came up in the first three decades of the twentieth century, from most of which the Japanese influence can be seen.

In general, in the first decades of the twentieth century, the knowledge of Western scholarship, in particular of social sciences, that the Chinese scholars had was very limited. The period of 1904-32, therefore, is a stage of introduction of the modern Western economic historiography, mainly through Japan. The early twentieth-century Japan was in an "intermediary" position between China and the West culturally and academically. In the discipline of historiography, the most influential Western school introduced in Japan was the Rankian Historical School (the Ranke History or the modern objective historical school), which shares many common principles with the *Qian-jia* School which had been prevailing in China in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Though the limitation of the traditional *Shi-Huo* Studies was broken through in the subjects, the study of Chinese economic history in this stage bears the strong benchmark of the *Shi-Huo* Studies. In this sense, we say that it is the stage of budding of Chinese economic historiography.

In the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, however, a significant event—the Great Debate on Chinese Social History—took place in the Chinese intelligentsia, which speeded up the growth of Chinese economic historiography. As is summarized by Tao Xisheng (1899-1988), in the debate many Chinese scholars felt that the focus of attention should be shifted from the general social ideas which were borrowed from the West to the specific aspects of Chinese history, and Chinese historiography should be turned from "the historiography of the revolutionaries" to "the historiography of the historians." This means that the study of economic history began to become more academic which was going to be carried by professional scholars.

The Formation (1932-49)

This period saw a rapid growth of the study of economic history in China, which led to the formation of economic historiography as an independent discipline.

According to a statistics, 524 works on Chinese economic history were published in the first half of the twentieth century, most of which came out during the five years of 1932-37. Moreover, an great improvement was achieved in the academic quality of the works.

In the early 1930s two professional journals of economic history were published by two most prestigious academic institutions. The first one—*Journal of Modern Chinese Economic History*, which was re-named as *Journal of Chinese Socio-Economic History* later — was published by the Institute of Social Sciences of Academia Sinica in 1932. The second one — the *Shi-Huo Bimonthly* — was published by the Law School of Peking University in 1934 with Tao Xisheng being the chief editor. Though the year of the creation of the first journal is seen the watershed of the stages of budding and formation of Chinese economic historiography, the second journal may be more influential and was called “the most famous journal of social-economic history” in China or even in East Asia and was widely issued.¹⁰ The two journals made great contributions to the development of fledging Chinese economic historiography.

Professional academic societies of economic history appeared in this period. Behind *Journal of Chinese Socio-Economic History* was the *Society of Historical Studies*, while the *Society of Shi-Huo* took the *Shi-Huo Bimonthly* as the hub of their activities. Many numbers of the two societies became the hard cores in the study of Chinese economic history later. Besides, similar societies were established in other major Chinese universities, among which the Society of Chinese Economic History of Sun Yat-sen University was better known.

The courses of Chinese Social History (in fact, it was Socio-Economic History) and Historical Materialism were created in Peking University in 1931. Two years later the teaching and research section of Chinese economic history was founded in the Law School of the same university and a series of works on Chinese economic history was published.

Outside the campuses, Marxist historians with Guo Moruo (1892-1978), Fan Wenlan (1893-1969), Lu Zhenyu (1901-1980), Li Jiannong (1880-1963) and Hou Wailu (1903-1987) being the representatives were active. They translated some of major Marxist works, including Karl Marx' *Das Capital*, into Chinese and produced a number of important works on Chinese social and economic history, which won an increasing influence among the scholars of the younger generations.

All the changes listed above show that the discipline of economic historiography had grown rapidly and held an important position in modern Chinese historiography by the Japanese invasion in 1937. Major features can be seen in Chinese economic historiography in this period.

From the beginning, Chinese economic historiography, like modern China's historiography as a whole, has been strongly influenced by the Western scholarship which was introduced directly from the West and via Japan and the Soviet Union. In the first half of the twentieth century, the three major schools of Western historiography were the Rankian historical school which still held the central position, the *Annales* School which was fledging, and the Marxist Historical School which dominated in the Soviet Union after the 1917 Revolution. The influences of these schools were felt in China but very differently. The influence of the *Annales* School was negligible, while the other two played a very important role in the formation of Chinese economic historiography.

