Your bi-monthly update from the African Economic History Network

The AEHN newsletter brings you up to date with current and forthcoming events in African Economic History. It gives you a chance to publicise your new research and opportunities to the right audience.

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Do you want to become a member of the network and receive this monthly email? Send a message to the African Economic History Network at aehnetwork@gmail.com with ‘member’ in the subject line.

Anything we missed? Want to publicise your own research, events or organizing a panel for an upcoming conference? Send a message to aehnetwork@gmail.com and we will include your news in our bi-monthly round up.

Best regards,

The African Economic History Network
News and Announcements

Working Papers Series

If you have a paper you would like to submit for our consideration please send us an email. For questions regarding the WPS please contact Erik Green at Erik.Green@ekh.lu.se.
NEW ABSTRACTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Articles

Vallore Arthi and James Fenske. Intra-household labor allocation in colonial Nigeria

We use a year-long panel of time-use data from colonial Nigeria to show that labor complementarities and strategic concerns shaped the time-use decisions of African households. Using quantitative and ethnographic approaches, we show that health shocks imposed time costs that followed the gender division of labor. The labor of others did not automatically compensate for this. Whether individuals could respond by recruiting substitutes depended on social standing, urgency of work, and type of illness. Labor was coordinated between spouses. Child labor was coordinated with parental work, aided child care, and allowed children to build skills and resources.


Morten Jerven. Research Note: Africa by numbers: Reviewing the database approach to studying African economies

We know less about growth and poverty based on numbers in African economies than we would like to think. Numbers are soft, and data availability is sparse, sporadic, and uneven. For researchers and data users, whether engaged in inferential or descriptive statistics, the message is that studying Africa by numbers can be misleading. This research note surveys the knowledge gap and provides guidance on how to and how not to study Africa by numbers.


Working Papers

Levi Boxell. A Drought-Induced African Slave Trade

Historians have frequently suggested that droughts helped facilitate the African slave trade. By introducing a previously unused dataset on historical rainfall levels in Africa, I provide the first empirical answer to this hypothesis. I demonstrate how negative rainfall shocks and long-run shifts in the mean level of rainfall increased the number of slaves exported from a given region and can have persistent effects on the level of development today. Using a simple economic model of an individual’s decision to participate in the slave trade, along with observed empirical heterogeneity and historical anecdotes, I argue that consumption smoothing and labor allocation adjustments are the primary causal mechanisms for the negative relationship between droughts and slave exports. These findings contribute to our understanding of the process of selection into the African slave trade and have policy implications for contemporary human trafficking and slavery.

There is a tight historical connection between endemic labour scarcity and the rise of coercive labour market institutions in former African colonies. This paper explores how mining companies in the Belgian Congo and Northern Rhodesia secured scarce supplies of African labour, by combining coercive labour recruitment practices with considerable investments in living standard improvements. By reconstructing internationally comparable real wages we show that copper mine workers lived at barebones subsistence in the 1910s-1920s, but experienced rapid welfare gains from the mid-1920s onwards, to become among the best paid manual labourers in Sub-Saharan Africa from the 1940s onwards. We investigate how labour stabilization programs raised welfare conditions of mining worker families (e.g. medical care, education, housing quality) in the Congo, and why these welfare programs were more hesitantly adopted in Northern Rhodesia. By showing how solutions to labour scarcity varied across space and time we stress the need for dynamic conceptualizations of colonial institutions, as a counterweight to their oft supposed persistence in the historical economics literature.


