

STORIA GLOBALE

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[Moodle](#) enrolment key: **GLOBHIST**

Lezione 8

Visioni europee 1750-1850

Ambasciate europee dal secondo '600 all'inizio dell'800

- Zacharias Wagenaer (1614-1668), a Canton nel 1653 (poi Giappone); estratti del diario in Churchill, 1704, II, 489 sgg.
- De Goyer-de Keyser (Nieuhoff), 1654-1657 (più altre 5 ambasciate a Pechino entro il 1685)
- Fyodor Alexeyevich Golovin (1650-1706), 1689 (Gerbillon-Pereira)
- Eberhard Ysbrandt Ides (ambasciatore russo in Cina) 1692-1695
- Gemelli Careri, 1695-1697
- Laurent Lange (inviato di Pietro il Grande in Cina), 1716-17, 1719-21 (con l'ambasciatore straordinario Ismailoff), 1726-28 (Kiakhta), 1736
- Charles Cathcart, 1788
- Lord Macartney, 1792-1794
- Isaac Titsingh, 1794-1796 (Andreas Everardus van Braam Houckgeest, Louis-Chrétien de Guignes)

- Lord Amherst, 1816-1817
- Egor Fedorovich Timkovski (1820-1821),
*Travels of the Russian mission through
Mongolia to China* (ed. ingl. 1827, tr. fr. 1827)
- Lord Napier, 1833-1834
- Caleb Cushing, 1844

L'AMBASSADE
DE LA
COMPAGNIE ORIENTALE
DES
PROVINCES UNIES
VERS
L'EMPEREUR
DE LA
CHINE,
OU
GRAND CAM
DE
TARTARIE,

FAITE PAR LES
S^{rs}. PIERRE DE GOYER, & JACOB DE KEYSER,

Illustrée d'une tres-exacte Description des Villes, Bourgs, Villages,
Ports de Mers, & autres Lieux plus considerables de la CHINE:

Enrichie d'un grand nombre de Tailles douces.

LE TOUT RECUEILLI PAR LE

M^r. JEAN NIEUHOF,

M^r. d'Hotel de l'Ambassade, à present Gouverneur en Coylan:

MIS EN FRANÇOIS,

Orné, & assorti de mille belles Particularitez tant Morales que Politiques, par

JEAN LE CARPENTIER, HISTORIOGRAPHE.

PREMIERE PARTIE.



A LEYDE.

Pour JACOB DE MEURS, Marchand Libraire
& Graveur de la Ville d'Amsterdam, 1665.



*Wie zie je Nieuwe na het Leven afemaakt;
Een Heel, die zelf de Raam verloor heeft voor zijn daaden;
Een die tekent is, daar het doollicht eest en daalt,
Voor Overhoofst Gezand, met Justice overslaand;
Zyn wysheit, kloek verstand, en overmoede oest,
Blinkt yet aan ieder een die zyne Schriften loest.*
J. Nieuhof

Johan Nieuhof (1618-1672), in Brasile nel
1640-49; poi dipendente VOC in Cina fino al
1657, poi India, Ceylon (1663-1667)

L'Ambassade de la Compagnie Orientale des Provinces Unies vers L'Empereur de la Chine, Ou Grand Cam de Tartarie, Faite par les Srs. Pierre de Goyer, & Jacob de Keyser; illustrée d'une très-exacte description des villes, bourgs, villages, ports de mers, & autres lieux plus considérables de la Chine: enrichie d'un grand nombre de tailles douces. Le tout recueilli par le Mr. Jean Nieuhoff, Mre. D'hostel de l'ambassade, a présent gouverneur en Ceylan: mis en François, orne, & afforti de mille belles particularitéz tant morales que politiques, par Jean le Carpentier, historiographe, à Leyde, chez Jacob de Meurs, 1665

TANYN TARTARIE PARS.

REGNUM NIUCHE



REY - KAERIE
 In Auftrage der Niederländischen
 Ost-Indischen Compagnie durch CHRISTOPH
 VAN DEN GOSS, Cartographen CHAM
 DEUR, JOHANN NIEBUHR.

Carte du Voyage
 de la Compagnie des Indes
 Orientales de la Compagnie
 des Indes Néerlandaises par
 le Capitaine de la Corvette
 le Commandeur de la Corvette

Tabula Geographica
 Imperii Japonici, Sive
 Imperii Japonici, Sive
 Imperii Japonici, Sive
 Imperii Japonici, Sive
 Imperii Japonici, Sive

1725
 In Amsterdam, apud
 Johannem Neumeijerum
 Typographum

Regnum
 Gannan

KANTON.



