

CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC HISTORY

RESEARCH SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

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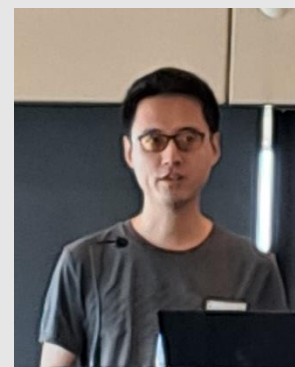
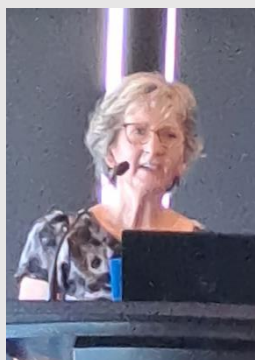
Welcome to this issue of the CEH newsletter. It includes a report on the Asia-Pacific Economic and Business History Conference, an announcement of the next AusClio workshop and more. Once again, thanks for your interest in the Centre for Economic History.

Tim Hatton, CEH Director

Report: Asia-Pacific Economic and Business History Conference at Monash

The 2025 edition of the APEBH Conference was ably organised by Lionel Frost at the Caulfield Campus of Monash University on 6-7th February. Over the two days more than 50 participants heard 42 papers on a wide variety of topics. In an opening session on Australian business, Pauline Hastings (Monash) examined the challenges faced by migrant women in the early postwar years as outworkers in the garment trades. Catherine Bishop (Macquarie) found that between 1891 and 1921 women as employers and own-account workers were displaced by social and sectoral change. And Matthew Bailey (Macquarie) examined the emergence and development of department-store supply chains as a microcosm of Australian development.

Shifting to political economy, Gary Magee (Monash) re-examined voting for the Nazis in 1930s Germany, showing how local activist organisation increased turnout and contributed to electoral success. Shifting back to the post-1492 Americas, Motohiro Kumagai (ANU) showed how the increasing military use of horses fostered state formation and supported the growth of autocratic states. And Weijia Li (Monash) provided a theoretical model of the likelihood of violent contests in different political settings, emphasising the separation of powers between executive and legislative branches of government.



Presenters: Pauline Hastings, Catherine Bishop, Gary Magee and Weijia Li

APEBH Conference contd.

In a session on the contribution of immigrants, Quoc-Ahn Do (Monash) showed how Chinese immigration to Java from the 1400s led to long run persistence of prosperity in the localities where they settled. Sumner La Croix (Hawai'i) showed how those taking up homesteads after the US takeover of Hawai'i in 1898



Presenters: Quoc-Ahn Do, Claudio Labanca and Dean Hoi

had mixed fortunes with many giving up their land. And Claudio Labanca (Monash) found that Italian prisoners of war deployed on Australian farms in 1942 used their skills to significantly raise farm productivity. Later, Dean Hoi (Melbourne) turned the focus to the effects on those left behind, finding that Italian emigration before 1920 increased productivity in sending regions.



"The March of Intellect" featured in the presentation by Mike Charleston and Paul Wilson

Back in Australia, a number of presenters focused on Tasmania. Monica Schwartz (Monash) examined convict networks and their collective action in the face of brutal treatment by an overseer of road construction. Matthew Cunneen (ANU) estimated migration to Victoria of convicts released in Tasmania and evaluated the incentives for moving. John Wilson (UniSA) used panel data from 1867 to 1891 to estimate variations in the urban penalty for infant mortality and explore its spatial heterogeneity. Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (New England) presented new data on property valuations, while Mike Charleston and Paul Wilson (Tasmania) used deceased estates to provide different statistical perspectives on inter-generational mobility.

Laura Panza (Melbourne) used the combination of slave exports and the presence of mosques in Sub-Saharan Africa to help explain the spread of Islam, which protected against slavery. Martine Mariotti (ANU) presented new time series on wage rates series for Black workers 20th century South Africa to examine the economic implications of apartheid. Other contributions that ranged over time and place included economic developments in India and China and progress in agriculture and business in Europe and Africa. There was also a session in which the three finalists for the Asia-Pacific Dissertation Prize each presented a summary of their thesis. Last up, the Noel Butlin Lecture was given by Tim Hatton (ANU) who explained how and why the steamship

APEBH Conference contd.

SS Great Britain successfully provided a passenger service to Australia from 1852 to 1875 while other steamship lines failed.

