

Migrating Ideas of Governance and Emerging Bureaucracies between Europe and Asia since the Early Modern Era

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From Susan Richter

The workshop “Migrating Ideas of Governance and Emerging Bureaucracies between Europe and Asia since the Early Modern Era” explores the transcultural transfer of notions of order, bureaucratic efficiency and bureaucratic ethos and their implementation by the adoption of foreign institutions in Europe and Asia from the Age of Enlightenment to the early 20th century.

Analyzing the policy of other states in fields like finance, education, society or environment and searching for role models based on positive examples are nowadays quite common in the political practice of European and Asian countries. The orientation on models of other cultures or other continents, however, requires acceptance and tolerance as basic principles. Foreign successes need to be understood as stimulant for own reforms, not as danger. In Europe, this perspective was established by the Enlightenment. The biblical or antique examples of functioning statehood were increasingly replaced by ideas based on contemporary European or foreign – e.g. Asian – concepts.

Especially the Chinese government was perceived as a carefully and wisely constructed system of administration that automatically ensured good governance. Therefore, China served as the most frequently used example for efficient administration of political power in European state theories.

Various European thinkers – e.g. Wolff and Justi in Germany, Voltaire and Quesnay in France or Budgell in England – and their theories of state were influenced by the Chinese systems of education, examination and government. Some conceptions like the civil service examinations became reality in Europe in the late 18th and 19th century. In fact, European states like France, the United Kingdom, or different German territories introduced an efficient administration as well as systematic and specialised training of civil servants in special administrative schools, e.g. the “Hohe Kameralsschule” in Kaiserslautern/Germany. In this way the Chinese bureaucracy served as a blueprint for many European reforms.

Since the 19th century Asian states like China and Japan likewise tried to copy European techniques and institutions to increase the functionality of their respective civil and military administration. They aimed for an extended administrative and fiscal pervasion of their dominions. The processes of transfer mostly took place in areas, where an increased need for action or even a structural deficiency was perceived. Internal crisis and external threats through the expanding Europeans forced Asian states to turn to foreign role models and to modernize. Intellectuals and reformers like Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei in China, Okuma Shigenobu in Japan, King Chulalongkorn of Siam (Thailand) propagated the implementation of European-style governance structures and institutions as well the development of a competitive civil administration and military organisation.

The workshop “Migrating Ideas of Governance and Emerging Bureaucracies between Europe and Asia since the Early Modern Era”, initiated by the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” (University of Heidelberg) and the Department of History, Qinghua University (Beijing), focuses on discussing the historical dimension of European and Asian bureaucracies and on the asymmetrical transfer of notions, ideas and practises of administration as well as on their transformation in different cultures. The issues of transcultural creation, coding, code conversion and changing connotation of knowledge (Michel Espagne) about administration and corresponding institutions are of central importance to the workshop. Moreover, emphasis will be on various discourses accompanying these processes of transfer. How did the elites react? Was there any resistance during the implementation and how was it conducted?

At the beginning of the workshop concepts like “administration” and “bureaucracy” will be introduced and defined in the respective context of European, Chinese and Indian historical comprehension. This will provide a solid and well-grounded terminological basis for discussion and help to minimize misunderstandings between the different participating academic cultures.

The papers of the international participants will deliver case studies on the transfer of ideas and institutions from China to Europe in the 18th and early 19th century and from Europe to Asia, namely to China and colonies like India and Malaya in the 19th and early 20th century. At the moment, 18 speakers from different disciplines (e.g. history, political science, legal history, military history, Chinese studies, Indian studies) have confirmed their participation.

Due to a lack of cooperation and language barriers there has been only limited exchange of research results in the historical study of administration between Asian and European scholars. The workshop will be a great chance to rectify those deficits and aims to extend and reformulate the central research questions in this field. According to Max Weber a sophisticated and highly developed bureaucracy is one of the most important elements of modernity and modern states. By examining migrating ideas and the transfer of bureaucratic structures the workshop will highlight the global origins of modernity, in particular of modern governments.