PEKING.





Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

La Cina e l'illuminismo

- Influenza sul gusto, la letteratura, la filosofia, la politica, l'economia
- Voltaire, *Orphelin de la Chine*, 1755: tragedia ispirata alla traduzione francese effettuata da Premare in Du Halde, 1735 dell'*Orfano di Zhao*, una storia o leggenda tramandata da Sima Qian o Ssu-ma Chien (145-68 a. C., epoca Han) e rielaborata da Ji Junxiang (epoca Yuan): storia dell'orfano della famiglia Zhao, perseguitato dal malvagio ministro che ne ha sterminato la famiglia per odio del padre e che poi lo adotta senza conoscerne l'identità; quando l'orfano, divenuto adulto, scopre chi è il padre adottivo si vendica e recupera proprietà e onore di famiglia
- Esaltazione dell'etica di clan feudale, della vendetta, della legge del taglione
- L'ammirazione di Voltaire è segno di una "estrema infatuazione per la Cina" (Etiemble)
- Voltaire vuole esaltare l'etica confuciana e la virtù dei Cinesi

Leibniz, *Novissima Sinica* (1697, 1699)

- “ Et donc si nous sommes leurs égaux dans l’art industriel et en avance sur eux dans les sciences contemplatives, ils nous surpassent certainement (bien qu’on ait presque honte de le confesser) en philosophie pratique, c’est-à-dire dans les préceptes éthiques et politiques adaptés à la vie présente et à l’usage de la morale »
- Tolleranza, ateismo, filosofia morale

Voltaire sinofilo

- *Essai sur les moeurs* (1756-1760), “Chine” in *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764), *Catéchisme chinois* (1762), “Chine” in *Questions sur l’encyclopédie* (1770)
- L’antichità dell’incivilimento e della storia
- La morale confuciana
- Il sistema mandarinale
- L’assenza di privilegi nobiliari
- Il sovrano assoluto ma illuminato
- La giustizia efficace
- Religione razionale, mancanza di fanatismo, di sette, di conflitti tra chiesa e Stato

Voltaire sinofilo (“Chine” in *Dictionnaire philosophique*, 1764)

- « La religion des lettrés, encore une fois, est admirable. Point de superstitions, point de légendes absurdes, point de ces dogmes qui insultent à la raison et à la nature, et auxquels des bonzes donnent mille sens différents, parce qu’ils n’en ont aucun. Le culte le plus simple leur a paru le meilleur depuis plus de quarante siècles. Ils sont ce que nous pensons qu’étaient Seth, Énoch et Noé; ils se contentent d’adorer un Dieu avec tous les sages de la terre, tandis qu’en Europe on se partage entre Thomas et Bonaventure, entre Calvin et Luther, entre Jansénius et Molina »

Voltaire sinofilo (“Chine” in *Dictionnaire philosophique*, 1764): ammirazione equilibrata

« Laissons donc, nous qui sommes d’hier, nous descendants des Celtes, qui venons de défricher les forêts de nos contrées sauvages laissons les Chinois et les Indiens jouir en paix de leur beau climat et de leur antiquité. Cessons surtout d’appeler idolâtres l’empereur de la Chine et le soubab de Dékan. Il ne faut pas être fanatique du mérite chinois: la constitution de leur empire est à la vérité la meilleure qui soit au monde la seule qui soit toute fondée sur le pouvoir paternel; la seule dans laquelle un gouverneur de province soit puni quand, en sortant de charge, il n’a pas eu les acclamations du peuple; la seule qui ait institué des prix pour la vertu, tandis que partout ailleurs les lois se bornent à punir le crime; la seule qui ait fait adopter ses lois à ses vainqueurs, tandis que nous sommes encore sujets aux coutumes des Burgundiens, des Francs et des Goths, qui nous ont domptés. Mais on doit avouer que le petit peuple, gouverné par des bonzes, est aussi fripon que le nôtre; qu’on y vend tout fort cher aux étrangers, ainsi que chez nous; que dans les sciences, les Chinois sont encore au terme où nous étions il y a deux cents ans; qu’ils ont comme nous mille préjugés ridicules; qu’ils croient aux talismans, à l’astrologie judiciaire, comme nous y avons cru longtemps. »

