

BRITAIN'S EMPIRE AND THE ECONOMY

1. WHY DID EUROPE'S ECONOMIES DIVERGE FROM ASIA?

MARTIN DAUNTON



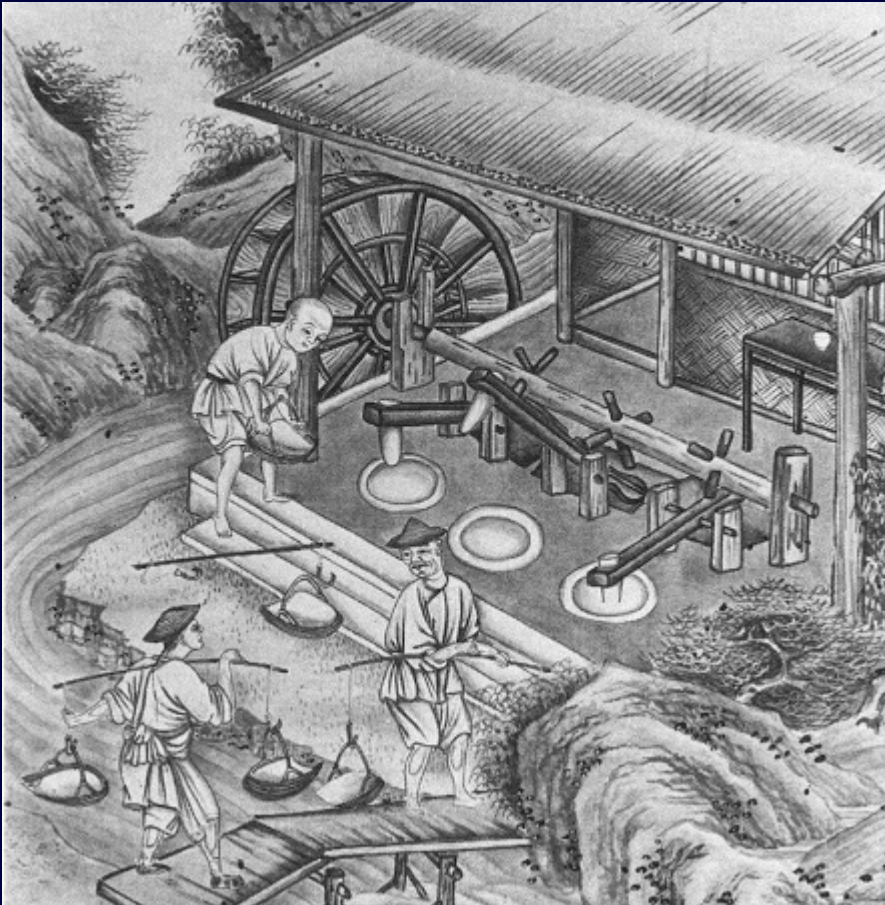
GRESHAM
COLLEGE

Purchasing power parity by GDP per adult

(Euro 2021)

	USA	India	China
• 1960	23,876	1,515	1,768
•			
• 1980	35,446	1,885	2,002
•			
• 2000	53,197	3,614	5,389
•			
• 2020	61,443	7,974	19,729

Jingdezhen – city of blue and white



Source: Wikimedia Commons



Wikimedia Commons: Vases from Jingdezhen, 1351

Delft charger in the style
of Chinese Wanli period,
17th century.
[Wikimedia Commons.](#)





Cotton cloth from Coromandel coast, first quarter of 18th century, based on a European silk design. (public domain, Metropolitan Museum)



