

Let's survive a FUCKING midterm together

Transitions and Transformations 250-900 CE



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Acknowledgement

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Importance of History: Social Science Tradition

Social Science Tradition Stemming from History

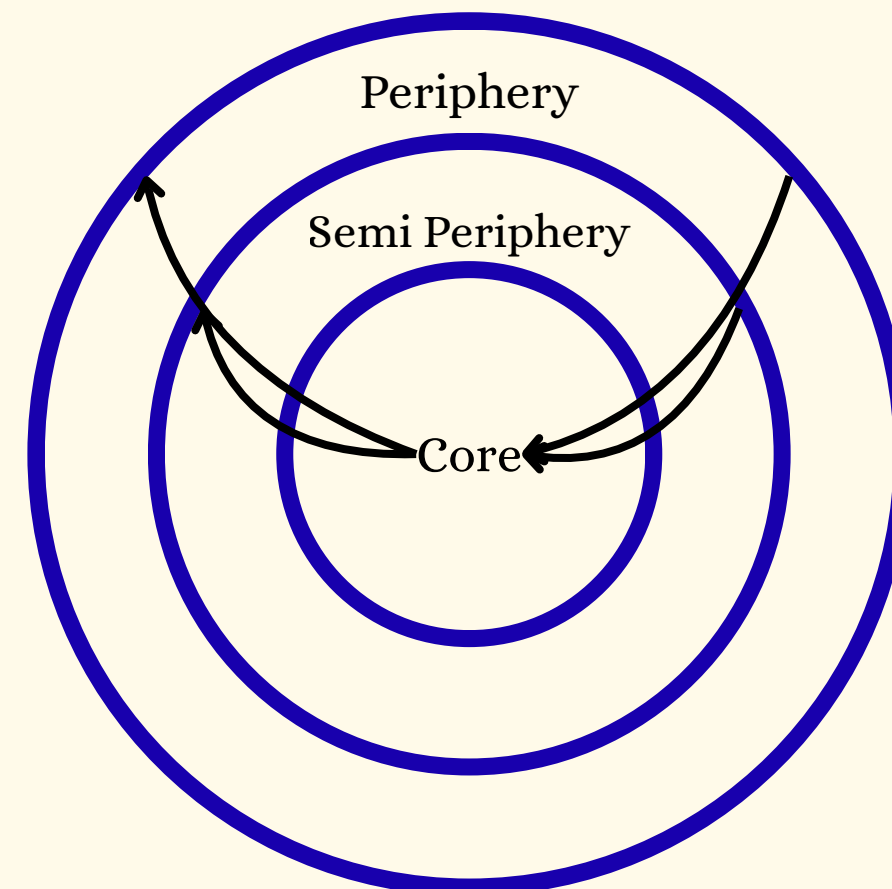
- History disciplines contributes to social science

Ferdinand Brudel's World System Theory → global economy as a single interconnected system

- Explains global economics systems

Social Evolution

- Studies the development of societies over time



For example, Thailand exports CPU to the USA → USA produces computer → USA distributes computers to Thailand

Importance of History: Bias Theories

Imperialist Context of Bias Theory

- Emerged during the 19th and early 20th century

Austro-Germanic School of Thought

- Centered around the school

Western European Christian Views

- Encultured by pre-17th century views

Social Evolution Theories

- Environmental / Christian Derminism

Roots of Changes and Relativism

- Drawn from the Greco-Roman Tradition



The European Penned History: Modern States and Greco-Roman Influence

Renaissance Revival of Greco-Roman Concepts

- Modern states drew inspiration from these concepts

What's the perspective from western historian?