Books


Ports have played a key role as elements of development, transference of knowledge and culture and as dynamic centers for seaborne trade throughout History. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, technical advances and the transports and telecommunication revolution increased the importance of ports over the configuration of a more integrated and globalized economy. African seaports where the places where the local and global factors interacted. This book deals with the historical evolution of the port of Dakar (Senegal) between 1857 and 1957. This volume offers a study of the port tied to the development of the regional economy and the colonial institutions. These institutions encouraged fundamental changes on the economic structure which had further effects on the long run. On the other hand, port functions are analyzed in comparative terms and the way how Dakar increased its competitiveness facing the rivals regional ports. The archival sources from Senegal, France and Great Britain offers a pioneer study for the African Maritime Economic History academic literature.
This book examines how the first major commodity booms in three African and three Latin American countries influenced their state building trajectories. Saylor maintains that coalitional politics ultimately determines whether countries harness booms to expand their state capacity. Countries ruled by export-oriented coalitions (Argentina, Chile, and Mauritius) expanded their state capacity as a direct result of commodity booms. Countries in which exporters were politically marginalized (Colombia, Ghana, and Nigeria) missed analogous state building opportunities because ruling coalitions preyed upon export wealth. The coalitional basis of these divergences suggests that, contrary to the belief in a “resource curse,” natural resource wealth does not doom countries to low state capacity. The book concludes by considering which public policies best serve developing countries that are trying manage their natural resource wealth.

Maurits W. Ertsen. *Improvising Planned Development on the Gezira Plain, Sudan, 1900-1980.* Palgrave Macmillan US.

The typical image of the Gezira Scheme, the large-scale irrigation scheme started under British colonial rule in Sudan, is of a centrally planned effort by a central colonial power controlling tenants and cotton production. However, any idea(s) of planned irrigation and profit in Gezira had to be realized by African farmers and European officials, who both had their own agendas. Projects like Gezira are best understood in terms of continuous negotiations. This book rewrites Gezira’s history in terms of colonial control, farmers’ actions and resistance, and the broader development debate.

Maurits Ertsen is Associate Professor of Water Resources Management at Delft University of Technology, Netherlands. He is interested in irrigation practices emerging from many short-term actions of human agents or farmers’ responses to irrigation planning from a central state. Maurits is one of two Editors-in-Chief of the journal Water History.
UPCOMING EVENTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

International Workshop on Inequality and Middle Class Development in Africa
Cape Town, 5-6 May 2016

The GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, in cooperation with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) and the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) at the University of Cape Town, invites submissions for a two-day workshop on Inequality and Middle Class Development in Africa.

The changing skylines of Africa’s capitals, the suits and ties of its dealmakers, the chauffeured cars, and the growing visibility of global brands in many of its capitals exemplify Africa’s good news growth story of the past decade. The one-sided image of the “old Africa” is making way for a more nuanced view that sees opportunity in countries that offer greater political stability and increased openness to investors from around the world than ever before. The continent’s rising middle class has emerged as a central protagonist in this narrative. Yet, when reading the reports by management consultants, investor advisory groups and some academic studies, it seems that the historic role played by the middle class in the developed North as the backbone of democracy and economic growth has frequently been superimposed to the African context without substantial knowledge about this emergent middle. Empirical evidence on which to substantiate these ideas remains scarce, not least because of severe data limitations and ambiguities in the understanding and measurement of this group. Critical voices have raised concerns about Africa’s rising inequality, which is rather slowing the number of poor moving into the ranks of a middle class.

Conference themes

Against the background of a renewed interest in the impact of the distribution of income and wealth on socioeconomic development, this workshop invites scholars and practitioners to deliberate on the understanding of middle class formation and segmentation and to discuss the potential of the middle class to foster inclusive growth and play a transformative socio-political role in their respective countries. In particular, the workshop will address the following overarching and interrelated themes:

1. **Measurement of social class and economic inequality**: approaches to defining and measuring the middle class within the African context.

2. **Economic development**: Economic behavior of the middle class and its effects on economic growth.

3. **Labor market**: the role of labor market characteristics and dynamics for income inequalities, social mobility and middle class formation.

4. **Political attitudes and behavior**: political thinking and engagement of the middle class and its role for democracy.

Other papers of relevance to inequality and middle class development are also welcome.