Montesquieu

- *Geographica, Pensées, Spicilège, e Esprit des lois*
- Rilettura di Du Halde dietro la scorta di Renaudot, Fouquet e Matteo Ripa: antigesuitismo di Montesquieu
- Intenzione di ridimensionare l'ammirazione contemporanea per la Cina, la "légende", il "mirage" cinese
- Influenza di Laurent Lange (1715) e di George Anson, *A Voyage around the World*, 1748 (letto nel 1749)
- *Esprit des Lois*, libro VIII, cap. 21: specificità della Cina, difficoltà di applicare il modello del dispotismo, il migliore dei governi asiatici (influsso dei costumi, dei riti e di leggi tradizionali), ma comunque un governo dispotico
- Montesquieu si preoccupa non tanto della "vera" Cina, ma della sua propria teoria e finisce col diventare autorità di riferimento per i "detrattori" della Cina

I fisiocratici e la Cina

- Etienne de Silhouette, *Idée générale du gouvernement et de la morale des Chinois* (1731)
- Abbé Baudeau, marquis de Mirabeau, Dupont de Nemours in “Ephémérides du Citoyen”, 1765-1768
- François Quesnay, *Despotisme de la Chine*, 1767
- Pierre Poivre, *Voyage d'un Philosophe*, 1768
- Turgot, *Questions sur la Chine*, 1766

I fisiocratici e la Cina

- Potere paterno del sovrano
- Il “dispotismo legale”
- Un ordine politico modellato sulle leggi della natura e su un “ordine di doveri e diritti che costituiscono una necessità fisica e dunque assoluta” (Mercier de la Rivière)
- La legge naturale trasformata in massime codificate di governo (Quesnay)
- La protezione dell’agricoltura, i riti agricoli e il rispetto della proprietà
- Il sistema d’istruzione e di esami

Raynal e Diderot: gli ammiratori e i detrattori

The economy, the social structure, private and political morals, history, the antiquity of Chinese history and the long and uninterrupted historical continuity of the empire.

Economic aspects: industry, application to agriculture, water regulations and (internal) navigation common property of natural resources of general utility, moderation in fiscal impositions, respect for property, equality of fortunes, simplicity and frugality in lifestyle. Social aspects were wisdom and cult for social and moral virtues, religion as practice of social virtues, absence of feudal rights and hereditary nobility, favourable conditions and propensity for demographic reproduction, social tranquillity, religious tolerance, rational character and domestic and social utility of Confucian teachings, care for children's and people's education, respect for the elders and for virtue itself. From a political and administrative point of view: the widespread awareness of the emperor's duties toward his subjects, the paternal character of his supreme political authority, the sentiments of filial respect as much towards parents as toward the emperor, advancement on the basis of personal merits only, wisdom of government in every gradation, absence of factions in public life, honours and rewards for virtue, mildness of the penal laws, popular patriotic spirit.

At the same time: little progress made in theoretical sciences caused by the difficulty of the language, the dominance of memory and tradition on imagination and innovation and the absence of the spirit of invention, paradoxical perfection of laws, policy and government and imperfection of belles lettres et beaux arts, Chinese as masters in the art of good government, pacific, not martial and warlike spirit

I detrattori

the great amount of population is neither necessarily a positive feature of Chinese society nor the proof – but rather direct cause – of industry and agriculture productivity. Chinese population is abundant because largeness of the country and absence of wars and devotion to agricultural works is the consequence of contempt for speculative, not immediately useful and productive occupations, but it is also the cause of such inhuman and barbaric customs as infants' murder, which is considered an unequivocal sign of lack of civilization, and of an unbearable pressure on men's work because of the unending struggle against basic needs and the clearing all spare time for cultivating arts, sciences and the enjoyments of life. The same is true for Chinese hostility to colonization, which could have been a proper remedy to overpopulation: again, China is lacking of one of the distinctive features of European modernity, propensity for expansion. Patriarchal despotism is the sum of two forms of oppression and it tends necessarily to the extinction of virtue; that the administration is not in the hands of powerful and rich families is a positive fact only if one admits that the French government under Richelieu was a bad one; education of the Chinese children does not encourage sentiments of sociability but of submission; good manners are really just ostentation of formalities; commerce with foreigners is dominated by bad faith or dishonesty; China is more than barbaric a country

I detrattori

What Chinese people and civilization are deprived of are exactly those virtues which makes different European society, that is to say the attitude to entertain social commerce and get into relationships with other peoples as a consequence of their prejudice against all foreigners as inferiors. Chinese language is not suitable to the practical requirements of economic activities and is “à peine suffisante au commerce de la vie”; there is not enough of honesty in the administration of justice; all the governmental and administrative jobs is rapacious and oppressive with the people. And the Chinese are “useless to the rest of the Earth”, as it is demonstrated by the fact that no philosophical or scientific work or dissertation on political, moral or economic matters rivalling with the European ones have ever been brought to Europe. The much praised tolerance does not extend itself to Christianity. There is not “ni police ni mœurs” in China [...] it is difficult to choose between the two opposed thesis of the pro- and against-Chinese and that the controversy could be ended only by a research on the spot supported by direct knowledge of language and country.