近代早期统治思想在欧亚之间的迁移和各自官僚体制的演化发展

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本次研讨会“近代早期统治思想在欧亚之间的迁移和各自官僚体制的演化发展”，旨在探究从启蒙时代到20世纪初两大陆在秩序概念，官僚体制效率和及其精神特质，以及通过吸收借鉴外国制度加以行政实施等诸多方面的跨文化交流。

分析其他国家在财政，教育、社会以及环境等方面政策，并且根据正面范例寻找政府职能模式，在当今欧亚国家中是相当普遍的政治实践。然而这种跨文化或跨大陆的决策态度则需要以接纳和宽容为基本原则。外国的成功例子应该被理解为自身改革的兴奋剂，而不是危险。这种观点在启蒙时代的欧洲已被确立。圣经上的或古代的国家职能典范，日益被基于同时代的欧洲或其他国家——比如亚洲国家——的理念所取代。

特别是中国政府曾被欧洲视为一个谨慎而明智的行政管理体系，它自然确保国家有良好的治理。因此，中国成为欧洲国家理论界最频繁引用的政权高效率管理的榜样。不同的欧洲思想家，比如德国的 Wolff 和 Justi，法国的 Voltaire 和 Quesnay 或英国的 Budgell，以及他们的国家理论都受到中国教育，科举，行政体系的影响。某些由此产生的构想，像文职行政官员考试，在18和19世纪末期的欧洲成为了现实。事实上，欧洲诸国如法国，英国，或不同的德国邦国都引入了高效行政，而且在特别行政学校里对国家公务员进行系统和专门训练，比如在德国凯泽斯劳滕的“Hohe Kameralsschule”（高级财政学校）。由此，中国的官僚体制成为许多欧洲国家改革的效仿蓝本。

自19世纪起亚洲国家比如中国和日本也试图通过效仿欧洲科学技术和政治体制以提高他们各自的民用和军事管理职能。这些措施是针对本国行政滥用职权和政府财政的蔓延。如此的东渐过程主要出现在改革实践的需求不断增加，甚至统治结构已有明显缺陷的领域。欧洲殖民扩张所带来的内忧外患迫使亚洲各国把目光转向国外的政府职能模式和现代化。知识分子和改革先锋像中国的梁启超和康有为，日本的大隈重信以及泰国的朱拉隆宫国王都宣传欧洲式的政府结构和体制，以及具有竞争力的民政管理和军事组织的发展。

此次研讨会“近代早期统治思想在欧亚之间的迁移和各自官僚体制的演化发展”是由海德堡大学的欧亚交流研究所(the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context”)以及北京清华大学历史系发起主办，着眼于探讨欧洲和亚洲的官僚体制的史学考量，彼此在行政管理概念，认知和实践方面的不对称交流，以及它们在不同文化背景下的改变。跨文化的创建、文化解密、社会习俗转化，和有关行政管理及相关制度的知识内涵变化（由 Michel Espagne 提出）的问题将是本次研讨会的中心议题。此外，在这些交流过程中所伴随的不同讨论也是本次会议的重要议题。如当时的文化精英对于对外交流是如何反应的？是否在实施过程中出现阻碍？最后是如何解决的？

在研讨的开始，我们将首先在欧洲，中国和印度各自不同理解的历史背景下，对一些重要的概念比如“行政管理”，“官僚”等进行介绍和定义，这将为后面的讨论奠定一个坚实的，有充分根据的理论基础，并有助于尽量减少与会者之间由于学术文化差异所导致的误解。

来自各国的与会者将提交的专题研究论文，是关于 18 世纪和 19 世纪初中国思想和政府机构的西渐，以及西学东渐，即西学于 19 世纪，20 世纪初传入中国和亚洲殖民地国家，如印度，马来西亚等国的议题。目前有 18 位来自不同学科的报告人（比如史学，政治学，法学史，军事史，汉学，印度学）已确认将参加此次研讨会。

由于合作的欠缺和语言上的障隘，对行政管理领域的史学研究成果在欧亚学者之间的交流非常有限。因此本次研讨会将是一次良机以弥补这个不足，同时会议的目的还在于延伸和再次阐明这个领域里的中心研究问题。Max Weber 认为，一个成熟和高度发展的官僚体系是一个现代国家现代性最重要的要素之一。通过考察思想的迁移和官僚机构的转变，相信本次研讨会将会突显全球现代性的起源，特别是现代政府的起源。