

Zhao Dong

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Research Fields

Economic History · Political Economy

I am an economic historian studying long-run development and the political economy of institutions. My research combines historical national accounting with the analysis of elite recruitment, bureaucratic organisation and political trust, using imperial China as the principal empirical setting.

Academic Appointment and Education

Trinity College Dublin | Assistant Professor in Economics 2026–2027

University of Oxford | DPhil Candidate in Economics 2021–2026

Thesis submitted; viva completed on 25 September 2026; minor corrections underway.

Supervisors: Stephen Broadberry and Sheilagh Ogilvie.

University of Cambridge | MPhil in Finance 2018–2019

University of Bath | BSc (Hons) in Economics, First Class 2015–2018

Ranked 1st out of 260 students; Neil Farmery Prize in Economics (2018).

Doctoral Thesis

Living Standards and Political Institutions in Imperial China

Examines long-run changes in living standards and state organisation in China. Uses historical national accounting to construct GDP-per-capita benchmarks from the Han to the Ming (2 CE–1400 CE), including estimates for the Han, Tang, Southern Song and Yuan dynasties. Further chapters study elite recruitment across fifty-five dynasties and Qing bureaucratic composition during internal and external wars.

Selected Research Papers

All five papers are sole-authored.

1. Conquest and Patrimonialism in Imperial China:

Elite Recruitment across Fifty-Five Dynasties, 221 BCE–1912 CE

Journal of Comparative Economics | Forthcoming

Renamed *Journal of Comparative Economics: Political Economy* from 1 January 2027.

2. The Political Economy of Noble Rank Proliferation in Imperial China

Cliometrica | Forthcoming

3. The Military Trap: Why Roman Emperors Died More Violently Than Chinese Emperors

Applied Economics Letters (2026) | Published online 3 June 2026 | DOI: 10.1080/13504851.2026.2683696

4. Loyalty, Competence, and the Allocation of Office under Threat

Job market paper

5. Meritocratic Entry, Hereditary Rank Premium: Evidence from Qing China's Bureaucracy

Asia-Pacific Economic History Review | Revised manuscript submitted

Teaching Experience and Fields

Trinity College Dublin | Department of Economics

2026–2027

Scheduled teaching: Long-Term Development (MSc), module lecturer; supervision of 12 undergraduate dissertations (Economics Capstone).

Somerville College, University of Oxford

2025–2026

Graduate Teaching Assistant and College Tutor. Tutorials in probability, statistical inference and introductory econometrics.

Brasenose College, University of Oxford

2022–2024

Graduate Teaching Assistant. Tutorials in Introductory Economics and Core Macroeconomics across four terms, covering national income accounting, IS–LM, monetary and fiscal policy, and open-economy macroeconomics.

Fields prepared to teach: Economic history; political economy; development and growth; macroeconomics; applied econometrics and quantitative methods.

Selected Conferences and Seminars

2026 | 12th Annual Symposium on Quantitative History, Central China Normal University, Wuhan, 11–12 July (paper presentation).

2025 | Oxford Political Economy Workshop (invited); LSE Graduate Economic History Seminar (invited); 2nd Tsinghua–Oxford Comparative Economic History Workshop.

2024 | Cambridge Economic and Social History Workshop (invited).

2023 | EHES Conference; Economic History Society Annual Conference; Oxford Economic and Social History Seminar.

2022 | Chinese Economy in the Long Run Conference.

Academic Service

2025 | Undergraduate Admissions Interviewer, Somerville College, University of Oxford.

2024 | Co-organiser, 1st Tsinghua–Oxford Comparative Economic History Workshop.

Awards and Research Funding

2026 | Quantitative History Emerging Scholar Paper Award (inaugural award).

Oxford Economics Doctoral Bursary (2022–present); George Webb Medley Research Grant (2022); Doctoral Scholarship Award (2022); Lady Margaret Hall Graduate Research Grant (2021–2022).

Languages and Software

Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native); English (fluent); Classical Chinese (primary-source reading).

Software: Stata (advanced), Python, R and LaTeX.

References

Professor Stephen Broadberry | Professor of Economic History, University of Oxford
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Professor Sheilagh Ogilvie | Chichele Professor of Economic History, University of Oxford
sheilagh.ogilvie@all-souls.ox.ac.uk

Dr Sijie Hu | Assistant Professor
Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, The University of Hong Kong
sijiehu@hku.hk