

YAN HU

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Contact Information

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Undergraduate Studies:

Bachelor of Arts, University of Hong Kong (First Class Honours), 2013

Exchange Program, University of California San Diego (Provost Honors), Fall 2010

Graduate Studies:

Master in Specialized Economic Analysis, Barcelona Graduate School of Economics, 2014

Master in Economics and Finance (Final Grade: A), CEMFI, 2016

Visiting Student, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Oct-Nov 2019

Ph.D Candidate in Economics, CEMFI, 2016 to present
Expected Completion Date: June 2021

Thesis Committee and References:

Professor Diego Puga (Main advisor)

Professor Paula Bustos

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Teaching and Research Fields:

Applied Microeconomics, Urban Economics, Development Economics

Teaching Experience:

2019 Uncertainty and Information, Graduate level course at CEMFI, *TA for Professor Guillermo Caruana*
2018, 2019 Big Data Management with Python, Short course of Undergraduate Summer Internships at CEMFI
2017, 2018 Introduction to Making Maps Using GIS, Graduate level course at CEMFI, *TA for Professor Diego Puga*

Research Experience and Other Employment:

2017-2020	CEMFI, <i>Research Assistant to Professor Diego Puga</i>
2016-2017	CEMFI, <i>Research Assistant to Professor Joan Monras</i>
Summer 2015	Bank of Spain, Microeconomic Studies Division, <i>Research Assistant to Ernesto Villanueva</i>

Presentations:

2020	Virtual Econometrics Society European Winter Meeting (Scheduled) Virtual 2020 North East Universities Development Consortium Virtual Meeting of the Urban Economics Association CES North America Virtual Conference
2019	Econometrics Society European Winter Meeting (Rotterdam) Meeting of the Urban Economics Association (Philadelphia) LSE Economic History Graduate Seminar UC3M Applied Reading Group
2018	European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association (Amsterdam) Meeting of the Urban Economics Association (New York) CAGE&IAS Summer School (Warwick)
2017	Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture European Conference (Bologna) Summer School in Urban Economics (Paris) Econometrics Society Asian Meeting (Hong Kong)

Academic Service

2019, 2020	Scientific Committee of RES Symposium of Junior Researcher
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Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2018-	Spanish Ministry of Economics and Competitiveness Pre-Doctoral Grant (ID: BES-2017-082187)
2018-	Maria de Maeztu Ph.D Scholarship
2018	UIMP Travel Grant
2016-2018	Ph.D Scholarship-ERC Advanced Grant Agreement (ID: 695107-DYNURBAN, PI: Professor Diego Puga)
2014-2016	CEMFI Master Scholarship
2009-2012	Deans's Honours List
2012	HSBC Scholarship for Mainland Students
2011	Hong Kong University Alumni Prizes
2011	C.V.Starr Scholarships

Languages: Chinese (native), English (fluent), Spanish (Intermediate)

Technical Skills: Stata, Python, MATLAB, R, ArcGIS, LaTeX, MS Office

Research Papers:

“The roadblock effect: war shocks, modal shifts, and population changes” **(Job Market Paper)**

Using the Taiping rebellion in 19th century China, I study population changes when war shocks hit cities directly and through trade. The rebellion ravaged many cities, but also blocked key land routes, triggering investments facilitating steamship trade. Combining a novel method to estimate historical trade costs,

shipping records, and a trade model featuring modal and route choice, I show that the spatial variation in steamship trade immediately after the rebellion was driven by blocked land routes and the feasibility of sea alternatives. This “roadblock effect” permanently shifted many routes to sea and catalysed a shift of population towards port cities.

“Rushed to the altar: the effect of social interactions on migrant workers’ marriage age

Social interactions can regulate behaviour by placing pressure on members in the social group to comply with the group norms. Using variation of social pressure to conform to rural norms from rural-to-urban migrants from the same origin in the workplace, I find that the chance of getting married before 23 doubles for female migrants in China if the majority of their co-workers are from the same home town. Little effect is found on male migrants, since early marriage is more prized for females in agricultural society. Consistent with the norm-based explanation for the association between early marriage and social interactions, the gender differential is larger for individuals from regions with more conservative values on women. The gender-biased effect of social interactions is not driven by self selection into social interactions.

“Rice to riches: the effect of comparative advantage in cooperation on industrial development”

This paper examines whether rice growing areas in China foster a culture that emphasizes on cooperation and inter-dependency among people and how it shapes regional specialization in industrial activities. I find in areas with a higher ratio of rice growing, industries that require a higher level of cooperation among workers grow more between 1998 and 2007. The growth of cooperative industries in rice regions is particularly sharp in 2001 when China enters WTO, showing that the role of comparative advantage becomes more prominent when opening up to a larger market and competition. To isolate the effect of culture from other regional characteristics correlated with rice growing that can have a long-term impact on development, I also look at college students in Beijing and migrant workers in the Yangtze and Pearl River Delta, who are away from their home towns but can carry with them the culture of cooperation. The results show that more students from rice areas choose college majors that require cooperation skills and more migrant workers from rice regions work in occupations that require social skills.

Works in Progress:

“Work harder as girls: the effect of son preference on girls’ achievement” with Yining Geng

In societies with strong son preference, more family resources are allocated to male offspring. This can be counteracted by incentives for girls to work harder. Knowing they are left on their own stimulates girls to exert more effort, especially when lack of family investment can be compensated by public investment. In this paper we examine whether born and raised in a family with a male sibling, compared to with a female sibling, improves a girl’s competency when access to public education becomes available. Providing girls with access to public education not only levels the playing field, but could further reduce gender gaps in gender-biased societies when girls are motivated to succeed.