- They see western civilisation as the “inheritor” of Greek and Roman civility

On going Dialogue in History

- Interacting between past and present

Empirical Theory of Knowledge: Positive Approach

Facts point to an absolute conclusion

History could be studied as a hard science

E.H Carr's argument → people have guarded opinions / opinions influenced by others / e.g., influence of christian culture in a christian society / shared experiences remembered differently

Perception and Analysis of History: Linear / Progressive Thinking

Dependence on Societal Changes & Time

- Our understanding of history is based on how we perceive societal changes
- Time plays a vital role on how we view the historical events

Linear / Progressive Thinking

- Society is moving forward or declining in a linear fashion
- E.g., Marxist framework

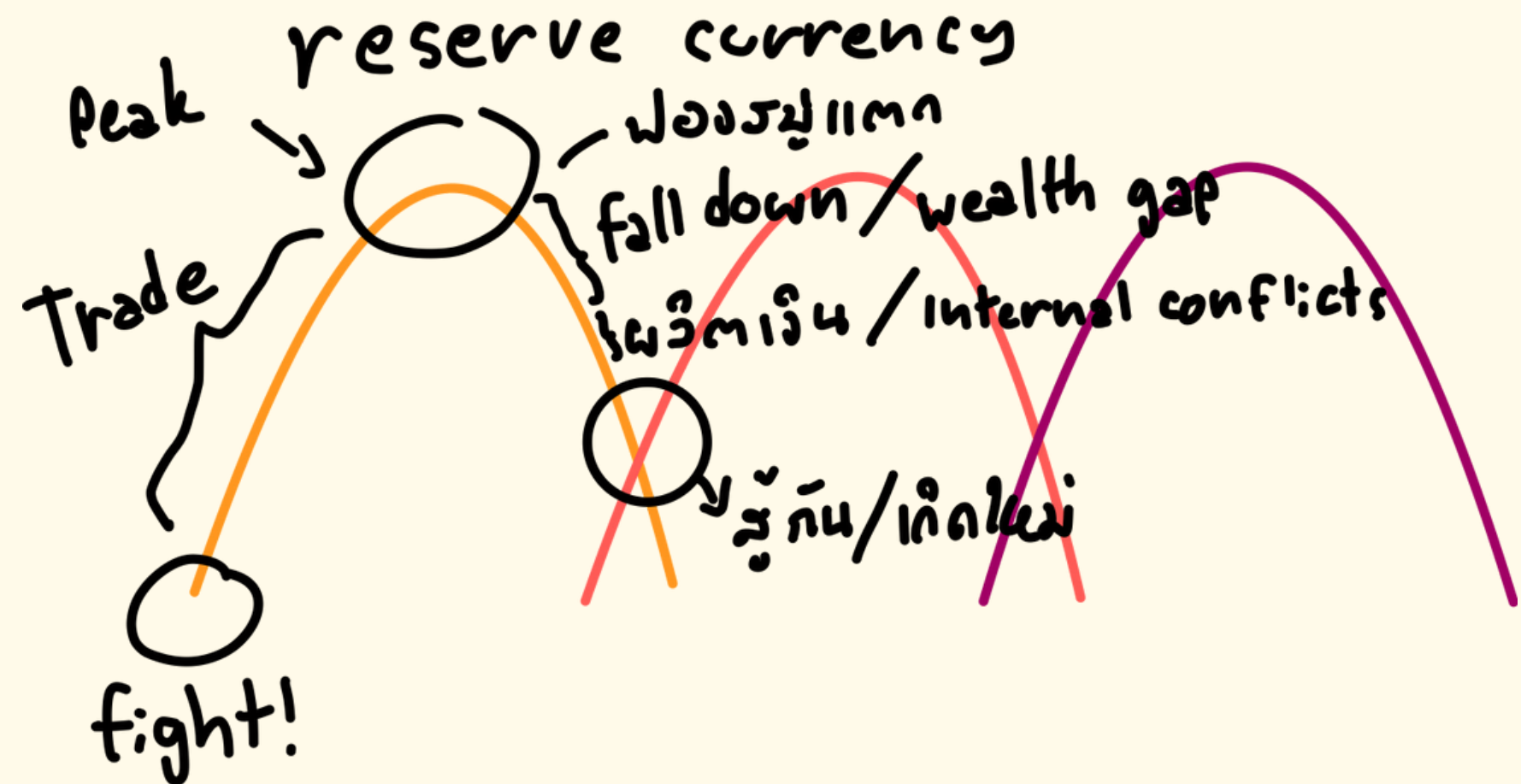
Ripples of Effects

- Changes are not linear, they can happen again and are induced by different factors
- Phenomena doesn't have a starting point; many can happen together

