**Economics Research Seminar**

The Epidemiological Roots of Ethnic Diversity

You are cordially invited to the following seminar: Thursday, 4 March 2021 from 12:15hrs – 13:30hrs, ONLINE via ZOOM

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Director of the PhD Program (2013-2016) and Head of Department 2021-2024.

Matteo’s research interests are in the theoretical and empirical investigation of long-term development. He has been working on political economics, economics demography, unified growth theory, endogenous democratization, theory and empirics of cultural values, the role of life expectancy and exposure to human pathogens, the determinants of civil conflicts with disaggregated data. In these topics, he has published in journals like AER, Econometrica, ReStat, AEJ: Macro, Economic J., Jo Ec. Growth, JPuBE among others. PI in research project funded by MIUR-PRIN, EIEF, University of Bologna and member in FIRB and ERC network projects. Research Fellow: CEPR, London; IZA Bonn; CESIfo Munich; GLO.

**ABSTRACT:** We study the role of long-term exposure to malaria in pre-colonial times for the emergence and the persistence of ethnic diversity. A Malaria Epidemiology Model nested in a Malthusian framework is used to derive predictions on the patterns of behavioral isolation that maximize group fitness as measured by the level of population density in the stationary state. The framework delivers predictions on optimal patterns of geographic clustering of humans, limited visitations and contacts as well as sexual endogamy. In an identification by committee approach, we test the novel predictions using a variety of spatially disaggregated data ranging from grid-cell level, ethnic groups and dyads, village level, and individual-level data. The results provide robust new evidence that the ancestral exposure to malaria is a main driver of the emergence and persistence of ethnicities through its legacy on the spatial over the determinants of comparative development by identifying the long-lasting impact of malaria on the diversity of human populations.

This seminar will take place online. For ZOOM meeting details and/or to book bilateral meetings after the seminar please email heather.dupontderivaltz@unisg.ch