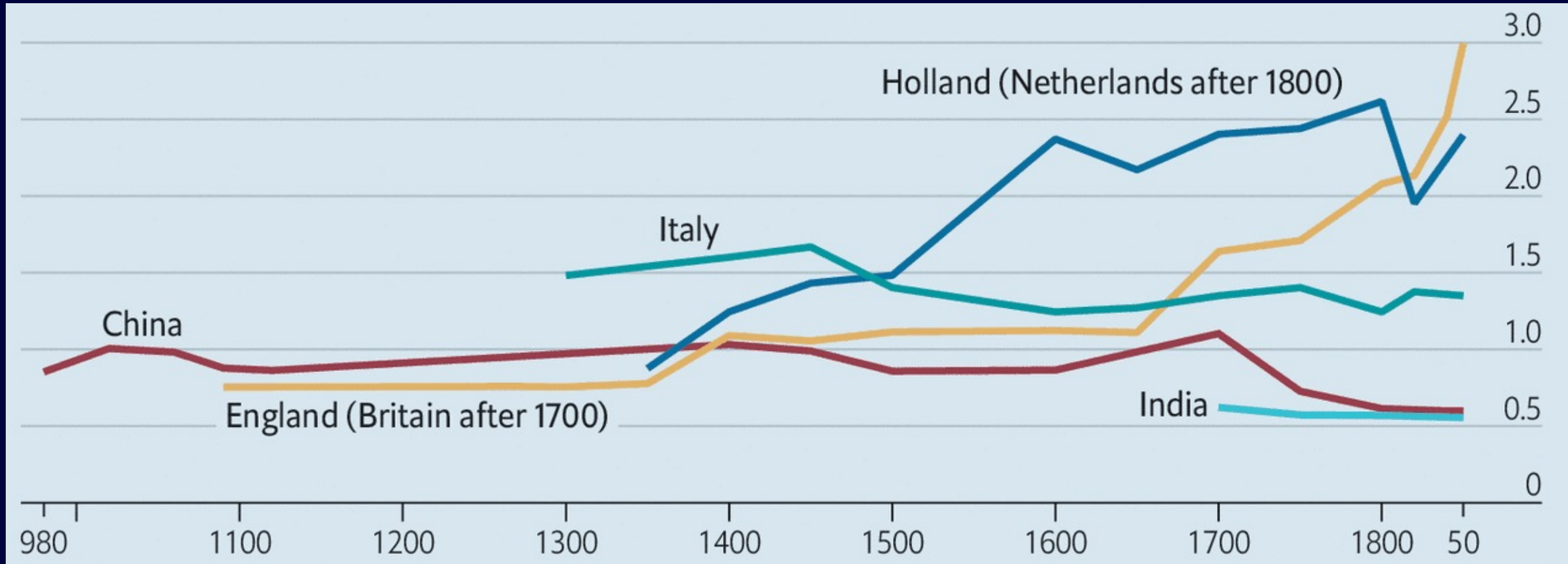
George Romney, Lady Lemon in a muslin dress, c1785. (public domain, Metropolitan Museum)