In the 1930s the Ranke History was seen “orthodox” by the leading Chinese historians such as Hu Shi (1891-1962) and Fu Si-nian (1896-1950) who were educated in the West.

Under its influence, Chinese economic historians were discussing many issues that their Western colleagues raised, but methodologically, the empirical study, in particular textual research, was the major approach. Few scholars tried to apply theories and methods of social sciences in the study of economic history.

More or less to confront this orientation of neglecting theories in the mainstream historiography, Chinese Marxist historians tried to construct Chinese economic history within a highly theoretic framework. They made efforts to apply the Marxist theory of social and economic modality into the study, aiming at proving the universality of the theory. The models of the evolution of the Chinese society and economy that they established became the cornerstone of China's Marxist economic historiography and dominated the discipline in the second half of the twentieth century.

In spite of the achievements, major problems can be found in this period. First, though a few leading scholars emphasized the necessity of borrowing methods from social sciences and applying them in the study of Chinese economic history, few efforts were made. Second, though some historians began to focus on the characteristic features of Chinese economic history, Euro-centrism held the central position in the study. Third, many scholars believed that "scholarship should serve reality," or finding the solutions of major problems China was facing. This is embodied in the "path-dependency" of the development of Chinese economic historiography on the discussion of the practical problems. This "path-dependency" played a double role to the evolution of the discipline. On one hand, it stimulated the interest of scholars in China's past social and economic situations and then advanced the discipline, but on the other hand, it made scholarship and politics inter-twisted each other which would harm the academic development of the discipline.

The vigorous development of Chinese economic historiography was interrupted by the Japanese invasion in 1937. During the extreme hard time of the war (1937-45) and the civil war (1946-49), however, Chinese scholars did not stop their working and achieved considerable advancements.

The Transformation (1949-78)

The foundation of the PRC in 1949 began a new era of Chinese economic historiography. The Soviet Marxist historiography was transplanted in 1950s and became dominated. Because Marxism emphasizes the determination of "economic base," economic history held the central position in the new historiography. In the 1950s there were five nationwide debates which are called "five golden flowers of New China's historiography." Of the five debates, four belong to or are related to social and economic history.¹¹ In these debates, a number of important works on Chinese economic history was produced.

The establishment of Marxism as the guide theory has transformed Chinese economic historiography. In contrast to the prejudice of the pre-1949 mainstream scholarship which cherished the belief of "history is historical materials,"¹² the new scholarship raised a battle cry of "the study of history must be guided with the (Marxist) theory," which echoed with Fernand Braudel's famous words of "no theory, no history." The high stress of the role of theories has never been seen before. Marxism itself also provided a theoretic framework of analysis of economic history, which was lacked in the previous mainstream scholarship. The new scholarship also highlighted the activities of the ordinary people and their roles in history, which were ignored in the previous mainstream scholarship¹³. All these changes are significant to the development of economic historiography.

During the decade of 1955-65 some significant theoretical innovations were made by Chinese economic historians. Of them the theories of "Chinese capitalist sprouts" (or "Chinese capitalist embryo," "Chinese indigenous capitalism") and of "Chinese Feudal Society" are the most important.

In the century before 1950, the view of "Unchanging China" had dominated the study of Chinese history. This view originated in Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who thought that China was outside the modern development. His view has had a profound influence on later Western thinkers of generations, including Karl Marx. Marx placed China in his category of "Asiatic society" which, as he claimed, couldn't follow the Western way of evolution. Moreover, he saw China a closed and stagnant society like a mummy carefully preserved in a hermetically sealed coffin, which would dissolve whenever it was brought into contact with open air. According to the view, the late imperial Chinese society and economy were hopelessly stagnant.¹⁴

In contrast to this conventional wisdom, the theory of "Chinese Capitalist Spouts" held that the late imperial Chinese society and economy were not stagnant but ever changing, and major changes which happened in China were similar with the changes that happened in early modern West Europe. The driving forces behind the changes of society and economy in both China and West Europe were the same — capitalism, which was indigenous. This theory broke through the convention of "Unchanging China."