**Confirmed Speakers**

Two keynote lectures will be delivered by:

**PROF. MTHULI NCUBE** from the Blavatnik School of Government, at the University of Oxford. Prof. Ncube, a former Chief Economist and Vice President of the African Development Bank has published several influential books and articles on economic growth and policy, the emerging middle classes, financial markets, and regional integration and trade in Africa.

**PROF. STEPHAN KLASEN**, Head of Chair of Development Economics, and Head of Ibero-America Institute for Economic Research at the University of Göttingen. Prof.Klasen has published several leading articles mostly on issues of poverty, inequality, environment, and gender.
Call for Papers
BSPS Annual Conference
12-14 September 2016, University of Winchester

The 2016 BSPS Conference will be held at the University of Winchester, 12-14 September. All Conference sessions will be held on site, where Conference catering and high-standard accommodation will also be available at very reasonable rates. Booking forms will be available from early May, together with a provisional timetable.

There will be a full programme of simultaneous strand sessions of submitted papers. Proposals or abstracts for papers and posters are invited across the entire demographic and population studies spectrum. Presenters are requested to submit ongoing work with incomplete analyses and findings as posters rather than papers. Oral presentations should include results. For organisational purposes, strand organisers have been allocated to specific themes: email queries may be addressed to the strand or session organiser shown below. Submissions of both quantitative and qualitative papers are welcome.

Some sessions within strands have been suggested and these will be organised by the person named as session organiser, within an overall strand and in conjunction with the overall strand organiser. Sessions within strands are shown beneath the overall strand title.

Training sessions & workshops: Suggestions for and offers to organise would be very welcome.

THERE WILL BE TWO PLENARY SESSIONS ON THE THEME OF DEMOGRAPHY & EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY.

PAPERS ON POLICY ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS & EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY WOULD BE PARTICULARLY WELCOME IN 2016, ACROSS ALL STRANDS, & TO FIT WITH THE PLENARY THEME. BSPS ANTICIPATES EITHER SESSIONS WITHIN STRANDS OR COHESIVE SESSIONS ON THIS THEME.

Information updates on the Conference will be posted to the BSPS website as available. See: http://www.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/Researchcentresandgroups/BSPS/annualConference/Home.aspx

VI Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network
New Approaches to African Economic History: History, Methods and Interdisciplinarity
The University of Sussex, Brighton, UK
Friday 21 - Saturday 22 October 2016

How can different disciplines and methodological approaches contribute to understanding long-term African economic development? Traditionally, the historiography of Africa’s social and economic past has been shaped and enriched by a cross-fertilization of disciplines. Due to the lack of written records and the paucity of reliable quantitative evidence for a considerable part of the continent’s history, African economic historians engage in productive dialogue with historians, anthropologists, sociologists and economists. The conference will devote particular emphasis to papers and contributions that bring issues of methodology and interdisciplinarity to the fore.

Keynote speaker: Professor Paul Lovejoy (York University, Toronto, Canada).

Call for papers
The organising committee of the VI Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network (AEHN) launches a call for papers presenting frontier research in the field of African Economic
History, with particular attention to innovative methods for evaluating Africa’s social and economic development in historical and comparative perspectives, both at the micro and macro level. The committee also specifically encourages scholars from Africa to present their work.

The committee solicits both individual papers and proposals for sessions consisting of 3-4 papers. Session organisers and prospective chairs should send session titles along with the names and contact details of presenters, and titles and abstracts for each of the proposed papers.

Presenters should submit paper title and an abstract of no less than 500 words, or full papers.

**Paper and panel proposals are to be submitted to:** aehn2016@sussex.ac.uk

**Deadline for submissions: 15 May 2016**

Decisions on submissions can be expected at the end of May 2016.

**Local organising committee:**

Alexander Moradi, Felix Meier zu Selhausen, Gerardo Serra

Enquiries should be addressed to: aehn2016@sussex.ac.uk

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**Call for Papers**

‘OUT OF AFRICA’: A History of Business, FDI and Globalisation of African Enterprises

1st World Congress on Business History / University of Bergen, 2016.