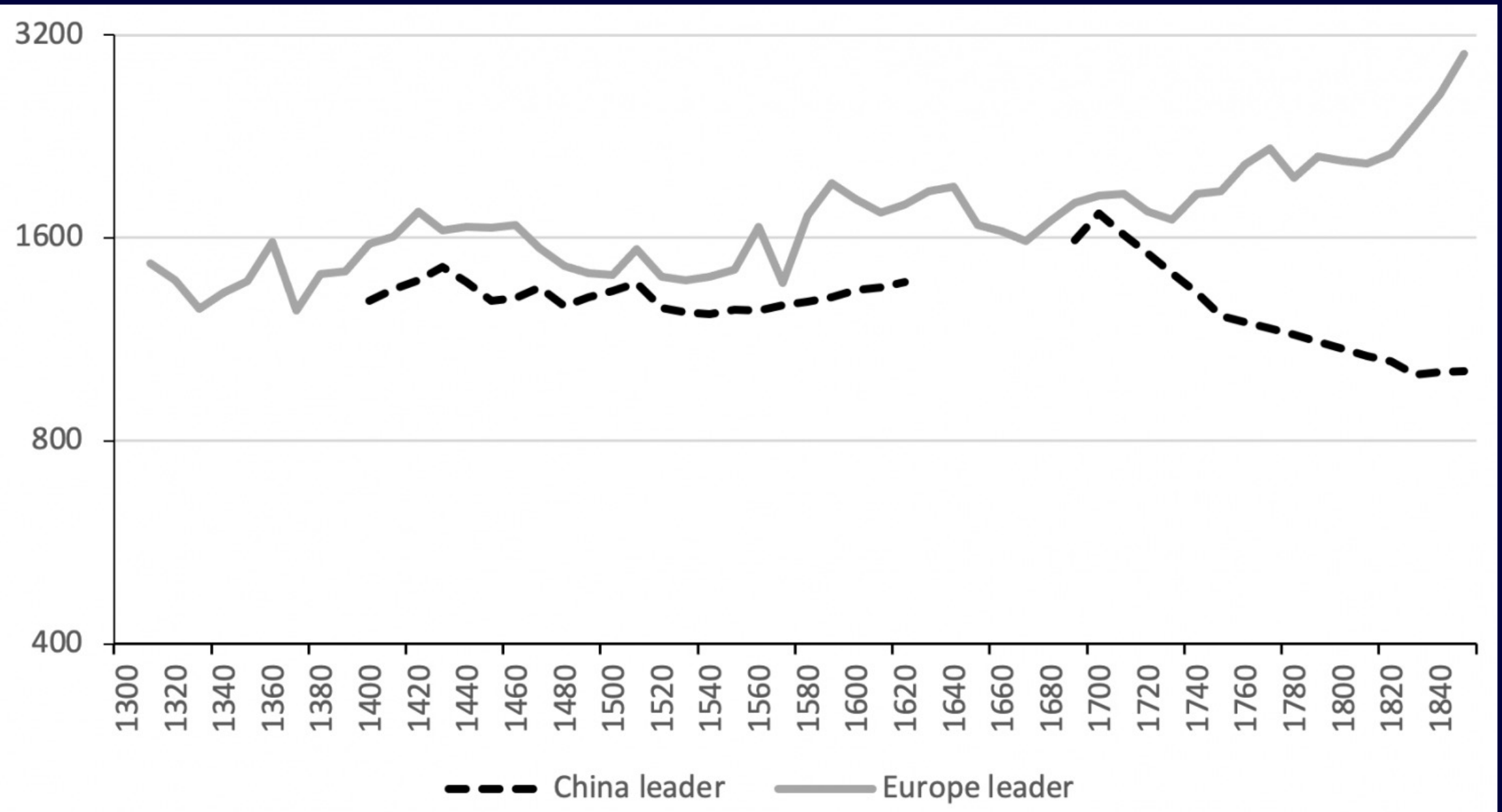
Silver coin of 1808 from Spanish America with chop marks after weighed by Chinese merchants. Wikimedia Commons

