

CPO 4931/EURO 4930: Great Divergence – Europe vs Asia

University of Florida – Spring 2025

Instructor: Prajakta Gupte, PhD Candidate

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Office: 010 Anderson

Class: Tuesday: Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 AM)

Thursday: Period 4-5 (10:40 – 12:35 PM)

Location: AND 101

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12 – 2 pm

Office Hours Signup:

https://calendly.com/prgupte/office_hours

Course Description

Why did Europe industrialize first instead of Asia? Why did Asia not develop as much as Europe? Was Europe's exceptional development an 'accident' or the result of 'fortuitous circumstances'? These questions lie at the heart of one of the most interesting debates in global history – the Great Divergence.

This course will examine the reasons behind the huge gap in the levels of development, growth and wealth between these two parts of the world. In the recent years, scholars no longer view Asian states like India and China during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as extremely underdeveloped and poor, especially compared to their European counterparts. In fact, they see several similarities between the European and Asian states indicating that there was nothing unique about Europe that many Eurocentric historians claimed as the reason behind that region's unprecedented growth. What then were the reasons behind the divergent outcomes?

The course will rely on scholarly works from political science, history, sociology, and economics. The focus will be on Europe and Asia i.e., our readings will deal with both – reasons behind Europe's exceptional growth *and* lack of it in Asia. By the end of the semester, students will have a better understanding of why Europe and Asia developed differently despite having similar starting points.

Course Requirements

Assignment	Points	Percent of Grade
Attendance	50	5
Participation	100	10
Theme reflections	200	20
Abstracts	250	25
Final Exam	400	40
Total	1000	100

- Attendance = 5%
 - Attendance is mandatory. I will take a roll call in every class. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation. You are also allowed two unexcused absences.
 - Absences are factored into participation grades. I understand that unforeseen events can arise and therefore missing a class will not harm your grade. However, a pattern of absences will result in a low participation score.

- Participation in class = 10%
 - This course relies on your active and consistent engagement with the material. Students are therefore expected to actively participate in all the class discussions. Students should arrive at class having read the material thoroughly and be ready with questions/critical comments about the readings.
 - Students who feel uncomfortable speaking in class should feel free to discuss with me how we can develop this skill, as public speaking is an important aspect of any career, academic or otherwise. More importantly, hearing from a broad variety of perspectives will be beneficial for everyone.

- Abstracts = 5% * 5 = 25%
 - You have to submit a total of **FIVE** abstracts this semester. Each abstract must contain two elements: a clearly stated central argument of the assigned reading and one (1) major piece of evidence the author has used in the reading to support their argument.
 - Remember, this is not an opinion piece so your views/agreement/disagreement with the readings should not be discussed here.
 - The goal is to be able to locate/identify the argument made by the author and the evidence provided by them to support their argument.
 - Word limit is **300 words**. Documents must be in Times New Roman, 12-font size and single-spaced.
 - Submit your abstract on Canvas by Sunday 11:59 pm **BEFORE** the reading is scheduled to be discussed in class.

- Thematic reflections = 20% * 2 = 20%
 - You have to submit a total of **TWO** reflections pieces this semester. Each response will be based on the readings from the “themes” in the syllabus such as role of geography, political institutions, property rights and so on in leading to the Great Divergence. These will be due after we have completed the discussion of the theme in the class.
 - In these review responses, you have to address the following questions: how do these readings inform the broader theme? What issues are missing or need to be discussed by scholars on this theme?
 - Your response must have an argument, and you should not simply be summarizing the readings. The focus of your responses should be on critiquing the

readings. Moreover, your criticisms need to be supported by valid evidence from the readings. Remember, this is not an opinion piece.

- In terms of structure, the responses must be 2-3 paragraphs long. You can briefly summarize the readings but use most of your space critiquing and providing evidence for the same.
 - Word limit is **450-500 words**. Essays less than 450 words will result in lower score. Documents must be in Times New Roman, 12-font size and single-spaced.
- Final (take home) exam = **40%**
 - Essay-type Q-n-As.

Grading Scale

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	79-82%
C+	75-78%
C	72-74%
C-	69-71%
D+	66-68%
D	62-65%
D-	60-61%
E	Fewer than 60%

Readings

There is no required book for this course. In an effort to reduce the associated costs of a university degree, I will post all articles, book chapters, and other assigned reading links to our Canvas site.

** Please do not distribute these materials to people beyond this class. **

Course Policies

Lecture Slides

I will post lecture slides on Canvas after each class meeting. The slides are meant as a guide and are in no way a substitute for lectures. My hope is that by providing slides you will not have to spend the entire class furiously note taking and can pay close attention to the lecture, ask questions, and participate deeply in class discussion. If, however, class participation or attendance wanes, I retain the right to end sharing lecture slides.

Late or Make-up Assignments

NO late or make-up assignments will be accepted without prior approval. If an assignment is submitted late without prior approval, it will receive a 0. Generally, at least one week in advance notice is required for assignment or exam extension request.

