

Faculty of History, University of Cambridge



Quantitative History Seminar, Easter Term 2018

Supported by the Centre for History and Economics
and the Trevelyan Fund



Seminars will take place at 4pm in Room 5, Faculty of History
Convenor: Leigh Shaw-Taylor - lmws2@cam.ac.uk

19th June

Cheng Yang (University of Cambridge)

160 years of occupational structure: Late Imperial China and its regions

Despite extensive debates around West-East divergence in economic developments before and during the Industrial Revolution, empirical evidence of China remains thin. Using Xingke Tiben (judicial records of Chinese homicide trials), a hitherto unused source for occupational data, a new occupational database has been created that comprises individual-level occupational data and other key variables; over 31,000 individuals in 8,000 randomly sampled Xingke Tiben from the Qing Empire's 320 prefectures in 1736-1898 are recorded. This paper discusses the core methodology (assessment of the inherent biases; reweighting) and key results of reconstructing the occupational structure of China and its regions from this database.