The business meeting was chaired by the Society's president Sumner La Croix. The biennial E. O. G. Shann Prize for distinguished service to Australia and New Zealand economic history was awarded to Pamela Statham-Drew and the Sir Timothy Coghlan Prize for the best paper in the *Asia-Pacific Economic History Review* in 2024 was awarded to Huiwen Koo, Shao-yu Jheng and Kun-jung Wu for their paper, "Property Rights in a Weak State: Evidence from Land Pawning in Qing Taiwan (1683-1895)". And the PhD dissertation prize went to Runzou Zhai for his Oxford thesis "Toward the Great Divergence: Economic Growth in the Yangzi Delta, 1393-1953." The meeting discussed progress in renegotiating the contract with Wiley, publishers of the *Asia-Pacific Economic History Review*. It was also resolved to hold the conference biennially from 2026 in order to alternate with the Asian Historical Economics Society Conference.

12th Australasian Cliometrics Workshop ***Call for Papers***

The 12th Australasian Cliometrics Workshop will be held on Friday 14 November 2025, at Monash University, Melbourne. AusClio follows the established Clio format of short presentations (5 min), discussant comments (10 min) and substantial discussion by the audience (30 min). Accepted papers will be distributed in advance to all participants, who are expected to read them beforehand to ensure engaged contributions and meaningful discussions.

There is no workshop theme, submissions to all topics in Economic History are welcomed. The workshop is hosted by the Department of Economics at Monash and supported by the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand.

Extended abstracts or full papers will be accepted now through 14 September 2025. Notifications will be made shortly afterwards, and full papers will be due by 31st October (two weeks before the workshop). To submit an abstract or paper as well as to RSVP to attend (including willingness to serve as a discussant), please send an email to Quoc-Anh Do (quoc-anh.do@monash.edu) and Laura Panza (lpanza@unimelb.edu.au). Early career scholars and graduate students are particularly encouraged to apply.

Registration is free and lunch and coffee will be provided. All other costs will need to be self-funded, such as travel and accommodation. An informal dinner or get-together on Friday evening will be organized.

Thanks, and we look forward to seeing you in Melbourne.

Featured Economic Historian: Motohiro Kumagai



Motohiro Kumagai

We are pleased to welcome Moto who joined the ANU in 2024 after completing his PhD at Brown University in 2023. His wide ranging research interests include economic growth and development, political economy, cultural economics, and history. He has a special interest in pre-modern economic history. One thread is the biogeographical origins of the emergence and spread of agriculture, which he shows was accelerated by the extinction of large herbivores. He also has a strong interest in horses and demonstrates their role in advancing the military origins of the state, battles, and autocracy. His other interests include the early development of agriculture and the biogeographical origins of risk preferences and human capital.

Centre for Economic History Discussion Paper Series

The CEH website hosts a discussion paper series on a variety of topics in economic history. Recent additions to the series are as follows:

- 2024-07 [**Sailing Ship Technology, Navigation and the Duration of Voyages to Australia, 1848-85**](#) by Timothy J. Hatton
- 2024-08 [**The unavailing origin of Australian protectionism? Victoria's McCulloch Tariff of 1866**](#) by Brian D. Varian
- 2024-09 [**Information costs and trade: Evidence from international electric telegraphy during the "golden age" of globalisation**](#) by Sean Bottomley & Brian D. Varian
- 2024-10 [**The ownership and control of Australian companies in the interwar period**](#) by Grant Fleming, Zhangxin (Frank) Liu, David Merrett & Simon Ville
- 2025-01 [**Constructing GDP Estimates by the Output Approach, Malaya 1900-1939**](#) by Tin Htoo Naing
- 2025-02 [**Effective Rates of Protection in an Industrialising, Settler Economy: Estimates for Victoria \(Australia\) in 1880**](#) by Brian D. Varian

Centre affiliates and visitors are encouraged to submit working papers to the series. All papers are available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/s/auu/hpaper.html>

CEH news and working papers at: <https://www.rse.anu.edu.au/research/centres-projects/centre-for-economic-history/>

The CEH welcomes courtesy announcements from affiliates and interested parties for inclusion in our newsletter (subject to editing). Please send news items to: tim.hatton@anu.edu.au

All CEH affiliates who are registered with RePEc are invited to add the Centre as an affiliation on IDEAS: <https://edirc.repec.org/data/cpanuau.html>