

Department of
Economic History

Alumni Newsletter

Summer Term 2021-22

**Welcome, from our Head of
Department, Professor Patrick
Wallis**



As we reach the end of the academic year and wave goodbye to another cohort of students, it's an opportunity to pause for a little reflection on the past year. Recent events – particularly the surge in inflation – have once again reminded the world of the importance of understanding economic history if we are to manage the challenges of the present. Many of our colleagues have been involved in helping provide insights into this through the media and helping to give a little grounding to some of the looser parallels with the 1970s that have appeared in the press.

As for life here, we started last September optimistically hoping for a return to normality but endured another lockdown and the continuation of hybrid teaching. Some of the transitions this has forced on us have been challenging, but our students

have again produced some superlative work, and thanks to the generosity of one of our alumni donors we have been able to run research internships for our students to give them a chance to collaborate on projects with faculty. We end the year with an in-person MSc Dissertation workshop which, this year, will bring together faculty and students from all levels of study to discuss areas of research interests - and which will, no doubt, continue in the pub later.

Sadly, we've had to say goodbye to LSE Fellows Stefania Galli and Guillaume Yon as they have moved on to postdoctoral positions at Gothenborg and Duke University respectively, we are incredibly grateful for their contribution to Department life.

We are pleased to announce that Mohamed Saleh of the Toulouse School of Economics, who you may remember gave the Epstein Lecture in 2020, will be joining us as an Associate Professor in September. Mohamed brings us a new area thanks to his expertise on the economic history of the Middle East and North Africa, with a particular interest in the role of religion in shaping the economy of the region, and on understanding the persistence of autocratic regimes.

The PSS team has also undergone a re-structuring – with Loraine Long's retirement (see last issue), Tracy Keefe has taken on the management of the PhD programme, and we welcome Oli Harrison as the new MSc Programmes Officer.

We are planning to build on the success of our public events and have already got some great ones planned for next term: Nick Crafts will discuss whether, in a post covid world, we can learn lessons from the Attlee Government of the 1940s; Leigh Gardner will deliver her Inaugural Lecture; Natacha Postel-Vinay will host a screening of her television documentary 'Can't Pay, Won't Pay! A Popular History of Taxes'; and Joan Roses will Chair a Panel on Regional Inequality. Keep an eye on our Events Page: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/Economic-History/Events> as information will be posted there once finalised.

I wish you all a wonderful, relaxing summer!

Congratulations

To:

Patrick Wallis, who won the LSESU Award for PhD Supervision

Yitong (Nora) Qiu and **Mario Cuenda-Garcia** who won LSE Class Teacher Awards

Hillary Vipond, who won the Economic History Society's New Researchers Award for her work on the effects of automatization on labour during the Industrial Revolution using linked census data. You can read her blog [here](#).

Leigh Gardner, Eric Schneider and **Neil Cummins** who have all been promoted to full Professor with effect from September.

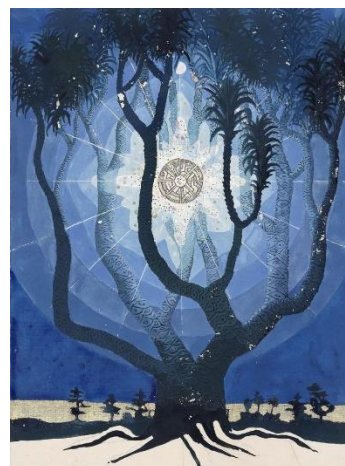
Round-up of 2021-22 Public Lectures, seminars and workshops

As well as welcoming Jan Lucassen to talk about his book *The Story of Work*, and Philipp Ager, who delivered the 2022 Epstein Lecture, we also ran a very successful event: *Do Financial Sanctions Work? Lessons from History*. Chaired by Mary Morgan, panellists Olivier Accominotti and Albrecht Ritschl discussed how economic sanctions have been used in the past, for what purpose and with what success.

If you missed it (or any of our other 2021-22 events), you can watch the recordings by visiting our [Events Page](#), and clicking on the relevant links.

Please do visit that page regularly as details of events planned for 2022-23 will be posted there first.

