



## **Seminar in Early Modern Economic and Social History Faculty of History, University of Cambridge, Lent 2019**

The seminar meets Thursdays at 5 pm in Room 12 of the History Faculty.  
We normally have dinner with the speaker afterwards, to which all are welcome.  
Convenors: Amy Erickson, Craig Muldrew, Leigh Shaw-Taylor and Paul Warde

### **31 January: Nuala Zahedieh (Edinburgh University)**

#### ***Eric Williams and William Forbes: Copper, colonies, and the industrial revolution***

A London coppersmith's business papers are combined with other eighteenth-century trade and plantation records to link the rise of the sugar plantation complex with change in the British copper industry and broader economic and social developments at home. The story puts flesh on the Williams thesis which, decades after the publication of *Capitalism and Slavery* in 1944, continues to provoke lively debate.

### **21 February: Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist (Stockholm University)**

#### ***European building activity in times of crisis, 13th-17th centuries***

Our dataset of c.50,000 dendrochronologically dated felling dates from historical timbers of buildings across central Europe permits the study of past construction rates in time and space. We establish a new history of European building activity between 1250 and 1699, finding that: (a) lower building activity coincided with periods of plague outbreaks and/or higher grain prices; (b) a significant decline in construction activity at c. 1300 – thus preceding the Black Death (1346–1353) by five decades, the Great Famine (1315–1322) by two – and lasting till c. 1415; and (c) an unprecedented decline in European building activity occurred during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648).

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