Though imperial Chinese society was identified as a "Feudal Society," many scholars found that the differences between the imperial Chinese society and economy and the West European ones are so obvious that the concept of "feudal society" from the Marxist classics can hardly be applied intactly in Chinese history. The Chinese "feudal society" seems to have been "precocious" as well "immature" if compared with the West European feudal society.¹⁵ Accordingly, Chinese historians should find the characteristics of the Chinese "feudal society," not force the Chinese reality into the West European model.

Though the two theories are working within the framework of analysis and discourse system of Marxism, they are important breakthroughs from the doctrines of the Soviet historiography. The breakthroughs are significant to the development of Chinese economic historiography. Inspiring with the innovations, Chinese scholars have made great efforts to search the "Chinese capitalist sprouts" and find the characteristics of the "Chinese feudal society" in the late imperial Chinese society and economy. A great number of works was produced which is very helpful to the study of the Chinese society and economy before the modern West arrived.

In the period of 1955-65, the government organized and sponsored the work of collecting and sorting out of economic historical materials. By 1966, several important collections and compilations had been published, which serve as the basic source of economic historical materials not only in this period, but also in the periods after.

Serious problems, however, can be seen in this period, of which the following three are more important.

First, the mainstream of the pre-1950 Chinese scholarship, condemned as "bourgeois," was disregarded. In the 1950s the Soviet scholarship was taken as the guide, while in the 1960s and 1970s a self-closure was imposed. The Western scholarship was rejected totally. As a result, Chinese economic historiography was isolated from the development of international scholarship.

Second, dogmatism was prevailing and intensified. The pattern of evolution of West European history was seen universal and the Chinese reality had to conform to it. In particular, Chinese historical development has to follow the "five modes of production" formula, going through the successive stages of primitive, slavery, feudal, capitalist and socialist modes of production. As the conclusion is pre-determined, the approach was extremely oversimplified. Scholars were concerned with counterfactuals and it was unnecessary to verify if the above formula fits the Chinese reality.

Third, scholarship became politicized, which made economic historiography a tool of political struggles. The theory of "class struggle" was developed into the absurd theory of "line struggle,"¹⁶ both of which were seen the dynamics behind changes of society and

economy. The politicization of scholarship led to the political persecutions of scholars which reached the peak in the "Cultural Revolution" (1966-76).

In the "Cultural Revolution," Chinese economic historiography was ruined. Almost all the economic historians were condemned as "bourgeois," some of whom were persecuted to death. Courses of economic history were cancelled, professional journals were stopped, and libraries and archives were closed. No works of economic history were published during this decade.

The Prosperity (1978-2007)

In December of 1978, the CCP summoned the third plenum of the eleventh Central Committee, which was a major landmark in modern Chinese history and opened up a new era of Chinese economic historiography.

The three decades after 1978 have witnessed an unprecedented prosperity of Chinese economic historiography. During the decades, the old institutions of economic history which had been wrecked in the "Cultural Revolution" were resumed, while more new ones have been created. Courses of economic history have been offered in universities. Scholars of old generations have been rejuvenated and ones of younger generations grown up. Two major professional journals — *Journal of Chinese Social and Economic History* published by Xiamen University and *Researches on Chinese Economic History* published by the Institute of Economics of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences — were started in 1982 and 1985 respectively. They play a very important role, similar with what *Chinese Socio-Economic History* and the *Shi-Huo Bimonthly* did in 1930s and 1940s. The professional website of economic history was established in 2000, which provides a new space of research and discussion for economic historians. Societies of economic history were founded in most of provinces and major cities in the early 1980s. Based on them, China Economic History Society (CEHS) was inaugurated in 1986. It was affiliated to the International Economic History Association (IEHA) in 2002, while Li Bozhong was elected a number of Executive Committee of IEHA in 2006, which show that Chinese economic historiography is merging into international scholarship.

