

Xin Zhang. *The Global in the Local: A Century of War, Commerce, and Technology in China*. Bristol: Harvard University Press, 2023. Pp. 288. Hardcover \$45.00.

Xin Zhang, Professor of History at Indiana University, Indianapolis, contributes to China's representation in world history in *Global in the Local*. He argues that China is an active participant in global change through the interactions between local communities and the global markets. Zhang's analysis considers how ordinary people facilitated changes in global history. Globalization altered their communities from the city of Zhenjiang through the introduction of Western business practices and technology which increases local interactions with the international market.

Zhenjiang, located in the Jiangsu province, demonstrates how war promoted global connections between people outside of Asia, commerce directly connected the country's domestic markets to the international markets, and Western technology advanced China's industrial development into a modernized country. Its location between the northern and southern canals of the Yangtze River connected it to various cities, including the capital Beijing, making Zhenjiang the center of commercial trade.

Global in the Local consists of an introduction, nine chapters, and a conclusion that chronologically spans Chinese imperial history from 220 CE to the 1840s, when China began to indirectly dominate the world market through the high demand for trade goods. The First Opium War against Britain from 1839 to 1842, however, opened up the country not only to European subjugation but also to changes in trade relations as exemplified in Zhenjiang. The Opium War generated social relations between the British and locals. Commercial activity grew to connect to the port city of Shanghai to tap into the world markets for profits. The introduction of steamships allowed local communities to control the transportation of people and trade goods across the waterways and the promotion of community interests. These events happened as China transitioned from an empire to a republic between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Global in the Local offers a bottom-up view of global changes from the local communities in China. Accounts from native residents and British soldiers during the Opium War

identify how these two cultures negotiated the social differences between one another, facilitating a global connection (70). Locations, routes, and canals provide readers the knowledge of where historical events, global changes, and commercial activity were taking place and how the communities contributed to the world market. Xin Zhang's translations of the terms and names for the locations and businesses extend the understanding of Chinese culture and economics to readers through a local perspective.

Global in the Local's arguments could be stronger if it included a map of the trade routes, canals, and locations described. Keeping track of where the people, trade goods, and historical events were located could provide a better understanding of where the global connections were in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Including written sources representing the illiterate populace from nineteenth-century China could also benefit the reading. Literacy was reserved for the political elite or wealthy merchants who could afford an education. The majority of the population, like the farmers and artisans, lacked the funds and means of learning to write, underrepresenting their contributions to the history of global change.

Global in the Local makes a compelling argument about China's growing international influence across world markets despite being behind in technology and industry in comparison to Europe and the United States. Zhang draws on diaries and memoirs from British soldiers and the local literati of Zhenjiang for firsthand accounts of the cultural negotiations between ordinary British and Chinese people. Various archival records, newspapers, and magazines from the Zhenjiang municipal library about the city's history illustrate how local communities took advantage of the global trade relations to create new livelihoods for themselves. This book would interest students of Chinese history and economic history, Chinese Americans wanting to learn about their ancestry, and politicians studying foreign relations. Zhang's analysis offers insight into the contributions of ordinary people in modernizing nineteenth-century Chinese society and international relations with Europe and the U.S. to create the country that dominates world trade today.

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