Adam Smith

Adam Smith's chapters III, VII and IX of book I of the *Wealth of Nations*: China's economic conditions are the subject of considerate reflection [...] in ancient times Chinese agriculture and manufactures had been improved thanks mainly to the internal demand and the domestic market, made accessible by efficient transports and communications ("inland navigation") [...] China one of the most fertile, best cultivated, richest and most prosperous and populous countries in the world [...] But China had arrived at a stalemate: inadequacy of internal demand, the low reward of labour, the low wages of the workers: in a word, the low family income both in agriculture and in manufacture and the consequent lack of initiative in a context of too strong social inequalities [...] a sort of physiological relationship between the total attainable wealth and the political institutions of the country [...] defective laws and an inadequate policy [...] Small stockowners were not protected enough from usurers. Inequalities trampled low-income potential entrepreneurs. Contracts were not adequately protected at law. The cost of economic risk was too high and so resulted the interest rate [...] lack of juridical protection for contracts is a sign of barbarism The case of China demonstrated that "A defect in the law may sometimes raise the rate of interest considerably above what the condition of the country, as to wealth or poverty, would require. When the law does not enforce the performance of contracts, it puts all borrowers nearly upon the same footing with bankrupts or people of doubtful credit in better regulated countries. The uncertainty of recovering his money makes the lender exact the same usurious interest which is usually required from bankrupts" (*Wealth of Nations*, book I, ch. ix).

Adam Smith

A “great degree of opulence” had been reached in past history without recourse to foreign trade, that was due to the great extent of the domestic market, which had allowed a wide division of labour and the improvement of manufactures. The main reason of China stationary state was exactly represented by the restrictions of the domestic market, where the low income of the agricultural labourers did not permit the growth of manufactures and the income of the agricultural labourers could not rise for the economic, political and financial causes as indicated above. Only foreign trade would have broken this vicious circle.

Adam Smith

“A more extensive foreign trade, however, which to this great home market added the foreign market of all the rest of the world – especially if any considerable part of this trade was carried on in Chinese ships – could scarce fail to increase very much the manufactures of China, and to improve very much the productive powers of its manufacturing industry. By a more extensive navigation, the Chinese would naturally learn the art of using and constructing themselves all the different machines made use of in other countries, as well as the other improvements of art and industry which are practised in all the different parts of the world. Upon their present plan they have little opportunity except that of the Japanese”

Detrattori

- Herder, *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784): “China has stayed put in the same spot for thousands of years [...] even its moral and legal books go on and on in circles, and say in a hundred ways, precisely and carefully, with steady hypocrisy always the same things about childish duties” (XIV:12) [...] “their astronomy and music, poetry and the military arts, painting and architecture are now as they were centuries ago, children of their eternal laws and unalterable, childish institutions [...] The empire is an embalmed mummy, painted with hieroglyphs and wrapped in silk; its internal cycle is like the life of the sleeping winter animals”
- Condorcet: «c’est sur la Chine qu’il faut un moment arrêter ses regards ; sur ce peuple, qui semble n’avoir précédé les autres dans les sciences et les arts, que pour se voir successivement effacé par eux tous ; ce peuple, que la connaissance de l’artillerie n’a point empêché d’être conquis par des nations barbares ; où les sciences, dont les nombreuses écoles sont ouvertes à tous les citoyens, conduisent seules à toutes les dignités, et où cependant, soumises à d’absurdes préjugés, les sciences sont condamnées à une éternelle médiocrité ; où enfin l’invention même de l’imprimerie est demeurée entièrement inutile aux progrès de l’esprit humain. »

A Complete View of the Chinese Empire [...] a Genuine and Copious Account of Earl Macartney's Embassy, 1798

“But none have come up to the Chinese in the boldness of their pretensions to antiquity, and what is more, none have had such grounds on which to found their claims in this respect. It is natural enough for a people to overstretch the boundaries of truth on a favourite and interesting subject. The Chinese are remarkable for their vanity, for their love of their own country, and for their veneration of their ancestors. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that they should carry their pretensions farther back than the limits of truth and probability will allow. Nations possessing more advantages have done the same. Yet, notwithstanding this, the Chinese may with justice boast of very high antiquity.”

