

## Obituary Professor Kiyoshi Hamano (1958-2013)

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## Obituary

### Professor Kiyoshi Hamano (1958–2013)

Economic historians will be greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Professor Kiyoshi Hamano last December. Prof. Hamano made an outstanding, substantial, and enduring contribution to our understanding of Japanese economic history and historical demography, one that has perhaps been sufficiently recognized because of his own exceptional involvement.

His interests in Japanese economic and demographic history began when he started his academic career at the graduate school of Keio University. By engaging in several research initiatives abroad throughout his academic life, including his scholarship as an MA student at the University of Hawaii and his research leave at Emory University, he developed and extended his ideas about specific fields of studies.

His extraordinary book *Historical Demography in the Early Modern Kyoto: Toward Understanding Social Structure of Towns People* was published in 2007. Later volumes included *Japanese Economic History 1600–2000: The Present Looking through the Past* (coauthor, 2009) and *How Historical Demography Understands Japan in the Edo Period* (2011).

Whether writing about economic history in Japan or drawing on his research of demographic history, Prof. Hamano's characteristic approach was comparative and analytical. His work was firmly based on primary sources in early modern Kyoto in particular and in Tokugawa Japan in general. His research and publications also reflected the growing interest in this field, and while engaging with emerging themes and concepts within the discipline, he retained a sound rootedness in empirical investigation and analysis. Thus, his writings were always extremely lucid, well argued, and readable.

Prof. Hamano's interests were not merely academic but also educational. He had a lifelong commitment to improving and developing the teaching of economic science in particular and university education in general. Beyond this commitment, he relished outdoor life: walking, jogging, and participating in long-distance running.

As his colleagues can testify, Prof. Hamano was a thoughtful and gentle man with a very distinctive sense of humor who never believed in forcing his opinions on others. However, he was also principled, driven by a strong sense of professionalism and commitment to his undergraduate and graduate students and to the cause of developing Japanese economic history and historical demography.

(Katsuhiko Kitagawa)