



## Quantitative History Seminar, Easter Term 2023



Supported by the Centre for History and Economics and the  
Trevelyan Fund

Seminars will take place at 13.15 in Room 3, Faculty of History (stair access only)

Also streamed on Zoom (details to follow)

Convenor: Leigh Shaw-Taylor ([lmws2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:lmws2@cam.ac.uk))

Sandwiches will be available from 1pm

### **26 April: Guido Alfani (Università Bocconi, Milan)**

#### *Occupational structures and the composition of the rich in preindustrial Italy*

During the last few years, research conducted on the Italian property tax records (estimi) has led to the identification of relatively rare cases when these sources include good-quality information about occupations across society. Combined with other, more sporadic sources, the estimi allow us to get an impression of the occupational structures prevailing in different Italian regions and epochs, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. Additionally, as the same sources also allow to establish the relative wealth of different households, it is possible to explore the occupations prevailing across different social-economic strata: beginning with the rich, who are those for whom we have the most complete information.

### **17 May: Ying Dai (Cambridge)**

#### *The occupational structure of the twentieth-century Yangtze Valley: institutions, gender, and experiences*

I identified a new, reliable, and representative source, *jiapu* (Chinese genealogies), to quantitatively estimate the occupational structure of the twentieth-century Yangtze Valley, for which no other consistent source has been found. My dataset with 208,130 observations suggests that (1) agricultural employment share only decreased substantially from 1990 onwards, (2) structural change in the labour force and output diverges from Kuznets' modern economic growth model; (3) by-employment surprisingly increased in an era of factory production due to institutions relating to land and labour; and (4) gender matters in the diversification of the economy. My future research will incorporate micro working-life experiences.

### **21st June: Erik Buyst (Leuven)**

#### **Female labour, the industrial revolution and regional inequality: Belgium, 1846-1910**

Shaw-Taylor (2007) and You (2020a) investigated in detail the geography of female employment in respectively 1851 and 1881. Both studies confirmed that female labour force participation rates varied widely from region to region depending on their occupational structure. In this paper we do a similar regional exercise for the Belgian case. At the same time we introduce an extra dimension by analysing the intertemporal developments between 1846 and 1910. It shows that female workers on the one hand were very vulnerable to asymmetric shocks, and on the other hand did not benefit automatically from the strong growth performance of certain regions.