Very rich fruits have been yielded in the field of Chinese economic history in this period. According to a statistics, only in the decade of 1986-95 near 20,000 works on Chinese economic history were published, which outnumber the total publications in the eighty five years before 1986.

The field of research has been enlarged greatly; more and more new issues have been brought under study. Meanwhile, great efforts have been made in the work of collecting and sorting out historical materials; a great number of new materials has been published. Remarkable advances have been made in the fields related with economic history such as the studies of history of population, ecology, environment, geography, natural disasters, technology, water control, transportation, etc. These achievements are very helpful to economic historians.

More important than the "quantitative progress" is the "qualitative improvement" which has taken place in the discipline.

First, inspiring with Deng Xiaoping's call for "Seeking truth from facts" and "Emancipating the mind," Chinese economic historians have gradually broken through the shackles of dogmatism. With opening to the outside world, new theories and methods are rushed into China at an unprecedented speed and scale. New ideas and views have appeared, and the old simplified approaches have given place to the new multi-analysis approaches.

Second, the "path-dependency" of the disciplinary development on the practical problems that was characteristic of Chinese economic historiography in previous stages has been weakening remarkably after 1978. The weakening is significant to the development of Chinese economic historiography as an academic discipline.

Third, in the previous stages, the pattern of evolution of society and economy which is derived from the West European experience was venerated as the universal law. From mid-1990s on, however, the universality of the pattern has been challenged. The theory of "Chinese Capitalist Sprouts" has been questioned¹⁷ and then abandoned by many scholars.¹⁸ Such is the case with the theory of "Chinese Feudal Society."¹⁹ Meanwhile, new theories and models have been proposed,²⁰ aiming at finding better explanations of the evolution of Chinese society and economy. This change shows that to study Chinese history on the basis of Chinese facts has become the shared belief of Chinese economic historians of a new generation.

Fourth, a significant divergence has taken place in the discipline. Based on the differences of approach, three major schools have emerged. They are (1) the School of Socio-Economic History, which has been the mainstream of Chinese economic historiography in most of the post-1950 period, but changed greatly in the 1980s and 1990s; (2) the School of Economic History with Wu Chengming being the leader, which pays more attention to economic performances from the perspective of economics; and (3) the School of Social History with Fu Yiling being the representative, which concentrates more on social changes from the perspective of sociology and anthropology. The emergence of the schools has changed the landscape of the discipline and ushered in a period of "a hundred flowers are blooming, and a hundred schools of thought are contending" that the Chinese intellectuals have dreamed of for millennia. It needs to note that in spite of the divergence, however, the basic nature of socio-economic history of the discipline has not been changed greatly. The differences between three major schools are in their approaches, but the central concerns of them are the same.

Crisis and Chance: Chinese economic Historiography in the Twenty First Century

The importance of Chinese economic history has been strengthened with the swift pace of contemporary change to China's society and economy. Such a rapid and large-scale transformation is rarely seen in the world history. It is impossible to understand China's current changes and predict its future if one does not know China's long-term social and economic experience. This importance gives China historians an opportunity to look afresh at its past and evaluate its significance and that's why more and more first-class scholars in other fields are shifting on the Chinese social and economic history.²¹

It seems unthinkable, however, that Chinese economic historiography has manifested an ominous tendency of downfall after it reached its "golden age" in the 1980s and early 1990s. A crisis is felt by everyone who is working in this field.

The crisis is not unique to China. Rather, it is a reflection of the global "theoretical crisis" of historiography. After two decades of opening to the outside world, Chinese economic historiography has become a part of international scholarship and cannot sheer off the global crisis. But for a special reason, Chinese economic historiography suffers more than the Western economic historiography. For decades Chinese economic historians has been working within the framework of analysis of Marxism, but the dominant position of Marxism in the discipline has been challenged recently. Since it bears more pressure from two reasons, the crisis that Chinese economic historiography is experiencing is more serious.