Polarity and Dynamics

1. Education
2. Inventiveness
3. Competitiveness
4. Output
5. Trade
6. Military Strength
7. Power of Financial Center
8. Reserve status / Currency

Every Empire has the same factors and will be dominant for ~250 years



Perspectives and Arguments

Importance of Perspectives

- No correct answers
- Arguments should be based on evidence
- Balance the heritage of an idea and its intellectual history before reaching your own conclusions

For example, economics measurement →

Problems with measurement standards

- e.g., Differences in employment concepts: Indian weavers paid by price/bulk rates
- Accounting Differences

- GDP & productivity as progress indicator
- Issues with resource depletion
- Constructed indicators for economic superiority

Eurocentric Perspective

International Order

- Established by European & North American Powers

Historical Ideas

- Explaining societies, similarities, and differences

Eurocentrism

- Highlights European and North Atlantic superiority
- Arguments on convergence and divergence of societies

Types of Eurocentrism:

Historical contextual eurocentrism

- Focuses on European dominance and its development
- How historical narratives favor European achievements
- The unique development of European societies
- Rationality and Progress
 - Marxist Rationality Argument belongs to his school of Eurocentrism
 - Superiority and emphasis of Greco-Roman dominance and inheritance is also part of argument.
 - e.g., Rome is the only great empire and all else must be compared to Rome

Types of Eurocentrism:

Ideological Eurocentrism

European Superiority

- European think that their norms, values, and cultures are the pinnacle of human development and that other cultures should follow to European standards
- Some predecessors, such as Abrahamic Religion's belief in determinism
 - E.g., White man's burden → they have to spread religion, missionaries, and conquest.



Types of Eurocentrism:

Residual Eurocentrism

- Lingering effects of Eurocentric views in modern thought and practices.
- Still influences policies and attitudes even when there is a conscious effort to move beyond Eurocentric thought.
- Holding European standards as universal perspectives
 - E.g., in International Relations, mainstream theories reflect Eurocentric assumptions about state behavior, sovereignty, and international norms. This can limit the field's ability to explain the fact of diverse geopolitical realities

Types of Eurocentrism:

Philosophy Eurocentrism

- Viewing European philosophy as the primary / sole source of valid philosophical thought
- Dismissing non-European philosophical traditions propaganda

Cultural Eurocentrism

- Interpreting and representing of cultural history through a European lens
- Marginalisation or misrepresentation of non-European cultures in literature, art, and collective memory
- Eurocentrism is evident in media, material culture, and culture development, as seen in non-contextual museum representations of non-European culture objects

Types of Eurocentrism:

Political Eurocentrism

- European political models dominate, critiquing eurocentrism and its exclusion of non-European system
- It critiques the tendency to view European political developments as the standard for progress and governance

Economic Eurocentrism

- Emphasizes European economic models and theories as universally applicable
- Ignoring the economic practices and contributions of non-European societies

Problems on Eurocentrism

1. Marginalization of non-European civilization
2. Minimize non-European achievements
3. Biased historical narratives
4. Exaggerated European countries' achievements

Path Dependency in Global Antiquity

- Highlights on how decisions and developments from ancient times
- Still influences contemporary society
 - institutions, technologies, and cultures
- **Stability & Predictability:** social, economic, and political system
- **Resistance to change:** hindering adaptation to new circumstances
- **Cultural Continuity:** preserving the heritage of ancient civilizations
- **Innovation & Adaptation:** understading historical roots leads to better adapt to changes and embrance new ideas

Aspects of Antiquity Inherited in Modern World

Legal and political systems often based on Roman Law & Greek democratic principles

- Bureaucracy system
- Urban organization
- Public works
- Property rights, legal contracts, and personal liability have their roots in ancient legal traditions
- Boundaries and borders

Aspects of Antiquity Inherited in Modern World

Economic systems

- Global trade networks and economic systems evolved from early trade routes
- Concept of currency and monetary systems from ancient coinage practices
- Ideas of investments, commercial contracts, and resource management debates

