

Questions for Hessler Part I

This is a representative set of the sorts of questions you might bring to all of our readings this term.

- I. List up some of your favorite images. themes can include the following. If you think of other (likely better! categories please share those tomorrow
 - A. heterogeneity
 1. ethnic
 2. social
 3. income
 4. geographic
 - B. social norms and issues
 1. sources of income
 2. sources of status
 - C. business practices
 1. technology (appropriate given cheap labor / expensive capital?)
 2. management capability
 3. types of products
 - D. cars and roads
 - E. political system
 - F. dynamism and change
- II. What are the understandings of history that Hessler encounters in his travels? Do Chinese "know" their own country? That is partly a question of (i) education, partly one of (ii) the political role of history and partly one of (iii) anthropology. To follow up on the latter:
- III. What concepts and categories do the people Hessler encounters use in interpreting the world around them? Obviously it's much easier to spot reactions that are unexpected than to trace out ways in which Chinese "think like us."

More on this in class: it is the major conceptual challenge that we face when we look across time, culture and space. Obviously I'll emphasize using the tools of economics as a framework for understanding China, but we shouldn't be afraid to lean on other disciplines!