Though no agreement has reached on how to deal with the crisis, one thing is clear: we Chinese economic historians must face up to the crisis, if we want to save Chinese economic historiography from the crisis. Our goal, moreover, is not only to weather the crisis, but to develop the discipline further through the crisis. In the Chinese language, the word of crisis, *wei-ji*, consists of two characters, the first one, *wei*, means "crisis" or "danger," while the second one, *ji*, means "chance" or even "opportunity." If we really take this crisis as a chance, we will turn a bad thing into a good one.

To achieve the goal, we must mobilize all the resources that we have and work together with our colleagues over the world.

The key to mobilize our resources is to deal rationally with the traditions of Chinese economic historiography. As is seen above, the traditions consist of the following three ones: (1) the empirical tradition, which was the mainstream of China's scholarship of economic historiography in the 1930s and 1940s; (2) the Marxist tradition, which has been the mainstream since 1950s; and (3) the comprehensive tradition, which has been rising since the mid-1990s. All of them are valuable heritages of the discipline. Only based on these traditions, would a further development of the discipline be possible. Though there are obvious differences in approach and orientation of research, these traditions share some basic essences, such as the stress of socio-economy as the basis of history, the focus of physical aspects of human life, the emphasis of facts, and so on. Moreover, there is clear complementarity between the traditions. The traditions combined constitute the "Chinese characteristic feature" of Chinese economic historiography which makes Chinese economic historiography not a simple copy of the Western economic historiography.

Meanwhile, we should also to have a correct attitude towards the trend of globalization of scholarship. As is shown above, from the beginning, Chinese economic historiography has been strongly influenced by the scholarship which has originated in the West. Moreover, though the West-originated scholarship and the traditional *Chinese Shi-Huo Studies* are the two sources of Chinese economic historiography, the West-originated scholarship is much more crucial to the rise of the discipline. In this sense, Chinese economic historiography is a result of the globalization from the beginning. Since the globalization of economic historiography is an irresistible trend, the best way is to throw ourselves into it, not stand against it.

One key to the globalization is to how to regard the Western scholarship. There is little doubt that this scholarship originated and has achieved its greatest success in the West. For this reason, it inevitably bears some Eurocentric benchmark. When the scholarship is used in other parts of the world, the benchmark has to be thinning and then the scholarship would be becoming more "universal." We should break free of the Eurocentric straightjacket, but we should also avoid throwing out the baby with the bath water. Anyway, we are living in a small world in which the destiny of Chinese economic historiography has been entwined with those of other countries' in the search for resources, the exchange of ideas, and the expansion of knowledge.

In the field of economic history, there is no substantial contradiction between the Chinese scholarship and the mainstream Western scholarship, since both of them share the same disciplinary fundamentals. It is in particular worthy to note that Chinese economic historiography has had strong orientation of socio-economic history, while the Western economic historiography has shown a trend of return to "economic and social history" after the disillusionment with the "Revolution of New Economic History."²² These common grounds are a base for the integration of China's scholarship into the mainstream of international scholarship. Moreover, not only the Chinese scholarship, but also the international scholarship, will benefit greatly from the integration, since China has the longest tradition of economic historiography and one of the largest teams of economic historians in the present-day world.

Then, how will Chinese economic historiography develop in the new century? It is my opinion that it will cherish its own traditions, while plunge actively into the process of globalization. On this basis, a new economic historiography will emerge which will carry the Chinese traits but occupy an important place in the mainstream of international scholarship. Chinese economic historiography will advance in this direction. It is the destiny of the discipline.