In accordance with university attendance policy, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved. Please note that assignment deadlines for other courses will not be considered.

Grade adjustments

I do not under any circumstances round or adjust grades. This policy is not an attempt to be harsh but to hold all students in equal standing.

Contacting the Instructor

Students should use Canvas to contact me. Although you may email me at my UF email account, the university strongly encourages us to communicate via Canvas to avoid the potential of violations of student confidentiality protected by FERPA.

I strongly encourage students to visit my office hours, available by [appointment](#), to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the course.

Email/Messaging Hours

You may email or message me via Canvas at any time that is convenient to you. I will respond within one business day between the hours of 8am and 5pm. If you do not receive a reply from me after 48 hours, please resend your message. Although I may sometimes reply outside of these designated hours, responses cannot be guaranteed after 5pm on weekdays, on weekends, or holidays. Please plan accordingly to have your questions answered in advance of assignment and exam deadlines.

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and possible sanctions. Click [here](#) to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones:

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.uf](https://one.uf.edu) for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Course Schedule*

*This course schedule may be subject to change as needed. At times during the semester, we may be ahead/behind schedule, and so readings may be adjusted, dropped, or added to as necessary. I will notify you of all changes via email, and an updated syllabus will be provided if any changes occur.

Readings should be completed **before** the class starts, as it will form the basis of lecture/discussion.

Theme 1: Definition

- Pomeranz, Kenneth (2000), *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton University Press. Introduction.

- Parthasarathi, Prasannan (2011), *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600–1850*, Cambridge University Press. Introduction.
- Jones, Eric (2003). *The European Miracle: Environments, Economies and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia* (3rd ed.), Cambridge University Press.

Theme 2: Chance/Luck

- Acemoglu, Daron; Zilibotti, Fabrizio (1 August 1997). "Was Prometheus Unbound by Chance? Risk, Diversification, and Growth". *Journal of Political Economy*. 105 (4): 709–751.
- Crafts, N. F. R. (1 August 1977). "Industrial Revolution in England and France: Some Thoughts on the Question, "Why was England First?"". *The Economic History Review*. 30 (3): 429–441.
- Mokyr, Joel; Voth, Hans-Joachim (June 2010). "Understanding growth in Europe, 1700–1870: Theory and evidence" (PDF). In *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe*.
- Belich, James (2022). *The World the Plague Made: The Black Death and the Rise of Europe*. Princeton University Press.

Theme 3: Access to New World

- Pomeranz, Kenneth (2000), *The Great Divergence*. Chap 3 and 4.
- Chen, Kunting (2012), "Analysis of the Great Divergence under a United Endogenous Growth Model". *Annals of Economics and Finance*, 13 (2): 317–353.
- Ferguson, Niall. *Civilization. The West and the Rest*. January 2011. Penguin Books. Chapter 5 and Chapter 3 (pp. 96-103).

Theme 4: Geography

- Watson, Peter (30 August 2005). *Ideas: A History of Thought and Invention, from Fire to Freud*. Harper Collins. Chapter 15.
- Koyama, M., & Rubin, J. (2022). *How the world became rich: The historical origins of economic growth*. John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 7.1.2.
- Bai, Ying; Kung, James Kai-sing (August 2011). "Climate Shocks and Sino-nomadic Conflict". *Review of Economics and Statistics*. 93 (3): 970–981.
- Easterly, W.; Levine, R. (2003). "Tropics, germs, and crops: how endowments influence economic development" (PDF). *Journal of Monetary Economics*. 50 (1): 3–39.
- Crafts, Nicholas; Venables, Anthony J. (2003), "Globalization in History: A Geographical Perspective", in Bordo, Michael D. (ed.), *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 323-372.

Theme 5: Political Fragmentation

- Ko, Chiu Yu; Koyama, Mark; Sng, Tuan-Hwee (February 2018). "Unified China and Divided Europe". *International Economic Review*. 59 (1): 285–327.
- Mokyr, Joel (6 January 2018). *Mokyr, J.: A Culture of Growth: The Origins of the Modern Economy*. (eBook and Hardcover). Princeton University Press. Chapter 11.

- Cox, Gary W. (2017). "Political Institutions, Economic Liberty, and the Great Divergence". *The Journal of Economic History*. 77 (3): 724–755.
- Blaydes, Lisa; Paik, Christopher (January 2021). "Trade and Political Fragmentation on the Silk Roads: The Economic Effects of Historical Exchange between China and the Muslim East". *American Journal of Political Science*. 65 (1): 115–132.

Theme 6: Forms of Government

- De Long, J. Bradford; Shleifer, Andrei (1 October 1993). "Princes and Merchants: European City Growth before the Industrial Revolution". *The Journal of Law and Economics*. 36 (2): 671–702.
- Knutsen, Carl Henrik; Møller, Jørgen; Skaaning, Svend-Erik (2016). "Going historical: Measuring democraticness before the age of mass democracy". *International Political Science Review*. 37 (5): 679–689.

