

YAN HU

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Contact Information

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Undergraduate Studies:

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

Exchange Program, University of California San Diego, Fall 2010

Graduate Studies:

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

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

Visiting Student, Wharton Real Estate Department at 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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Professor Nezih Guner

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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, <i>Teaching Assistant for Professor Guillermo Caruana</i>
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, <i>Teaching Assistant for Professor Diego Puga</i>
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Research Experience and Other Employment:

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

Presentations:

2020	Virtual Econometrics Society European Winter Meeting Virtual 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 European Meeting of the Urban Economics Association (Amsterdam)
2018	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 Researchers
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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)**

This paper investigates a novel “roadblock effect,” whereby temporary forced route changes catalyse the adoption of a new transport technology. The Taiping rebellion in 19th-century China ravaged many cities, but also blocked key land routes, triggering investments facilitating steamship trade. Combining a trade model featuring modal and route choice, shipping records, and a new method to estimate historical trade costs, I show that the post-rebellion spatial variation in steamship trade was driven by blocked land routes and the feasibility of sea alternatives. This permanently moved many routes to sea and shifted population towards port cities.

“Rushed to the Altar: The Effect of Social Interactions on Migrant Workers’ Marriage Age”

This paper provides causal evidence that social interactions can regulate individual behaviour through norms, by looking at the marriage decisions of rural-to-urban migrants in China. Using variation of social pressure to conform to the rural norm of early marriage from co-workers from the same rural 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 hometown. Little effect is found on male migrants because early marriage is more valued for females than males in agricultural societies. 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 for women. I show that 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 cooperation and inter-dependency amongst people and how it shapes regional specialisation in industrial activities. The results show that industries that require higher levels of cooperation amongst workers had higher rates of growth between 1998 and 2007 in areas that had a higher ratio of rice cultivation. The growth of cooperative industries in rice-growing regions was particularly sharp in 2001 when China entered the WTO, suggesting that the role of comparative advantage becomes more prominent when opening an economy to a larger market and greater competition. To isolate the effect of culture from other regional characteristics correlated with rice cultivation that could have had long-term impact on development, I also studied college students in Beijing and migrant workers in the Yangtze and Pearl River Deltas, who are away from their hometowns but could carry with them the culture of cooperation. The results show that more students from rice-growing areas choose college majors that require cooperation skills and more migrant workers from rice-growing regions work in occupations that require social skills.