Literary & philosophical heritage

- Classical literature and philosophy form the bedrock of modern education & thought
- Ancient Greek & Roman principles influenced modern democratic systems & governance models

Aspects of Antiquity Inherited in Modern World

Architectural & Engineering Innovation

- Urban planning & city organization

Scientific Foundations

- Early scientific & mathematical principles under modern research & education

Cultural & Religious Traditions

- Continuing to shape societies globally

The Axial Age

Karl Jasper

- Significant intellectual, moral and political changes that happen across Eurasia
 - Core regions across Eurasia: Greece, Israel-Palestine, and India to China
- Changes in ideas like fairness, universal rights, democratic governance, and the rule of law

Expansionism & Pastoralism

- Global status
 - The world was at its peak in the 1st century with large empires & complex urban systems
- Major empires
 - Rome, the Hun empire, Satavahnas, and the Kushans
- Population Growth
 - Rose from ~150m to over 375m

The Roman Empire

Roman inheritance:

1. Administrative and fiscal systems
2. Legal Traditions → Law of Nations, Law of twelve tables
3. Urban Infrastructure → Trade, communication, military movements, contributing to economic political stability of medieval Europe
4. Military Organization
5. Cultural & Religious Continuity → Laid the foundation for christianization playing a central role in medieval society / influencing social and political life throughout the Middle Ages
6. Economic Structures

Roman Republic (509-27 BCE)

- Males had full citizenship
- Women and those in newly conquered lands had limited citizenships → citizenship count every 5 years
- Elected senate & several assemblies (only patricians could vote) → patricians voted for consuls → senate were elected by consuls, dictator was chosen by senates
- Run their internal affairs → internal conflicts
- Law of Nations

Pax Romana (27BCE - 180 CE)

- Rulers maintained peace, created social programs, and built public works
- Taxation was centralized
- Women gained full rights, including being able to divorce, attend public events, and influence politics
- Freeman can buy full citizenship
- Imperia Rule → has the emperor → Imperialism
- Tax
 - Tributum (military tax) → poll / land
 - Vectigalia (local consumption) → poll / interitance / postage / auction sales

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

Governance & Administration

- Centralized bureaucracy: reducing feudal cronyism and promoting harmony
- Confucianism in governance: a moral philosophy provided framework for political thought, shaping how officials were trained and legitimizing authority through the “Mandate of Heaven.”
- Civil service examinations: Candidates had to pass rigorous exams, preventing incompetence in power and became the backbone of effective governance

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

Influence on the world

- Global bureaucratic model: Chinese civil service examination system influenced the British civil service in the 16th century.
- Meritocracy: Focused on intellectual ability and moral duty as qualifications for governance.

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

Land & Property Rights

- Well-field system: abolishing feudalism and promoting social stability, economics, and the well-being of its people.
- Individuals held deeds, rights to cultivate, and rights to trade, supporting private property rights.

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

Technological Innovation

- Papermaking → record-keeping
- Deep Drilling
- The Wheelbarrow

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

Intellectual & Cultural Legacy

- Mandate of Heaven: the idea that rulers were chosen by the heaven, but could lose legitimacy if they govern immorally.
- Confucian education: influenced the structure of these societies, particularly in terms of governance, family relationships, education, and social order.

Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 CE)

- Confucianism + Legalism / Daoism
- Trading with Roman
- Silk Road
- Buddhism came into China
- The invention of paper
- The Three Kingdoms

The Mauryan Empire (322-185BCE)

- Governed under the Emperor Ashoka
 - centralized bureaucratic administration in India
 - championed Buddhism and promoted non-violence, moral governance, and religious tolerance
 - Spread Buddhism across Asia
 - Created treaties and edicts that addressed law, taxation, and how to treat tributaries

The Arthashastra

- highlights principles of IR, diplomacy, and statecraft, including how to interact with friends, tributaries, and enemies.

The Mauryan Empire (322-185BCE)

- Similar to Rome and China, Indian empires maintained low taxation rates to ensure social stability and prevent population displacement.