Upcoming event, 14th July 2022
Workshop: History, Culture and Popular Beliefs



'The Philosophical Tree' by Carl Jung

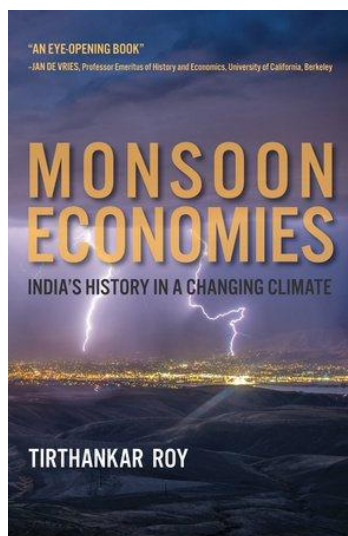
On Thursday 14th July the Department, with generous support from the LSE Hayek Programme, will host Melanie Meng Xue's '*History, Culture and Popular Belief*' workshop which brings together

scholars studying cultural norms from diverse fields and disciplines, with a special focus on inquiries into popular beliefs taking a folkloric approach.

More information, including how to register your interest in attending, can be found [here](#).

Recently published books

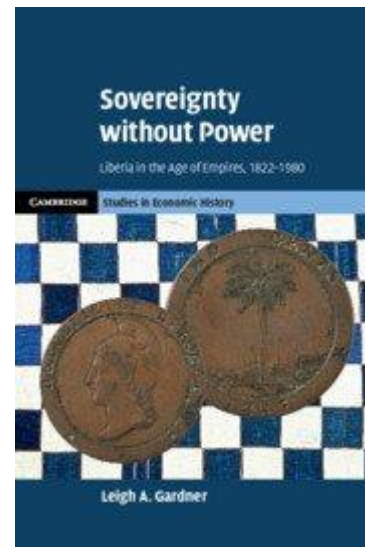
Monsoon Economies by Tirthankar Roy, MIT Press (available now)



In his latest book, *Monsoon Economies*, Tirthankar Roy explores the interaction between South Asia's environment, shaped by monsoons and water scarcity, and the economy in the emergence of modern India.

Read more and order here: [Monsoon Economies](#)

Sovereignty without Power: Liberia in the Age of Empires, 1822-1980 by Leigh Gardner, Cambridge (available for pre-order)



The history of Liberia, established in 1822 and maintaining independence in the colonial period, anticipates challenges still faced by developing countries today. In her forthcoming book, Leigh Gardner presents the first quantitative estimates of Liberia's economic performance from its establishment as a free state in 1822 onwards, allowing comparisons with both its colonized neighbours and other countries, and offering a new perspective on the role of power and power relationships in the shaping of Africa's economic history.

Read more here: [Sovereignty without Power: Liberia in the Age of Empires, 1822–1980](#)

Ten minute reads

We've rounded up a selection of recently published research that you may have missed. So grab a coffee, settle down, and enjoy!

Economics Observatory blogpost

In a recent blog, *Inflation past and present: how have we measure the*

rising cost of living? Jason Lennard and his co-author Ryland Thomas (Bank of England) take a look at how measuring the rate of inflation for households, sectors and regions is far from straightforward.

Read the full article [here](#).

Compliance and enforcement in an Elizabethan lockdown

As life starts to get back to normal and discussions about support for quarantine regulations are begun, current PhD student, Charlie Udale, looks at compliance levels in Bristol in the 16th Century.

Read the full article [here](#).

Raising historical awareness among German civil servants and economic policymakers

Albrecht Ritschl led a large research project on the history of the German Economics Ministry which has led to commemoration and reconciliatory dialogue.

Read the full article [here](#).

Alumni Profile

Here, we catch up with Colin Ganley, MSc Economic History (2005-06), whose post-LSE journey has taken him from the pubs of London, via the spires of Oxford, to Cuba and Nicaragua



Colin Ganley studied the remarkable rise of mid-17th century Bombay and the East India Company on those islands during his time at the LSE. The following year he continued on to Saint Antony's College, Oxford where he extended and deepened his research. But under the surface there was a private passion and unrevealed talent which would ultimately shape the direction of his career.

LSE

The class of 2005/6, like many classes, was a remarkable one. As Colin describes: "The friendships forged that year have remained among the strongest bonds from my student life. The camaraderie with Professors Colin Lewis, Nick Crafts, and Tim Leunig in my case, was very special. They were clearly brilliant but also accessible, funny, and encouraging."

That year was one which saw Colin, and other scholars, at the local pubs and clubs with professors and staff. From the South Bank's Founder's Arms to the Boisdale of

Belgravia. Alan Rappeport, Ali Mazanderani, Andrew Thuss, Marc Bridge, Tom Claerhout, and Anna Stasinou held regular sessions - as did nearly everyone.

Colin's Supervisor, Professor Colin Lewis' expertise lay in Latin America, while his own was emerging in the Indian Subcontinent. Therefore the main influence of the supervisor was of improving methods and suggesting approaches; something Ganley remains grateful for until this day. At this time there was no suggestion that Colin Ganley would end up living for more than a decade in Latin America!

