

Chiara Zanardello

IAST - Toulouse School of Economics

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1 Esplanade de l'Université - 31000 Toulouse, France

Citizenship: Italian

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Innovation, economic history, human capital and education, migration, long-term growth

ACADEMIC POSITION

2025 – Present Postdoctoral Research Fellow

IAST-Toulouse School of Economics

DOCTORAL STUDIES

2021 – 2025 Ph.D. in Economics

UCLouvain

PhD Thesis: *Human Capital and Knowledge Networks: Market Forces, Scientific Academies, and the Spread of Ideas in Early Modern Europe.*

Supervisor: *David de la Croix*

Jan-Jun 2024 Visiting Graduate Fellow

Northwestern University

Host advisor: *Joel Mokyr*

PRE-DOCTORAL STUDIES

2020 - 2021 M.Res. Economics (Joint Degree)

UCLouvain

2019 - 2021 M.Sc. Economics and Political Science

University of Milan

Fall 2018 Undergraduate Exchange Program (Erasmus+)

University of Latvia

2016 - 2019 B.Sc. Economics and Commerce

University of Verona

PUBLICATIONS

Zanardello, Chiara (2023). “Market forces in Italian Academia today (and yesterday)”. In: *Scientometrics* 128, pp. 651–698. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-022-04579-0>.

WORKING PAPERS

- [Early Modern Academies, Universities, and Economic Growth](#)

LIDAM Discussion Paper - 2024/12

Knowledge production is central to modern economic growth but what role did it play in the past? Despite growing interest in the history of human capital, we still know little about how knowledge shaped long-term development in pre-industrial societies. This paper studies the impact of early modern academies—research-oriented learned societies that spread across Europe between 1650 and 1800—on long-run urban growth and higher education. Drawing on newly assembled data and employing advanced difference-in-differences methods, I show that academies contributed to sustained urban growth. Using individual-level data on scholars, I demonstrate that the results are driven by scientifically oriented academies, while literary academies exhibit weaker and less robust patterns. Complementary analyses suggest that academies also affected nearby cities and improved the quality of existing universities, especially when academies had a scientific orientation. These findings provide the first empirical evidence of the pivotal role scientific academies played in shaping Europe’s long-run economic development.

- [Flora, Cosmos, Salvatio: Pre-modern Academic Institutions and the Spread of Ideas](#) (with David de la Croix, and Rossana Scebba) *CEPR Discussion Paper - DP20569*

While good ideas can emerge anywhere, it takes a community to develop and disseminate them. In premodern Europe (1084-1793), there were approximately 200 universities and 150 academies of sciences, which were home to thousands of scholars and created an extensive network of intellectual exchange. By reconstructing interpersonal connections that were made via institutional affiliations, we model the spread of ideas on the European academic landscape. We find that the implied exposure patterns align with observed urban developments: examples include botanic gardens, astronomical observatories, and Protestantism. Scholars' mobility and multiple affiliations sustain the diffusion, and counterfactual simulations underscore the bridging role played by scientific academies. We also show that the spread of ideas through the affiliation network is locally fragile but globally robust. Specifically, initial conditions matter for the speed of diffusion and the survival of ideas. Yet, removing entire geographical regions does not necessarily reduce exposure to ideas.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- How sustainable is the innovation process? (with Ludovic Maïsonneuve and Maxime Derex)
- Destruction of Human Capital

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

2023	Mobility scholarships: Scientific Stay Grant (FRS-FNRS), and Travel Grant (FWB)
2023	Ph.D. Fellowship (within <i>PDR (FRS-FNRS)</i> – Main promoter: David de la Croix)
2021	Ph.D. Fellowship (within <i>ERC grant 883033</i> – Supervisor: David de la Croix)
2020	Joint Degree Program UNIMI – UCLouvain
2020, 2021	Right to University Education (DSU) (University of Milan)
2018	Erasmus+ Study Abroad Program
2017, 2018, 2019	Right to University Education (DSU) (University of Verona)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2025	<i>Using Economic Tools to Solve Global Challenges</i> (TA, Graduate)	UCLouvain
2023	<i>Advanced Macroeconomics III</i> (TA, Graduate)	UCLouvain

TALKS

2026	ASSA 2026 (Philadelphia, USA)
2025	Université Laval (Quebec City, Canada), University of Sussex (Brighton, UK), Economic History Society (Glasgow, Scotland), AMSE PhD lunch seminar (Aix-Marseille University, France), IAST-TSE Welcome Days (Toulouse, France), IAST Lunch Seminar (Toulouse, France)
2024	Economic History Lunch (Northwestern University), Cliometric Society Conference (AU Washington DC), European Doctoral Program Jamboree (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona), FRESH workshop “Institutions, human capital, and long-term development: Lessons from pre-modern Europe” (UCLouvain), EHA “Globalization: Perspectives from the Past” (Sacramento, CA), CEPR-YSI (University of Southern Denmark)
2023	Doctoral Workshop (UCLouvain), IRES Lunch Seminar (UCLouvain), Econometric Society Winter Meeting (UManchester)
2022	IREs Lunch Seminar (UCLouvain), Conference “Early modern science, technology, and institutions” (UManchester), Doctoral Workshop (UCLouvain), AMSE Summer School “The Economics of Growth” (Aix-Marseille University), Conference “Religion, culture and economic growth in historical perspective” (UCLouvain)

DATA PAPERS

- 2025 Fabre, Alice and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Académie des belles-lettres, sciences et arts in Marseille (1726–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- 2024 Gualandris, Tifenn, Vitale, Mara, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Agiati Academy in Rovereto (1750–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- Clément, Blandine, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Royal Naval Academy of France in Brest (1752–1793)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts of Arras (1737–1793)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- 2023 Clément, Blandine, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Academy of Georgofili (1753 – 1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- de la Croix, David, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the University of Modena (1175–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- Zanardello, Chiara** *Literati and Scholars at the Dissonanti Academy in Modena (1680-1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- de la Croix, David, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars at the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris (1666-1793)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- 2022 **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Philosophical Society of Oxford (1651–1690)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- Rolla, Cecilia, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Academy of Sciences of Bologna (1714–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the University of Turin (1404–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)
- 2021 de la Croix, David, and **Zanardello, Chiara** *Scholars and Literati at the Academy of Sciences of Turin (1757–1800)*. Repertorium Eruditorum Totius Europae. [\[DOI\]](#)

REFERENCES

Professor David de la Croix
UCLouvain
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Professor Joel Mokyr
Northwestern University
j-mokyr@northwestern.edu

Professor Joseph F. Gomes
UCLouvain
joseph.gomes@uclouvain.be

MISCELLANEOUS

Refereeing	Journal of the European Economic Association, The Quarterly Journal of Economics
Digital Skills	R, Stata, L ^A T _E X, TeamPortal, Matlab, EViews
Languages	Italian (mother tongue), English (advanced), French (advanced), German (basic)