1. This is an English summary of my article with the same title which is presented to the conference of the Present and Future of Chinese Historiography, September 16, 2007, Beijing, China. The article is written in Chinese and much longer, containing in-depth analyses and detailed discussions of the issues under consideration. For the readers who are interested in the analyses and discussions, please read the article.
2. This kind of economic historiography includes specialized studies of economic history such as the "New Economic History" or "Institutional Economic History" which appeared in the United States in the late twentieth century.
3. Literally *Shi* means "food" and *-Huo* means "commodities." But Nancy Lee Swan translated the *Shi-huo Zhi* of *Han Shu* as *Food & Money in Ancient China*. Since Swan's translation with annotation is widely accepted, here I follow her and use "Food and Money," not "Food and Commodities." In addition, the name of Ban Gu is also spelt as Pan Ku in the Swan's translation because she used the older Wade-Giles system, while I use the Pinyin system to spell the Chinese names in this paper because the system has been adopted by the UN and other world's agencies and now wildly used in newspapers and scholarly works.
4. Together with *Shiji* and *Han Shu*, there are twenty four "official histories" whence came the name of the "Twenty Four Histories."
5. The *Ten General Series*, a de facto ten encyclopedias, is a collective name for the ten classic series on Chinese regulations, institutions, politics, and their transformation over thousands of years in Chinese history. It includes three categories: *Tongdian* (Comprehensive Canon, a historical encyclopedia covering panoply of topics from high antiquity), *Tongzhi* (General Treaties, a great institutional history of China from its beginnings down through the dynasties), *Wenxian Tongkao* (General Study of the Literary Remains, a huge encyclopedia of general knowledge). The *Ten General Series* contains more than 2,700 volumes, totaling more than 30,000,000 characters. Covered are topics such as military affairs, culture, religion, philology, phonetics, the development of families and clans, etc.
6. The information includes the prices of major goods in the official purchase, the standards of payment to hired labor in the government services and the government-organized constructions, the breakdowns of expenditure in the state-run manufactures, and so on.
7. According to an incomplete statistics, 8,264 of pre-1949 gazetteers of different kinds have survived in mainland China, but the total is estimated to be much more than 10,000.
8. Ukita Kazutami (1860-1946), a well-known Japanese scholar and thinker.
9. Liang Qichao (1873-1929), a great thinker in modern Chinese history and has been seen one of the founders of the modern Chinese historiography.
10. The circulation was more than 10,000 copies at the height in the eve of the Japanese invasion and there was a considerable number of Japanese subscribers.
11. The four are the periodization of Chinese history, the form of feudalist land ownership, the peasant war, and the capitalist sprouts, while the fifth one is the formation of the Han people.
12. This is a famous saying of Fu Si-nian. It is also translated as "Historiography is the Studies of Historical Materials" literally.
13. The previous mainstream scholarship was condemned as only focusing on "Emperors, Kings, Generals, and Prime Ministers."
14. Later in the twentieth century, this view evolved into new theories such as "Impact-Response" (the impact of the West and China's response to it), "High-level Equilibrium Trap," "Involutionary Growth" and others. In short, all these theories share a common belief — without the "impact" from outside, Chinese society and economy would be outside of modern development.

15. This expression was given by Fu Yilin (1911-1988), a leading economic historian who created the theory of "Chinese Feudal Society."
16. That is, the struggles between the "revolutionary" and "anti-reactionary," or the "progressive" and "conservative" lines in the ruling classes in Chinese history.
17. Li Bozhong published an essay of "On the complex of 'Capitalist Sprouts'" in 1994 which triggered in a debate on whether the Chinese "capitalist sprouts" were a reality or are just a complex of the contemporary Chinese scholars who hope to see that the evolution of Chinese history follows the way of the evolution of West European history, and furthermore, a debate on what the term of capitalism means.
18. These scholars include Wu Chengming, who is regarded the chief architect of the theory. He abandoned the theory in the late 1990s.
19. These scholars include Fu Yilin, who abandoned the theory which he had constructed, and argued that late imperial China was not a feudal society at all before he passed away in 1988.
20. For examples, the theories of the Chinese traditional market raised by Wu Chengming and of the "middle- peasantization" (*zhongnonghua*) of late imperial Chinese peasantry by Fang Xing, the "Jiangnan Pattern of economic growth" by Li Bozhong, and so on.
21. For example, Angus Maddison, a world-famous economist, published his work on Chinese economic history — *Chinese Economic Performance in the Long-Run* in 1998 (published by Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, Paris).
22. See the summary made in Pat Hudson ed. *Living Economic and Social History*, published by the Economic History Society, Glasgow, 2001.