Theme 7: Technology

- Clark, Gregory; Jacks, David. "Coal and the Industrial Revolution, 1700-1869".
- McCloskey, Deirdre (2010). *Bourgeois Dignity: Why Economics Can't Explain the Modern World*. Chapter 16.
- Lin, Justin Yifu. "The Needham Puzzle: Why the Industrial Revolution Did Not Originate in China". *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, January 1995, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 269-292.
- Clark, Gregory; Feenstra, Robert C. (2003), "Technology in the Great Divergence", in Bordo, Michael D. (ed.), *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 277–320.
- Landes, David (2006), "Why Europe and the West? Why Not China?", *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20 (2): 3–22.

Theme 8: Markets

- Pomeranz, Kenneth (2000), *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 and 4.
- Bairoch, Paul (1976), "Europe's Gross National Product: 1800–1975", *Journal of European Economic History*, 5 (2): 273–340.
- Bairoch, Paul (1995), *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*, University of Chicago Press.
- Allen, Robert (2001), "The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War", *Explorations in Economic History*, 38 (4): 411–447.
- Allen, Robert (2009), "Agricultural productivity and rural incomes in England and the Yangtze Delta, c. 1620–c. 1820", *The Economic History Review*, 62 (3): 525–550
- Batou, Jean (1991), *Between Development and Underdevelopment: The Precocious Attempts at Industrialization of the Periphery, 1800–1870*. Chapter 7.

- Robert C. Allen, Tommy Bengtsson, Martin Dribe (2005). *Living Standards in the Past: New Perspectives on Well-Being in Asia and Europe*. Chapter 7.
- Allen, R. C. (2011). *Global economic history: a very short introduction* (Vol. 282). Oxford University Press.
- Bassino, J. P., Broadberry, S., Fukao, K., Gupta, B., & Takashima, M. (2011). *Japan and the great divergence, 730-1870*. London School of Economics.
- Broadberry, S., & Gupta, B. (2006). The early modern great divergence: wages, prices and economic development in Europe and Asia, 1500–1800 1. *The Economic History Review*, 59(1), 2-31.
- Allen, Robert C. "Why the industrial revolution was British". *The Economic History Review* 64, no. 2 (2011): 357-384.

Theme 9: Property Rights

- North, Douglass C.; Weingast, Barry R. (1989). "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England". *The Journal of Economic History*. 49 (4): 803–832.
- Acemoglu, Daron; Johnson, Simon; Robinson, James (2005). "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth". *American Economic Review*. 95 (3): 546–579.
- Rosenberg, Nathan (1986). *How The West Grew Rich: The Economic Transformation of The Industrial World*. New York Basic Books.
- Waley-Cohen, Joanna (1993). "China and Western Technology in the Late Eighteenth Century". *The American Historical Review*. 99 (5): 1525–1544.
- Brenner, Robert; Isett, Christopher (2002), "England's Divergence from China's Yangzi Delta: Property Relations, Microeconomics, and Patterns of Development", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 61 (2): 609–662.
- Van Bavel, Bas; Buringh, Eltjo; Dijkman, Jessica (2017). "Mills, cranes, and the great divergence: the use of immovable capital goods in western Europe and the Middle East, ninth to sixteenth centuries". *The Economic History Review*. 71: 31–54.

Theme 10: Impact of Colonialism

- Bairoch, Paul (1995), *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*, University of Chicago Press. Chapters 6, 7 and 8.
- Parthasarathi, Prasanna (2011), *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600–1850*, Cambridge University Press. Select chapters.
- Williamson, Jeffrey G.; Clingingsmith, David. "India's Deindustrialization in the 18th and 19th Centuries". August 2005.
- Broadberry, Stephen N.; Gupta, Bishnupriya. 2005. "Cotton textiles and the great divergence: Lancashire, India and shifting competitive advantage, 1600–1850", *International Macroeconomics and Economic History Initiative*.

- Broadberry, S.; Custodis, J.; Gupta, B. (2015). "India and the great divergence: An Anglo-Indian comparison of GDP per capita, 1600–1871". *Explorations in Economic History*. 55: 58–75.
- Donaldson, D. 2018. "Railroads of the Raj: Estimating the impact of transportation infrastructure" . *American Economic Review*. 108 (4–5): 899–934.
- Acemoglu, D.; Johnson, S.; Robinson, J. A. 2001. "The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation". *American Economic Review*. 91 (5): 1369–1401.
- Feyrer, J.; Sacerdote, B. 2009. "Colonialism and modern income: Islands as natural experiments". *The Review of Economics and Statistics*. 91 (2): 245–262.
- Easterly, W.; Levine, R. (2016). "The European origins of economic development" (PDF). *Journal of Economic Growth*. 21 (3): 225–257.