Zeyi Qian

PhD Candidate · Economics · Urban and Trade

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Education

Clark University   *Worcester, Massachusetts*
PhD in Economics   *2026 (Expected)*
- Unproposed Dissertation: Quantitative Analysis on Spatial Distribution of Firms and International Trade
- Advisor: Dr. Junfu Zhang (Chair) and Dr. Kensuke Suzuki

Clark University   *Worcester, Massachusetts*
MA in Economics   *2023*

Shanghai University   *Shanghai, China*
MA in Economics   *2021*

University of Toronto   *Toronto, Ontario*
International Visiting Graduate Student   *2020*

Shanghai Ocean University   *Shanghai, China*
BA in Economics   *2018*

Research Papers

Working Papers

Local Business Climate, Trade Costs, and Spatial Distribution of Chinese Manufacturing Firms: A Quantitative Analysis (JMP)
with Kensuke Suzuki and Junfu Zhang

Abstract: This paper studies the determinants of the spatial distribution of economic activities in China. Specifically, we focus on the different patterns of sectoral growth across Chinese provinces in the last two decades, followed by a series of dramatic policy reforms, including trade liberalization, infrastructure development, productivity growth, and relaxation of mobility restrictions for workers. To understand how those factors interact with each other to shape the spatial distribution of economic activities across regions and sectors, we develop a spatial general equilibrium model of international trade in the spirit of the Melitz-Chaney framework. We extend the heterogeneous firm model to a multi-sector and multi-region setup, incorporating rich sectoral and regional interactions. We bring the model to the data for the Chinese economy and simulate the counterfactual equilibria to account for the underlying mechanism of regional development.

Trade Shock and Dynamic Labor Allocation

Abstract: The early 21st century saw the U.S. economy undergoing a profound structural shift, driven by the "China shock" following China's accession to the WTO. This trade shock initially significantly affected U.S. manufacturing, causing widespread job losses and economic disruption. However, contrary to expectations, the shock also accelerated the growth of the service sector, which emerged as a primary driver of economic expansion. A key mechanism behind this transformation was reducing labor relocation costs, enabling workers—particularly those with lower education levels—to switch industries and maximize their life utility. This adjustment not only offset the negative effects of the trade shock but also contributed to a re-optimization of labor market allocation. To understand this counterintuitive outcome, we develop a dynamic spatial model grounded in the frameworks of CDP and ACM. Our model integrates declining labor relocation costs with heterogeneity in workers' education levels and labor mobility. Numerical exercises using a toy model show that reducing labor relocation costs allows more low-educated workers to transition into the service sector. These findings highlight the critical role of declining labor relocation costs in mitigating trade shock impacts and achieving an optimal labor market allocation.

Publications

Zhao, H., *Qian, Z., Guo, Y., and Ye Y. 2025. **How City Size Affects Firm Survival: Evidence from Chinese Enterprise Registration Data.** *Applied Economics Letters*, forthcoming.

*Qian, Z., Zhang, J. and Chen, Q., 2024. **Estimating Round-Tripping FDI from Firm-Level Data in China.** *International Studies of Economics*, 1–24.

Chen, Q., Yang, J., and Qian, Z., 2022. **International Twin Cities and Chinese Export Activities.** *Economic Theory and Business Management*, (3), 137-155.(in Chinese)

Chen, Q., *Qian, Z., Chen, Y. and Shi, Z., 2021. **Promotion Effect of FDI on Enterprise Survival in Host Country–A Discussion on Industry Safety and Market Access of Foreign Investment.** *China Industrial Economics*, (7), 137-155.(in Chinese)

Qian, Z., Chen, Q., Shi, Z., Li, X., 2021. **The Man-Bear Race: A New Explanation of Regional Competition for China's High-Speed Rail Stations.** *South China Journal of Economics*, 40(2), 66-83.(in Chinese)

Presentations

2025	Annual Meetings of the MEA , **Midwest Economics Association**; Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
2024	Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
2023	Chinese Economist Society North American Conference, **University of Oklahoma**; Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
2022	Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
2020	Camphor Economic Circle Seminar, **University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences**
2019	Academic Forum on Regional Science and Urban Economics, **Shanghai University of Finance and Economics**; Shanghai Postgraduate Academic Forum, **University of Shanghai for Science and Technology**; Forum on Frontier of International Trade Theory and Demonstration, **Southwestern University of Finance and Economics**; Urban Development Forum, **Renmin University of China**; Innovation Forum, **Shandong University of Finance and Economics**; National Development Youth Forum, **Peking University**

Teaching & Research

Teaching Assistant

Spring 2025	ECON 265: Econometrics, supervised by Dr. Moshi Alam (**Clark University**)
Fall 2024	ECON 160: Intro to Statistical Analysis, supervised by Dr. Moshi Alam (**Clark University**)

Research Assistant

2021-2024	Supervised by Dr. Junfu Zhang, Dr. David Cuberes, Dr. Jon Denton-Schneider, and Dr. Kensuke Suzuki, (**Clark University**)
2018-2021	Supervised by Dr. Qiangyuan Chen (**Shanghai University/Renmin University of China**), and Dr. Yao Luo (**University of Toronto**)

Academic Service

2025	Anonymous Reviewer, *International Studies of Economics*

Awards, Fellowships, & Grants

Awards

2024	E. C. H. Veendorp Award, **Clark University**	*USD 0.5k*
2023	Sheftel Travel Award, **Clark University**	*USD 0.6k*

Fellowships

2021	Chinese Government Scholarship, **China Scholarship Council**	*USD 91.2k*
2019	National Scholarship, **Ministry of Education of China**	*CNY 20k*
2017	Shanghai Municipal Scholarship, **Shanghai Municipal Education Commission**	*CNY 8k*

Grants

2025-2026	IER Project Research Grant (IERPK2527), **Hitotsubashi University, Japan**	*JPY 500k*
2021-2024	NSFC Grant (72073093), **National Natural Science Foundation of China**	
2020	Joint Program Grant for Graduate Students Studying Abroad, **Shanghai University**	*CNY 10k*
2018	Shanghai Municipal Government Consulting Project Grant (2018-Z-D02), **Pudong New Area Government, Shanghai**	

Language & Skills

Language: Chinese (native), English (fluent)

Computer: Matlab, Julia, Stata, R, ArcGIS, Python (web crawling)