The great and little divergences

GDP per person, \$000, at 1990 prices

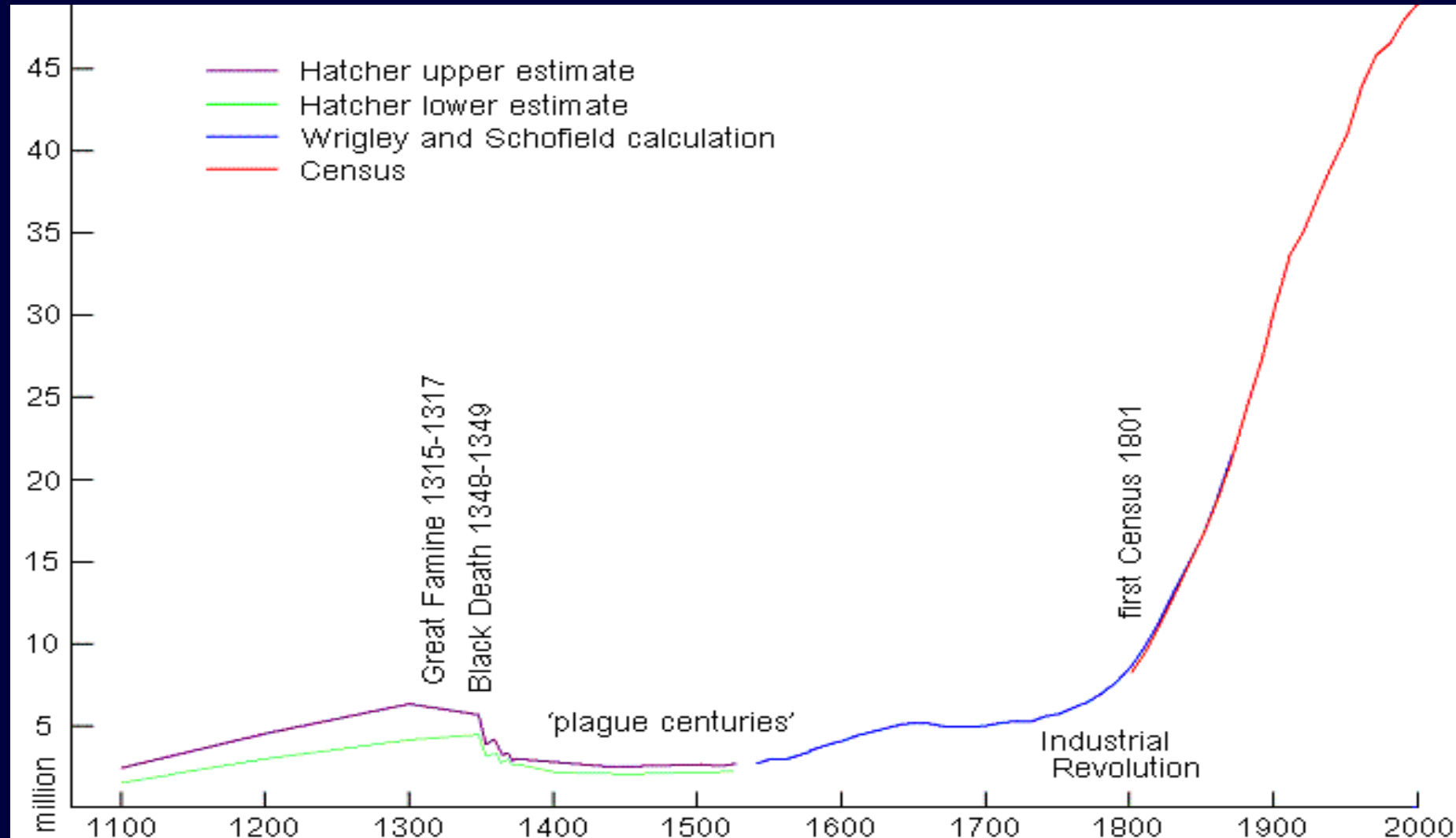


Stephen Broadberry, Hanhui Guan and David Daoki Li, 'China, Europe and the great divergence,' *Journal of Economic History* 78, 2008, 989.



Source: Broadberry, Guan and Li, 'China, Europe and the great divergence', 990.

Population of England, 1100-2000



N-W Europe escaped ecological constraints with 'ghost acres'

Coal – from flow to stock

Tony Wrigley: 15m acres of woodland to replace coal in England in 1815.