When the end of the year approached, Professor Lewis encouraged Colin to continue his research at either the LSE or Oxford as a Doctoral candidate. There was an undercurrent in Colin's time at the LSE. The pressure of the exchange rate of all currencies against the Great British Pound made 2005/6 one of the most expensive years for foreign students to attend the LSE. So, in order to raise money to support his studies, he began freelance writing for several cigar magazines.

Why cigars? London, as it turns out, is a global center of Cuban cigar connoisseurship. It was the home of Simon Chase, the world's pre-eminent Cuban cigar expert. Simon would become a dear friend and collaborator of Colin until Simon passed away in 2019. Edward Sahakian is the most notable enthusiast-purveyor of fine cigars in St. James and a Gentleman by any measure. With the knowledge and collections of these two gentlemen, their friendship allowed Colin to amass proficiency and experience sufficient to write quarterly articles for the leading cigar magazines of the time.

Oxford

While at Oxford, Colin continued his research under David Washbrook in the Department of Modern History while attending Economics seminars at Nuffield College. Oxford does not have a programme specifically for Economic History so it is necessary to choose either Economics or History. Since Colin's research goal was to explain a phenomenon and *story of a place in time* using the toolbox of Economics, the Department of Modern History was the best fit.

During this period of dissertation writing and research, his star was growing brighter in the world of cigars. Colin was invited to become a Chief Editor for the magazine then called the European Cigar Cult Journal, headquartered in Vienna, Austria. This led to extensive travel in the countries of Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. "I found a fascinating connection between my research into the pre-colonial period of India and the post-colonial feeling of these Latin American countries. For the Economic Historian, the palpable connections to the past are electric."

In his third year at Oxford, Colin was writing prolifically for both academic journals in Oxford and the popular cigar press. He was commissioned to write a book called "Cigars" as part of a series entitled Le Snob. The book was published by Hardie Grant and Süddeutsche Zeitung in several countries. He was also invited to judge a sommelier competition in Havana, Cuba called the International HabanoSommelier Competition. This is a test of the knowledge and skill of sommelier in the selection and serving of Cuban cigars. He would continue judging this event until it was put on pause in 2019.

Marriage, Family, and Nicaragua

Upon leaving Oxford, love had struck. At an Economics conference in Reykjavik Colin met Andrea Woolverton (PhD). "I don't know if it was the everlasting daylight of the Reykjavik summer or some other magic, but we fell in love quickly and married within a couple years."

In attendance, and as members of the bridal party, were a substantial contingent of friends from the LSE Economic History class of 2005-6.

As a couple, Colin and Andrea decided to move to Nicaragua in 2012. Colin describes Nicaragua at the time as being one of the places on earth where tremendous opportunities were available. One can live at the Pacific Ocean, as he does, and be at a coffee farm, cigar factory, mountain, rainforest, international airport, or Caribbean beach within a few hours.

Professionally, Colin was evaluating cigars, spirits, wines, food, and coffee. It turns out that tasting and blending was a skill that slowly developed in him during these nearly 9 years of practice. This led naturally, in hindsight, to Colin and Andrea founding a coffee company called Twin Engine Coffee.

The company grows, roasts, packages, and exports roasted coffee to a handful of countries around the world. But the work mostly takes place in Nicaragua. "We wanted to have access to the best coffees in the country and make a big impact in the local community. That's why we decided to work and live in Nicaragua." - Colin Ganley Twin Engine Coffee is one of the first "made at origin" coffees in the developing world.

Since the company's founding they have evidently achieved both of these goals. Colin explained that before Twin Engine, there were no companies roasting high quality coffees for domestic consumption. So one of the first achievements of Twin Engine was to make Specialty Grade coffees available for purchase within Nicaragua. They have since obtained Organic and Fair Trade certifications. "I'm not fully in agreement with some of these certifications. But when you have a researcher's training, it is hard to not see the flaws in any organization." says Colin.

Today

Colin and Andrea still work in the coffee company every day and are raising their 7 year-old daughter Lucille in Nicaragua. Colin says, "I'm fortunate to have the constant challenges of fatherhood and the search for great coffees every day. I think it is important to surround yourself with beauty, and essential to keep your mind challenged." At 42, Colin shows no sign of slowing down and says that he still has a few books he wants to write.

"The journey from London to Nicaragua was not a direct path, but it has been a fulfilling one. My time at the LSE was a highlight and I am tremendously pleased by the influence it has had on my life."

If you would like to receive copies of our newsletter direct to your inbox, just sign-up to the Alumni Network [here](#).