The African continent is largely missing from debates in business history with numerous methodological and archival challenges. Yet recent headlines extoll how business is coming to Africa, with 3 of the 10 fastest growing global cities. A continent of 54 counties, it is home to a billion consumers. Bypassing the constraints of legacy infrastructure, half of the population are under the age of 15 and adopting new technology. With this growth, African enterprises have also been globalising. No longer can the continent be merely seen as a source of commodities or a recipient of aid, but rather a rapidly expanding market with African business champions meeting rising demands. This change had led to a greater focus on the internationalisation of enterprises, the role of foreign direct investment and the historical roots of African enterprises.

Yet African businesses have not operated in a vacuum but were shaped by the first wave of globalisation, decolonisation and 50 years of independence. This lends their histories to comparative case studies with globalisation from Asia and Latin America. With unique opportunities and challenges, African businesses have adapted to diverse geographic, political and institutional settings. Multinationals from Africa are less well-known, such as MTN (ICT), Standard Bank (Finance) or Dangote (Industrials), but so are small and medium sized enterprises expanding operations outside of home borders. These businesses offers unique political, cultural, ethnic and migrant narratives from which business history scholarship can draw.

The main assumption of this panel is that a historical exploration of enterprises “Out of Africa” can shed light on the past development path of business in Africa, as well as informing current and future African business leaders. These include, but are by no means limited to the deeper understanding of patterns of internationalisation, the impact of macroeconomic and political context on African FDI, patterns of adaptation, organisation and management of African firms, entrepreneurial qualities of African business leaders, the state in business development, business groups, the impact of inward FDI on African business, culture and ethnicity in African business, etc.
By bringing together business and economic historians of Africa, this panel seeks to strengthen the study of business history in Africa. Collaborating with new and existing scholars from the field, and a rich sample of case studies from across Africa, the panel aims to publish special issues on African business history in the global context.

Expected Participants:
1. Same as Co-ordinating Organisers.
3. Tetsushi Sonobe, National Graduate Research Institute for Policy Studies, Tokyo.

Call for Papers
Symposium: Global Histories of Taxation and State Finances Since the Late 19th Century
Basel (CH), December 1-3, 2016
Deadline for submitting proposals: May 31, 2016
Organization: Vanessa Ogle (University of Pennsylvania), in cooperation with the Institute for European Global Studies at the University of Basel, funded by the universities of Basel, Heidelberg, and Sydney

Taxation has wide-ranging implications for global as well as domestic orders, ranging from budgets and public finances to inequality, the social fabric of societies, and worldwide competition for corporate profits. Since the global financial crisis of 2008 in particular, taxation and the reform of tax systems have become talking points in many parts of the North Atlantic world. Tax reform is often said to be required for fostering a more attractive business climate through reducing the tax burden and thus increasing tax competitiveness. Other voices focus on government revenues in times of empty coffers and instead call for higher tax rates especially for top earners. Thomas Piketty and his Capital in the Twenty-First Century as well as the Occupy movement in the United States have galvanized attention on the connections between taxes and inequality. Outrage at the rise of the “One Percent” is accompanied by calls for shutting down tax havens available mostly to the super rich. Whether in the United States or Britain, however, multinationals such as Google and Apple successfully play the inversion game by splitting up into multiple units and reincorporating in lower-tax countries for the purpose of obtaining better tax conditions.

