

Seminar

“Jesuits and Chinese Science”

(in English)



Professor MA Chicheng
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Date: 26 October 2018 (Friday)

Time: 3:30pm – 5:00pm

Venue: WYL314, 3/F, Dorothy Y. L. Wong Building

Abstract

Between 1580 and 1800, the Jesuits introduced European sciences to China. This promoted Chinese scientific production. Using prefecture-level data, we find that number of Chinese scientific works increased significantly in prefectures where there were Jesuit scientists. This is because Chinese literati got the chance to learn European sciences and adopt them in Chinese scientific research. This finding questions the conventional wisdom that Chinese literati depreciated science and Western learning. Instead, it indicates the importance of openness to knowledge frontier in scientific progress, particularly for historical China whose science had fallen behind that of Europe after the 14th century.

Biography

Chicheng Ma is assistant professor of economics in the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Hong Kong. Before joining HKU in 2017, he was associate professor of economics in Shandong University. His research interests are in economic history and development economics. Currently he is studying the relationship between knowledge diffusion, human capital, and economic development in historical China, and the economic origin and long-term effect of Confucian culture, among others.

All Are Welcome

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