“Parental authority is absolute and it always was so. An absolute monarchy was therefore the first form of government. This is the case in China. Though revolutions have frequently happened and the Sovereign, his family, and ministers have been all destroyed, yet the constitution has not suffered any alteration by the circumstance [...] The Chinese present to us an invincible argument against democratic forms of government. China possesses a form of government the most despotic in the world, and yet in no country has literature met with such encouragement as there, no nation is more ingenious, and with respect to happiness, taking them as a general body, they possess as much as a numerous society can possibly enjoy.”

Two embassies and their printed accounts: Macartney, Amherst

- **Macartney (1792-1794)**
 - *George L. Staunton* (1797)
 - *John Barrow* (1804)
 - Aneas Anderson (1795)
 - Samuel Holmes (1798)
 - James Dinwiddie (1868)
 - Stephen Else (1793)
 - Erasmus Gower
 - William Alexander (1805)
- **Amherst (1816-1817)**
 - *George Th. Staunton* (1810, 1822, 1824, mod. pos.)
 - *Henry Ellis* (1817, neg.)
 - Clarke Abel (1818)
 - John McLeod (1817)
 - *John Francis Davis* (1836, 1841)
- **Lord Napier (1786-1834):**
Superintendent of Trade at Canton, 1834

John Barrow, *Travels*, 1804, p. 3: need of a realistic picture

With regard to China, if we except the work of Sir George Staunton, and the limited account of Mr. Bell of Amoy, which was not written by himself, it may be considered as unbeaten ground by Britons. We have heard a great deal of Chinese knavery practised at Canton, but, except in the two works abovementioned; we have not yet heard the sentiments of an Englishman at all acquainted with the manners, customs, and character of the Chinese nation. The voluminous communications of the missionaries are by no means satisfactory; and some of their defects will be noticed and accounted for in the course of this work; the chief aim of which will be to shew this extraordinary people in their proper colours, not as their own moral maxims would represent them, but as they really are—to divest the court of the tinsel and the tawdry varnish with which, like the palaces of the Emperor, the missionaries have found it expedient to cover it in their writings; and to

...Barrow, p. 4: position on the scale of civilization

endeavour to draw such a sketch of the manners, the state of society, the language, literature and fine arts, the sciences and civil institutions, the religious worship and opinions, the population and progress of agriculture, the civil and moral character of the people, as may enable the reader to settle, in his own mind, *the point of rank which China may be considered to hold in the scale of civilized nations.*

...Barrow, p. 179: no human dignity under a tyrannical yoke

In a government, where every man is liable to be made a slave, where every man is subject to be flogged with the bamboo at the nod of one of the lowest rank of those in office, and where he is compelled to kiss the rod that beats him or, which amounts to the same thing, to thank the tyrant on his knees for the trouble he has taken to correct his morals, high notions of honour and dignified sentiments are not to be expected. . . Where the maxims of the government commanding, and the opinions of the people agreeing, that corporal punishment may be inflicted, on the ground of a favour conferred upon the person punished, a principle of humiliation is admitted that is well calculated to exclude and obliterate every notion of the dignity of human nature.

...Barrow, p. 180: dishonesty of Chinese merchants

It would be needless to multiply instances to those already on record of the refined knavery displayed by Chinese merchants in their dealings with Europeans, or the tricks that they play off in their transactions with one another. They are well known to most nations, and are proverbial in their own. A merchant with them is considered as the lowest character in the country, as a man that will cheat if he can, and whose trade it is to create and then supply artificial wants. To this general character, which public opinion has most probably made to be what it is, an exception is due to those merchants who, acting under the immediate sanction of the government, have always been remarked for their liberality and accuracy in their dealings with Europeans trading to Canton. These men who are styled the *Hong* merchants, in distinction to a common merchant whom they call *mai-mai-gin*, a *buying and selling man*, might not unjustly be compared with the most eminent of the mercantile class in England.

...Barrow, p. 183: defective system of government

These examples but too clearly illustrate the great defect in the boasted moral character of the Chinese. But the fault, as I before observed, seems to be more in the system of government than in the nature and disposition of the people. The accession of a foreign power to the throne, by adopting the language, the laws, and the customs of the conquered, has preserved with the forms all the abuses of the ancient government. The

...Barrow, p. 355: the tyranny of a paternal emperor

These opinions, to which it owes so much of its stability, are grounded on a principle of authority which, according to maxims industriously inculcated and now completely established in the minds of the people, is considered as the natural and unalienable right of the parent over his children; an authority that is not supposed to cease at any given period of life or years, but to extend, and to be maintained with undiminished and uncontrouled sway, until the death of one of the parties dissolves the obligation. The Emperor being considered as the common father of his people is accordingly invested with the exercise of the same authority over them, as the father of a family exerts on those of his particular household. [REDACTED]

It is greatly to be lamented that a system of government, so plausible in theory, should be liable to so many abuses in practice; and that this fatherly care and affection in the governors, and filial duty and reverence in the governed would, with much more propriety, be expressed by the terms of tyranny, oppression, and injustice in the one, and by fear, deceit, and disobedience in the other.