The current interest in taxation is welcome, but many of the issues raised more recently have long histories that deserve to be studied in their own right. This international symposium calls on historians and historically-minded sociologists, legal scholars, and political scientists with different geographical specializations to engage with the topic of taxation from a wide variety of angles. Contributions on histories of taxes and state finances beyond Europe and North America are explicitly encouraged. Commentators and session chairs will be drawn from the universities of Basel, Heidelberg, and Sydney as well as from the United States, Britain, and Switzerland. Currently, Patricia Clavin (Oxford University), Marc Flandreau (Graduate Institute Geneva/University of Pennsylvania), Madeleine Herren-Oesch (University of Basel), Monica Prasad (Northwestern University), Glenda Sluga (University of Sydney), Jacob Soll (University of Southern California), and Roland Wenzlhuemer (University of Heidelberg), have agreed to serve as chairs and commenters. While limited travel and accommodation support is available, interested presenters are encouraged to explore their own funding opportunities.

Possible contributions may address but are not limited to the following topics and questions:
- Acceptance of and support for high taxation levels throughout the 20th century
- Anti- or low-tax movements
- Taxation and inequality
- Transitions from colonial to post-colonial tax and revenue systems, from tariffs to income and other taxes
- Tax evasion, tax avoidance, tax havens
- “Tax density” and difficulties of collecting revenue and enforcing taxation
- Taxes and “social contracts” in authoritarian and dictatorial regimes

www.aehnetwork.org
- Multilateral, bilateral, and other efforts to combat tax avoidance
- Accounting standards and corporate/multinational tax avoidance
- “Race to the bottom” dynamics of global competition for corporate tax profits
- Historically different concepts for allocating business profits among tax jurisdictions: country-by-country reporting of taxes, worldwide income, etc.
- “Tax missions” to the non-Western world as part of dollar diplomacy and financial missions
- Restructuring fiscal systems in the third world as part of development and/or austerity politics, before and after the ‘Washington Consensus’
- Taxes vs. austerity
- Historically shifting attitudes towards deficits, taxation, and austerity: what are acceptable deficit levels, and how are deficits to be reduced?
- Alternative sources of state finances: government loans and bond issues

Scholars interested in presenting a paper at the symposium are invited to send a brief abstract of 300-500 words as well as a short biographical paragraph by May 31, 2016, to Vanessa Ogle at historiesoftaxation@gmail.com. For questions, please contact me at vogle@sas.upenn.edu.

OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Rowan University, History
Teaching Fellow in African History

Rowan University’s Psi Iota branch of Phi Alpha Theta (PAT), the national history honors society, is sponsoring a fellow-in-residence position in African history for the 2016-2017 academic year. The position is designed for an A.B.D. candidate finishing doctoral work but is also available to recent Ph.D.s. The Fellow must be prepared to teach early African history (to 1800) and one other upper division course in his/her area of specialty. Courses must be taught on the following schedule: Sub-Saharan Africa to 1800 in the Fall semester of 2016 and one course in the Spring of 2017. Depending upon circumstances, the Fellow may be able to teach an additional course in the Summer of 2017.

The Psi-Iota Fellow will receive an office with a computer, access to the University’s libraries and databases, secretarial support, a modest fund for research or travel related expenses, and a combination of salary and honorarium totaling at least $11,600. The Fellow’s compensation might reach $15,200, if the Fellow teaches in the Summer of 2017. During his/her time at Rowan, the Fellow will be expected to deliver a public lecture and an overview of his/her research for an audience of advanced undergraduates in history. Furthermore, he/she will have the opportunity to share a chapter or other in-progress research with faculty members in the History Department’s works-in-progress seminar. Fellows will be expected to interact with the Psi Iota branch of PAT at Rowan.

Applicants should send a curriculum vitae, sample syllabi or course outlines for proposed upper division courses, graduate school transcripts, one letter of recommendation, a list of at least two additional references, and any other supporting materials that the committee will find helpful. The committee will begin reviewing applications on 18 April 2016 and hopes to make a final decision by May 16. Candidates may accept this fellowship in conjunction with another fellowship so long as it does not interfere with this fellowship’s requirements. Applications may be submitted online at: www.rowan.edu/jobs. Please direct all inquiries to Kelly Duke Bryant, Associate Professor, Department of History, Rowan University, duke-bryant@rowan.edu