New world – cotton, sugar and timber

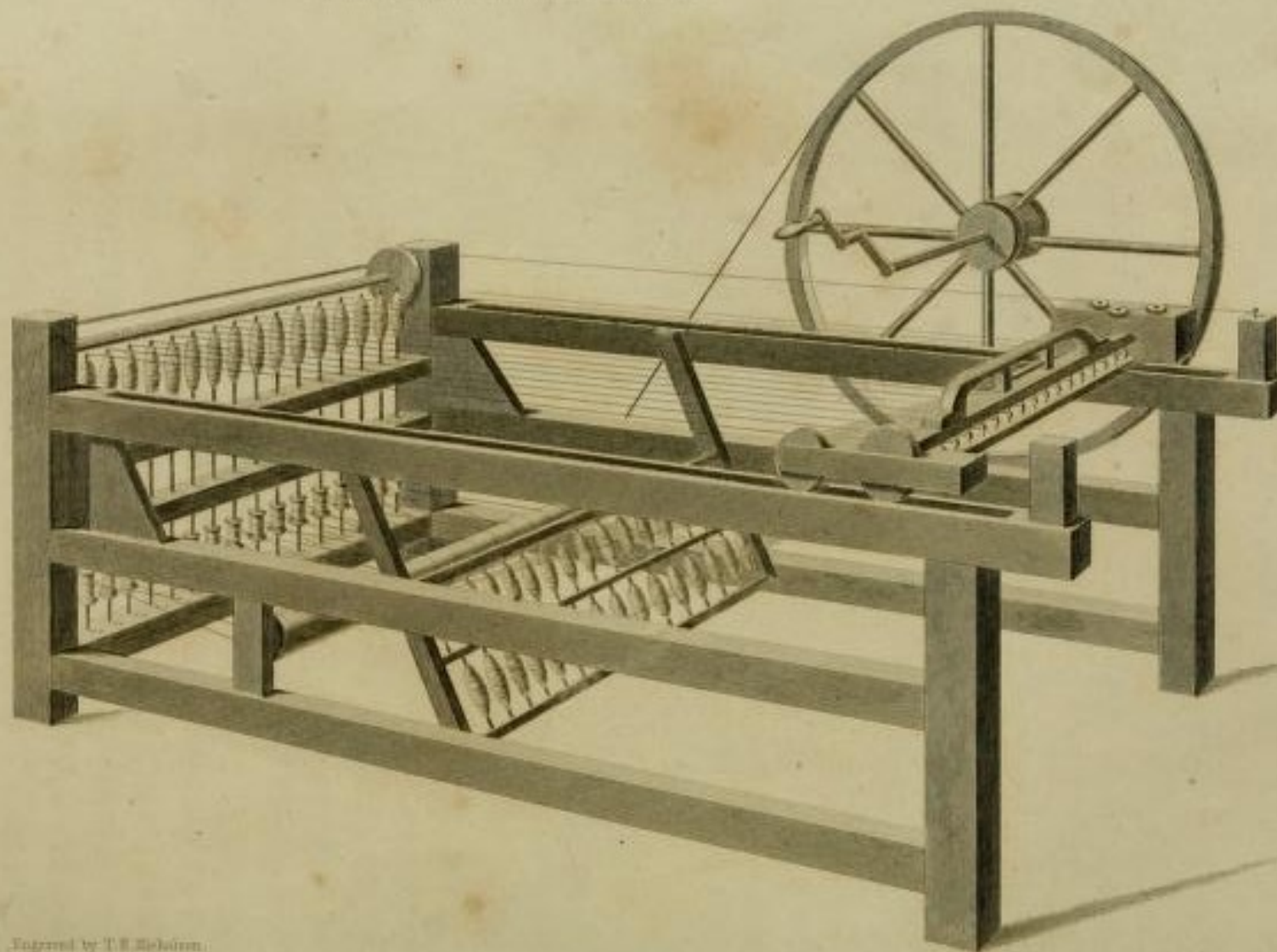
Pomeranz: added 25-30 million ghost acres in 1830





Hokusai: Lower Meguro, c1830-32. Wikimedia Commons from Metropolitan Museum, public domain

THE SPINNING JENNY.



Engraved by T. B. Johnson.

England in comparative European perspective

Economies at \$550 per capita income at 1970 prices

	Britain 1840	France 1870
Male workers, agriculture	50.6	28.6
Male workers, industry	47.3	28.7

Source: NFR Crafts, British Economic Growth During the Industrial Revolution (Oxford, 1985), table 3.4.

Urbanization in England and Europe:
percentage of population in towns of 10,000
and above

	1600	1800
England	6.1	24.0
N & W Europe (ex England)	9.2	10.0

English percentage net gain in European
urban population:

1700-50	57
1750-1800	70

Source: EA Wrigley, People, Cities and Wealth (Oxford, 1987), 177, 179.



I forget those Butts
in the Corner Neighbour

Yes, Yes thee'll keep a
Pretty charge lock out there's
no fear o' thee

Woodward Del

Pub^d Sept 11. 1799 by R. Akerman No 1 Strand
Printed by Rowland Baker

EXCISEMAN

Exciseman, 1799.
Source:
DigitalCommonwealth

HMS Royal George and launch of HMS Cambridge at Deptford (1757). Wikimedia Commons