...Barrow, p. 366: virtues of the code of penal laws

██████████ and I am encouraged to hold out a reasonable hope, that this compendium of the laws of China may, ere long, appear in an able and faithful English translation, which will explain, more than all the volumes that have hitherto been written on the subject of China, in what manner a mass of people, more than the double of that which is found in all Europe, has been kept together through so many ages in one bond of union. This work* on the laws of China, for perspicuity and method, may justly be compared with Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England. It not only contains the laws arranged under their respective heads, but to every law is added a short commentary and a case.

...Barrow, p. 367: from theory to practice

I have been assured, on the best authority, that the laws of China define, in the most distinct and perspicuous manner, almost every shade of criminal offences, and the punishment awarded to each crime: that the greatest care appears to have been taken in constructing this scale of crimes and punishments; that they are very far from being sanguinary: and that if

the practice was equal to the theory, few nations could boast of a more mild, and, at the same time, a more efficacious dispensation of justice. Of all the despotic governments existing, there is certainly none where the life of man is held so sacred as in the laws of China.

...Barrow, pp. 379-80: uncertainty of property

All their laws indeed respecting property, as I have already observed, are insufficient to give it that security, and stability which alone can constitute the pleasure of accumulating wealth. The avarice of men in power may overlook those who are in moderate circumstances, but the affluent rarely

escape their rapacious grasp. In a word, although the laws are not so perfect as to procure for the subject general good, yet neither are they so defective as to reduce him to that state of general misery, which could only be terminated in a revolution. The executive administration is so faulty, that the man in office generally has it in his power to govern the laws, which makes the measure of good or evil depend greatly on his moral character.

In the governments of Europe, property seldom fails to command influence and to force dependence: in China, the man of property is afraid to own it, and all the enjoyments it procures him are stolen.

...Barrow, p. 567: the end of the agriculturalist myth

rit; but, on the great scale of agriculture, they are certainly not to be mentioned with many European nations. They have no knowledge of the modes of improvement practised in the various breeds of cattle; no instruments for breaking up and preparing waste lands; no system for draining and reclaiming swamps and morasses; though that part of the country over which the grand communication is effected between the two extremities of the empire, abounds with lands of this nature, where population is excessive and where the multitudes of shipping that pass and repass create a never failing demand for grain and other vegetable products. For want of this knowledge, a very considerable portion of the richest land, perhaps, in the whole empire, is suffered to remain a barren and unprofitable waste. If an idea may be formed from what we saw in the course of our journey, and from the accounts that have been given of the other provinces, I should conclude, that one-fourth part of the whole country nearly consists of lakes and low, sour, swampy grounds, which are totally uncultivated: and

...Barrow, p. 569: the end of the agriculturalist myth

Upon the whole, if I might venture to offer an opinion with respect to the merit of the Chinese as agriculturists, I should not hesitate to say that, let as much ground be given to one of their peasants as he and his family can work with the spade, and he will turn that piece of ground to more advantage, and produce from it more sustenance for the use of man, than any European whatsoever would be able to do; but, let fifty or one hundred acres of the best land in China be given to a farmer, at a mean rent, so far from making out of it the value of three rents, on which our farmers usually calculate, he would scarcely be able to support his family, after paying the expence of labour that would be required to work the farm.

Barrow, in conclusion:

- Wise and well framed code of penal laws
- “Learning alone leads to office”
- Disapproves Chinese repugnance for foreign commerce and bad treatment of merchants (extortions, no justice)
- States general backwardness in civilization (lack of political liberty, insufficient juridical securities for property, no respect for women)
- Observes: extreme poverty of peasants, great differences between the rich and the poor, low state of agriculture (mainly cottagers, absence of great farms, backward cultivation techniques, “it can scarcely be expected that the whole country should be in the best possible state of cultivation” [*see 2 previous slides*]; country capable of sustaining high population, but frequent famines due to: “equal division of land, mode of cultivation, nature of the products”)
- **J. Osterhammel: not yet an idea of general economic weakness or backwardness [?]**

Barrow, final considerations:

The comparisons I have made were given with a view of assisting the reader to form in his own mind some idea what rank the Chinese may be considered to hold, when measured by the scale of European nations; but this part is very defective.

