

MOTOHIRO KUMAGAI
<https://motohirokumagai.com/>
motohiro_kumagai@brown.edu

BROWN UNIVERSITY

Placement Director: Toru Kitagawa TORU_KITAGAWA@BROWN.EDU 401-863-3836
Graduate Administrator: Angelica Spertini ANGELICA_SPERTINI@BROWN.EDU 401-863-2465

Office Contact Information

Department of Economics
64 Waterman Street., Box B
+1-401-345-9892

Home Contact Information

412 Hope Street, Floor 2
Providence, RI, 02906
+1-401-660-0729

Personal Information:

Citizenship: Japan

Pre-Doctoral Studies:

BA. Economics, Hitotsubashi University, 2013
MA. Economics, Hitotsubashi University, 2015

Graduate Studies:

Brown University, Providence, RI, USA 2016 to present

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics

Thesis Title: Essays on the Biogeographical Origins of Economic Development

Expected Completion Date: May 2023

References:

Professor Oded Galor

Department of Economics, Brown University

oded_galor@brown.edu

+1-401-863-2117

Professor Stelios Michalopoulos

Department of Economics, Brown University

stylianos_michalopoulos@brown.edu

+1-401-863-2506

Professor Louis Putterman

Department of Economics, Brown University

louis_putterman@brown.edu

+1-508-517-6976

+1-401-863-3837

Research and Teaching Fields:

Primary fields: Growth and Development, Macroeconomics, Political Economy

Secondary field: Cultural Economics

Research Experience and Other Employment:

Summer 2018 Brown University, Research Assistant, Professor Oded Galor

Professional Activities

Editorial Service:

Economic Inquiry (1), Review of Economics and Statistics (1)

Academia:

Oct 2020 Global Wellbeing Initiative, Discussant
Nov 2021 NEUDC, Paper Discussant

Conferences and Seminar Presentations

Internal Growth Seminar at Brown University (multiple times), 2018-2022
NEUDC at Boston University, 2021
Applied Young Economist Webinar at Monash University, 2022
Eurasia Business and Economics Society Conference at Berlin, Oct 2022
SEA Annual Meeting, Nov 2022
PhD EVS, Mar 2023
ASREC at Harvard University, Mar 2023
JADE-CEPR-Time Conference on Economic Development at Tokyo University, Apr 2023
Kyoto Summer Workshop on Applied Economics, July 2023
Historical Data Analysis Workshop at Tokyo University of Science, July 2023
EDW/CEI Seminar at Hitotsubashi University, Sep 2023
Seminar at Musashi University, Oct 2023
SEA Annual Meeting, Nov 2023
Tokyo Labor Economics Workshop at Tokyo University, Dec 2023
Seminar at Waseda University, Feb 2024
Seminar at Otaru University of Commerce, Feb 2024
Mini-conference of Economics Development and History at Doshisha University, March 2024
Seminar at Kobe University, April 2024
Deep Roots of Political and Economic Development conference in Vienna, June 2024 (scheduled)

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2016-2019	Japan Student Services Organization Scholarship
2019	Third Year Paper Distinction Award, Brown University
Spring 2021	Merit Dissertation Fellowship, Brown University

Research Papers:

“[Overkill, Extinction, and the Neolithic Revolution](#)” (Job Market Paper)

Abstract: This research explores the biogeographical origins of the emergence and diffusion of agriculture. I develop a model showing that large-herbivore extinction decreased hunting gains and permitted an earlier agricultural transition. It also shows that mammals’ biological vulnerability increased the extinction risk and promoted an earlier transition. To test the predictions, I construct a novel measure of the loss of hunting resources resulting from mammal extinction. Using multiple datasets and exploiting the biological vulnerability as an instrument for the extinction, the research establishes a positive impact of the extinction on the timing and the likelihood of the agricultural transition. It also shows a persistent effect of the prehistoric extinction on socioeconomic development that lasted until the preindustrial period.

“[Horses and the State](#)”

Abstract: This research explores the effect of horses on the state and on historical battles. It exploits multiple exogenous sources of variation in the adoption of horse riding on the battlefield: (i) the exogenous regional variation in the spread of horse-riding technology, (ii) the exogenous variation in the availability of native horses, and (iii) the exogenous change in the availability of horses in the Americas during the Columbian Exchange. The research, using these exogenous variations and multiple datasets spanning several millennia, provides repeated evidence of the significant impact of horses on state

formation and on historical battles. Rich historical accounts support the critical role of cavalry in state formation through its influence as a source of military power.

[“Biogeographical Origins of Risk Preference”](#)

Abstract: This paper explores the biogeographical origins of differences in risk preference across regions and individuals. The theory shows that individuals whose ancestors lived in regions with abundant hunting resources tend to be more risk averse. Such regions attracted even risk-averse individuals, and thus the population became more risk averse. To test the hypothesis, I construct a novel measure of megaherbivore biomass. This measure is a strong predictor of hunting dependency in traditional societies. I show that, consistent with the theory, descendants of inhabitants of regions characterized by larger megaherbivore biomass have higher risk aversion.

Teaching Experience

2013	Introductory Microeconomics @Hitotsubashi University, Teaching Assistant
2014	Introduction to Economics @Hitotsubashi University, Teaching Assistant
2015	Basic Economic Mathematics @Hitotsubashi University, Teaching Assistant
2015	Introductory Microeconomics @Hitotsubashi University, Teaching Assistant
2016	Advanced Macroeconomics @Hitotsubashi University, Teaching Assistant
2023	Theory of Economic Growth @Brown University, Teaching Assistant

Languages

English (fluent), Japanese (native)

Software

Python, ArcGIS, STATA, Matlab, LaTeX