

# CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC HISTORY

## RESEARCH SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

OCTOBER 2020, ISSUE 32



Australian  
National  
University

Friends of the ANU Centre for Economic History,

Welcome to this issue of the CEH newsletter. It contains a report on the AusClio workshop, conference announcements and new discussion papers. Once again, thanks for your interest in the Centre for Economic History. We hope that you keep safe and well.

Tim Hatton, CEH Director

### *AusClio by Zoom: Conference Report*

In the current unprecedented circumstances this year's Aus Clio workshop held on 9<sup>th</sup> October was conducted by Zoom. It was organised at Monash University by Weijia Li and Sacha Becker who produced a fine programme of speakers focusing on the implications of religion, violence and political economy (in short, death and taxes). The presentations were warmly received and stimulated lively discussion.

First up, Laura Panza (Melbourne) explored the relationship between religion and the persecution of minorities in European cities, 1100-1850. She found that cities that adopted the cult of a saint before 1100 were more likely to engage in persecution of witches and Jews. Discussant Pauline Grosjean (UNSW) asked whether city-saints represented the power of the church power or the intensity of faith and also about the persistence mechanism. She and other participants worried about the timing and procedure for designation of city-saints, about spatial dependence and about the role of the persecuted minorities.



Next up Mark Hup (UC Irvine) examined the trade-off between corvée labour and poll tax as fiscal mechanisms in Indonesian provinces from 1874 to 1905. He found that the colonial central administration pressed for replacing corvée with tax while indigenous local administrations resisted the trend. Discussant Tuan-Hwee Sng (NU Singapore) questioned the use of steamship access as an instrument for the influence of colonial officials and queried the motives behind divergent preferences of national and provincial administrations. Participants asked whether the type of taxes depended on their uses and suggested that the slow decline of corvée might reflect transactions costs where other means of payment were scarce.



Presenters Laura Panza and Mark Hup

## *AusClio by Zoom—continued*

Felipe Valencia Caicedo (UBC) rounded off the morning session by exploring some consequences of the loss of 70-90 percent of Paraguayan men in the Triple Alliance War of 1864-70, which massively skewed the gender ratio. In the short run there were more illegitimate births and in the long run more female headed households but only marginal effects on female employment. In her discussion Sarah Walker (UNSW) asked about distinguishing between the consequences of missing men and of the war itself and also about the influence of developments in the aftermath of the war. Questions from the virtual floor focused on identifying shifts in cultural norms, possible political outcomes and the effects of changes in the structure of the economy.

After the break Pauline Grosjean (UNSW) gave a presentation on how a hero can be a focal point for mobilising right wing militants. She finds that municipalities that raised troops who served under General Pétain at Verdun in WW1 were more likely to produce Nazi collaborators in WW2 than other units. Discussant Paul Raschky (Monash) questioned why it was the battle of Verdun in particular and whether inspirational heroism or charismatic leadership were separable in this context. Others wondered whether this exposure heightened pre-existing norms and how the effect was disseminated and translated into action.

Returning to South America, Tim Kooijmans (RMIT) studied the financing of Dutch coffee and sugar plantations in Suriname, 1765-72. Focusing on the linkages between agents and banks he explained how boom sowed the seeds of bust as loans for overvalued plantations were packaged and sold by lower quality banks. Giovanni Caggiano (Monash) questioned the measurement of plantation overvaluations and bank quality, and the role of external financial events. Others asked about the role of commodity prices, the Dutch financial system and the degree of supervision from Amsterdam.



Presenters' gallery: Pauline Grosjean, Tim Kooijmans, Cong Liu and John Tang

Switching to China, Cong Liu (Jinan University) examined the effect of the 'self-strengthening' programme of military investment (1861-1895) at the county level on non-targeted industries in the 1930s. Using pre-existing connections between officials in local and central government as an instrument for the location of military investments she found a significant but modest effect. Chicheng Ma (Hong Kong U) commented on human capital formation, industrial agglomeration and other infrastructure as transmission channels. Others raise questions about regional differences, the proximity to raw materials and the contrasting experience of Japan.

## Association for the Study of Religion, Economics & Culture

### CALL FOR PAPERS

#ASREC24h

20<sup>th</sup> November 2020

An online conference on social scientific approaches to the study of religion & culture. In lieu of in-person events, ASREC will be holding a **\*\*24-hour event\*\*** on Zoom on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020!

Each presentation will be 30 minutes and the papers will be split into three zones. Each zone will contain 16 papers over 8 hours. Registration is **FREE!** Attend as much or as little as you like. Please register here:

<http://www.asrec.org/member/noaccess.php>



### *AusClio—continued*

Continuing the eastern theme John Tang (Melbourne) wrapped up the proceedings with an examination of the relationship between epidemics in 1883 to 1901 and subsequent economic development in Japanese prefectures. He found little effect of excess mortality in the short-run, apart from a rise in stillbirths, but in the long run a positive effect on productivity in manufacturing. Discussant Yusuru Kumon (Toulouse) asked about the role of infanticide in the short run and about the channels of influence of the seemingly perverse long run productivity effect. Others asked about the vectors of disease transmission, the state of medical knowledge and noted some positive effects found in other studies. –TH

## 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:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 2020-08 | “Which States Gained, and Which States Lost, from Australia’s Federation Customs Union of 1902? The Answers of a Theoretical Schema, with an Empirical Check,” by William Coleman |
| 2020-07 | “The Revenue Maximising Tariff Rate: A Theoretical Model Applied to 1890s Victoria,” by William Coleman   |

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>

## *Asia Pacific Economic and Business History Conference 2021*

February 11th – 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Centre for Western Australian History, University of Western Australia  
Perth, Australia



### CALL FOR PAPERS

The Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand 2021 APEBH Conference will be hosted by the Centre for Western Australian History, University of Western Australia and held at the UWA Business School on its riverside Crawley Campus (COVID-19 permitting).

Given the location of the conference and Australia's increasing interest in the Indian Ocean region as well as its long-standing interest in Maritime South East Asia, the theme for the conference is: "Economic History Looking West and North". Concomitant with the main theme, a stream of papers looking at the economic history of Western Australia will also be presented.

Papers responding to these themes and economic and business history papers relevant to the broader region are now called. Papers from all areas of economic, business, environmental, and social history may also be submitted. The Society's annual public lecture, the Noel Butlin Lecture, will be given at the conference. Details to be advised.

**All abstracts, papers and proposals for sessions should be emailed by 1 December 2020 to Florian Ploeckl** ([florian.ploeckl@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:florian.ploeckl@adelaide.edu.au)) **or Lionel Frost** ([lionel.frost@monash.edu](mailto:lionel.frost@monash.edu)). **Professor David Gilchrist, Associate Director of the Centre for Western Australian History will chair the WA Economic History stream** ([david.gilchrist@uwa.edu.au](mailto:david.gilchrist@uwa.edu.au)). **Please indicate if you would like to have your paper refereed.**

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:  
[CEH.RSE@anu.edu.au](mailto:CEH.RSE@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>