...Barrow, p. 355: stationary state

I think, upon the whole, it may fairly be concluded, that the Chinese have been among the first nations, now existing in the world, to arrive at a certain pitch of perfection, where, from the policy of the government, or some other cause, they have remained stationary: that they were civilized, fully to the same extent they now are, more than two thousand years ago, at a period when all Europe might be considered, comparatively, as barbarous; but that they have since made little progress in any thing, and been retrograde in many things: that, at this moment, compared with Europe, they can only be said to be great in trifles, whilst they are really trifling in every thing that is great.

Decisive importance of Barrow

- Source for Benjamin Constant
- Source for James Mill
- Source (probably) for Hegel
- Source for the authors of reports on the Amherst's embassy

Some early- and mid-19th century accounts:

- Priscilla Wakefield, *The Traveller in Asia: Or, A Visit to the Most Celebrated Parts of the East Indies and China*, 1817
- R. Morrison, *A view of China for philological purposes: containing a sketch of Chinese chronology, geography, government, religion & customs, designed for the use of persons who study the Chinese language*, 1817
- H. Ellis, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Late Embassy to China: Comprising a Correct Narrative of the Public Transactions of the Embassy*, 1817
- P. Auber, *China: An Outline of Its Government, Laws, and Policy: and of the British and Foreign Embassies To, and Intercourse With, that Empire*, 1834
- W. H. Medhurst, *China, Its State and Prospects, with Especial Reference to the Spread of the Gospel*, 1838
- H. Murray, *An Historical and Descriptive Account of China: Its Ancient and Modern History, Language, Literature, Religion, Government, Industry, Manners, and Social State*, 1843
- J. Bowring, *Chinese Characteristics: Personal Reminiscences*, 1865

Wakefield: woman, Quaker, philanthropist, educationalist (and armchair traveller)

- Poor conditions of the peasants (Canton)
- Exploitation and mistreatment of women by the husbands
- Filial piety great principle of social and political obligation
- Great industry of the people, universal cultivation
- Various sects mixed with great superstition
- New-born infants exposition (rescued by missionaries)
- Nine orders of nobility, great encouragement to moral virtue, imperial endorsement of agriculture
- Progress into northern Tartary: “The further we advance, the more we recede from the establishments of civilized life”

Auber: historian of the East India Company

- Unvarying policy; opposition to any treaty for a settled intercourse upon a reciprocal basis with other countries (Russia an extraordinary instance)
- Commercial system of recent origin (two centuries)
- Dangers deriving from EIC's monopoly suppression: end of EIC's acting as mediator and supervisor and British King's authority (and Royal Navy's presence) much to be feared by the Chinese
- Difficulties of King-newly appointed superintendents (first: Lord Napier)
- Government of China despotic, a despotism founded on law and custom; "despotism" the cause of the decided inferiority of most Asiatic nations, ancient and modern, to those of Europe who are blest with happier governments

...Auber continues

- Duty of submission to parental authority, a general rule of action
- Firmness and durability of Chinese government and population united as a people depending on those principles
- Civil government precisely defined; penal code, code of civil laws
- Contempt of foreigners as barbarous, not to be suffered in the Empire; national vanity and arrogance
- Independence of foreign trade, abundance of goods; ***anti-commercial disposition***

