

Visualizing the City: China, Europe and the Islamic World, 1500-1750

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This paper will consider the development of Chinese cities in the Ming and the Qing in the context of urban growth in Europe and the Islamic world in the same period. It will focus on the construction (or reconstruction) of cities, their layout, and their architecture, as well as their cultural and political meanings. Previous scholarly comparisons of Chinese cities with European cities have not been linked to specific periods of history. By situating the discussion in a specific (but still broad) period, and by broadening the comparison to include the Islamic world, this paper hopes to view Chinese cities of the late imperial period from a different perspective. The paper will end with a reflection of how trends in that period may have influenced Chinese architecture in the twentieth century.