Rowan University is a comprehensive state-designated research institution with approximately 15,000 students. Its main campus is located in Glassboro, N.J., 20-miles southeast of Philadelphia, and it has a branch campus and medical school in Camden and a second medical school in nearby Stratford. Rowan is the second university in the country to offer M.D. and D.O. medical-degree
granting programs. The School of Osteopathic Medicine has a faculty practice plan that serves approximately 200,000 patients in Southern New Jersey. The institution is also home to the South Jersey Technology Park, which fosters the translation of applied research into commercial products and processes. Its business incubator also supports that mission. The University boasts seven colleges—William G. Rohrer College of Business, Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering and colleges of Communication and Creative Arts, Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Performing Arts, and Science and Mathematics.

The application must be submitted through our online application system.

**Deadline to apply:** 2 May 2016  

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**Sam Houston State University, History**  
**Visiting Assistant Professor**

The Department of History at Sam Houston State University seeks a Visiting Assistant Professor of History to teach courses in the history of Africa for the academic year 2016-17. Preference will be given to candidates whose scholarship and teaching demonstrate connections between the history of Sub-Saharan Africa and the history of the rest of the world. Course load is 4/4.

Ph.D. required by the time of appointment. Position will begin August 2016 and end May 2017.

Please go to [https://shsu.peopleadmin.com/](https://shsu.peopleadmin.com/) to view the job posting. To apply, upload a letter of application addressed to Dr. Thomas Cox. Include a CV, unofficial transcripts, a writing sample of chapter length, and two sample syllabi (one undergraduate, one graduate course). Submit the writing sample and syllabi as one file to the “Writing Sample” link. In addition, three letters of recommendation are to be sent to: historysearch@shsu.edu. Review of applications will begin on April 4, 2016 and continue until the position is filled.

Sam Houston State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan Employer and Smoke/Drug-Free Workplace. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, creed, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, veteran status, disability status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Sam Houston State University is an "at will" employer. Security sensitive positions at SHSU require background checks in accordance with Education Code 51.215. Sam Houston State University takes seriously the initiative to make the needed extra efforts to remedy the areas of underutilization in our Affirmative Action Plan.

**Deadline to apply:** 22 May 2016  
**Additional Information:** please see [http://shsu.peopleadmin.com/postings/14557](http://shsu.peopleadmin.com/postings/14557)

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**Ball State University, Department of History**  
**Visiting Assistant Professor in World and Sub-Saharan African History**

Visiting Assistant Professor in World and Sub-Saharan African history available August 19, 2016. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in the history of Sub-Saharan Africa and world and non-Western world civilization survey and upper division courses.

**Minimum qualifications:** ABD in history from an accredited college or university, with specialization in Sub-Saharan Africa; ability to teach the history of the West in the World and Non-Western Civilization survey courses as well as topical courses that address the major conflicts and issues in the history of Africa. Must have active research agenda in African history.
Ball State University is located in Muncie, Indiana, on an attractive campus 45 miles northeast of Indianapolis. Approximately 21,000 graduate and undergraduate students enroll in one of seven academic colleges that offer 187 undergraduate programs, 99 master’s programs, and 16 doctoral programs. Ball State aspires to be the model of the most student-centered and community-engaged of the 21st century public research universities, transforming entrepreneurial learners into impactful leaders – committed to improving the quality of life for all. The university offers an excellent benefits package, including health care and retirement plans, tuition assistance for employees and dependents, and generous time off with pay.

Electronic submission of application materials is preferred. Submit a letter of application, curriculum vitae, three letters of recommendation, copy of transcript for highest degree earned, and evaluations of teaching where available. Email application materials to mmgage2@bsu.edu or mail to Dr. Kevin Smith, Chairperson, Department of History, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306. Review of credentials will begin April 4, 2016 and will continue until the position is filled.

**Deadline to apply:** 19 June 2016

**Additional Information:** please visit [http://www.bsu.edu](http://www.bsu.edu)