Two factors transforming 'sweet commerce' language

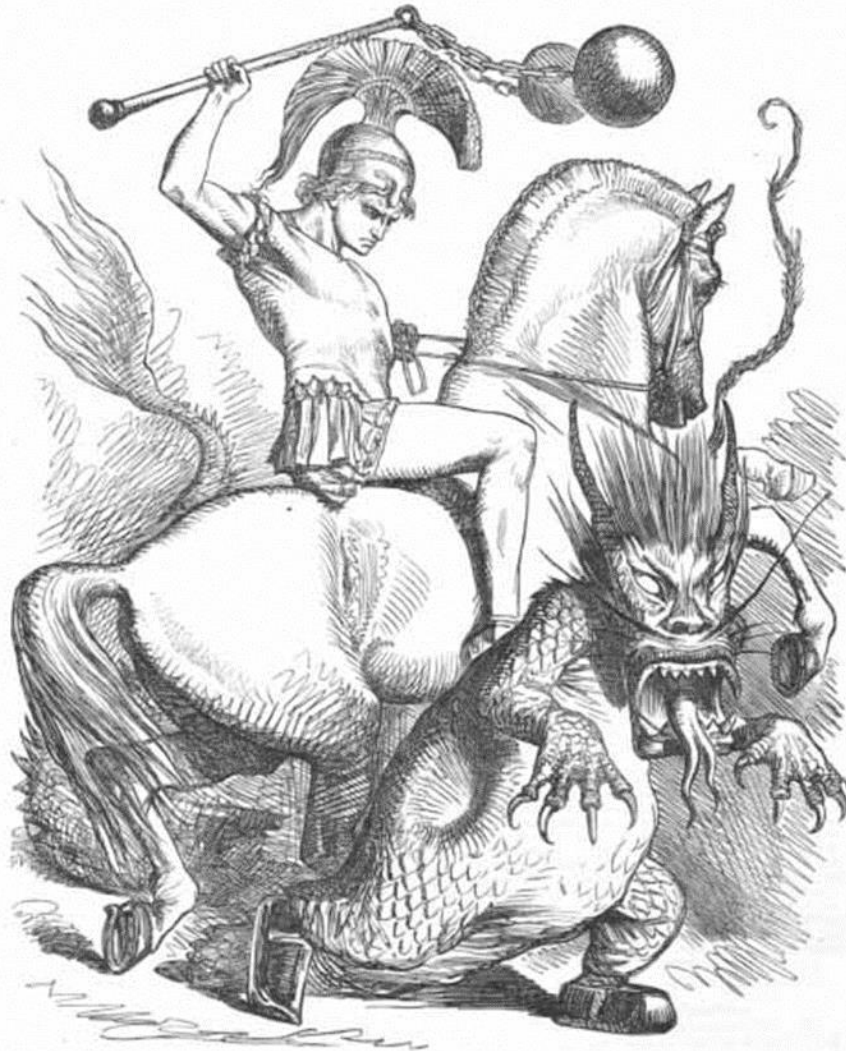
- The **language of Christianity** and the idea of the **'family of nations'** at the basis of :
 - A new vision of the international order
 - The demand of the use of force for the liberalization of commercial relations
- Robert Montgomery Martin, Karl Gutzlaff
- John Bowring, 1841: «Jesus Christ is the free trade and the free trade is Jesus Christ»
- Caleb Cushing and the language of diplomacy

Caleb Cushing to Gov.-General Qi-ying, July 22, 1844 (*Chinese Repository*, November, 1845)

“The nations of Europe and America form *a family of States*, associated together **by community of civilisation and religion**, by treaties, and by the law of nations. “By the law of nations, as practised in Europe and America, every foreigner, who may happen to reside or sojourn in any country of Christendom, is subject to the municipal law of that country, and is amenable to the jurisdiction of its magistrates on any accusation of crime alleged to be committed by him within the limits of such country. Here the minister or consul cannot protect his countrymen. The laws of the place take their course. “In the intercourse between Christian States on the one hand, and Mohammedan on the other, a different principle is assumed, namely, the exemption of the Christian foreigner from the jurisdiction of the local authorities, and his subjection (as the necessary consequence) to the jurisdiction of the minister, or other authorities of his own government. “One or other of these two principles is to be applied to the citizens of the United States in China. There is no third alternative. Either they are to be surrendered up to the Chinese authorities, when accused of any breach of law, for trial and punishment by the magistrates of China, or (if they are to have protection from their country) they come under the jurisdiction of the appointed American officer in China. “In my opinion, the rule which obtained in favour of Europeans and Americans in the Mohammedan countries of Asia is to be applied to China. Americans are entitled to the protection and subject to the jurisdiction of the officers of their government. The right to be protected by the officers of their country over them, are inseparable facts. “Accordingly, I shall refuse at once all applications for the surrender of the party who killed Hsü A-man; which refusal involves the duty of instituting an examination of the facts by the agency of officers of the United States.”

Samuel Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom. A survey of the geography, government, literature, social life, arts, and history of the Chinese empire and its inhabitants*, 1883 (1st ed. 1848)

“In this revision the same object has been kept in view that is stated in the Preface to the first edition - to divest the Chinese people and civilization of that peculiar and indefinable impression of ridicule which has been so generally given them by foreign authors. **I have endeavoured to show the better traits of their national character**, and that they have had up to this time no opportunity of learning many things with which they are now rapidly becoming acquainted. ***The time is speedily passing away when the people of the Flowery Land can fairly be classed among uncivilized nations.*** The stimulus which in this labour of my earlier and later years has been ever present to my mind is the hope that the cause of missions may be promoted. In the success of this cause lies the salvation of China as a people, both in its moral and political aspects. This success bids fair to keep pace with the needs of the people. ***They will become fitted for taking up the work themselves and joining in the multiform operations of foreign civilizations.*** Soon railroads, telegraphs, and manufactures will be introduced, and there must be followed by whatsoever may conduce ***to enlightening the millions of the people of China*** in every department of religious, political and domestic life” (“The Preface”).



WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO IN CHINA.