

# AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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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 [aehtnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:aehtnetwork@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 [aehtnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:aehtnetwork@gmail.com) and we will include your news in our bi-monthly round up.

Best regards,

The African Economic History Network



## News and Announcements

The African Economic History Network, in association with the Department of History and Cultures at the University of Bologna announces a

### CALL FOR PAPERS

**Bologna 2018** | 13th meeting of the African Economic History Network

**"Transitions in African Economic History"**

12-13 October 2018  
University of Bologna – Italy

Papers on all aspects of African economic history are welcome, but preference will be given to those that pertain to the conference theme.

Abstracts of 500 words should be submitted to [aehn2018@unibo.it](mailto:aehn2018@unibo.it) no later than 15th May 2018.

A small number of bursaries will be available for graduate students and faculty from Africa. If applicable, please indicate this in your submission.



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA  
DIPARTIMENTO DI STORIA CULTURE CIVILTÀ



AEHN  
AFRICAN ECONOMIC  
HISTORY NETWORK

The meeting is supported by the PRIN Project 2015JXPLWF

### 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](mailto:Erik.Green@ekh.lu.se).

The latest working papers include:

Sumner La Croix, 2018. [“The KhoKhoi Population: A Review of Evidence and Two New Estimates”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 39

Prince Young Aboagye and Jutta Bolt, 2018. [“Economic Inequality in Ghana, 1891-1960”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 38

Katharine Frederick, 2018. [“A comparative analysis of East and West African cotton cloth production from the early modern to the post-colonial era”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 37

Emmanuel Akyeampong, 2017. [“African Socialism; or the Search for an Indigenous Model of Economic Development”](#), AEHN Working Paper No.36

# NEW ABSTRACTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

## Articles

### **Marlous van Waijenburg. Financing the African Colonial State: The Revenue Imperative and Forced Labor**

Although recent studies on African colonial tax systems have deepened our understanding of early fiscal capacity building efforts in the region, they have largely ignored the contributions from a widely used but *invisible* source of state revenue: that of labor contributions. Exploiting data on *corvée* systems in French Africa, this is the first article to make these in-kind taxes “visible” by estimating a lower bound of how much they augmented governments' revenue base. Revealing that labor taxes constituted in most places the largest component of early colonial budgets, I argue that studies on historical taxation need to make a greater effort to integrate this significant source of government revenue into their analysis.

Marlous van Waijenburg, 2018. [“Financing the African Colonial State: The Revenue Imperative and Forced Labor”](#), *The Journal of Economic History*, 78(1): 40-80.

### **Ewout Frankema, Jeffrey Williamson and Pieter Woltjer. An Economic Rational for the West African Scramble? The Commercial Transition and the Commodity Price Boom of 1835-1885**

We use a new trade dataset showing that nineteenth century sub-Saharan Africa experienced a terms of trade boom comparable to other parts of the “global periphery.” A sharp rise in export prices in the five decades before the scramble (1835–1885) was followed by an equally impressive decline during the colonial era. This study revises the view that the scramble for West Africa occurred when its major export markets were in decline and argues that the larger weight of West Africa in French imperial trade strengthened the rationale for French instead of British initiative in the conquest of the interior.

Ewout Frankema, Jeffrey Williamson and Pieter Woltjer, 2018. [“An Economic Rational for the West African Scramble? The Commercial Transition and the Commodity Price Boom of 1835-1885”](#), *The Journal of Economic History*, 78(1): 231-267.

### **Johan Fourie and Christie Swanepoel. Impending Ruin’ or ‘Remarkable Wealth’? The Role of Private Credit Markets in the 18th-Century Cape Colony.**

Credit markets develop hand in hand with a market economy. Pre-industrial credit markets, like credit (and capital) markets today, developed in order to smooth consumption, ease trade, and enable long-term investment. Yet in the 18th-century Cape Colony, a Dutch settlement at the southern tip of Africa, commentators of the day were sceptical about what an active credit market could contribute to the economy: for them, borrowing was a sure sign of poverty. Historians have expressed the same view. We present a different picture of the Cape Colony. We use 4,160 probate inventories, listing 12,637 credit transactions and 12,580 debt transactions, to show that the main reason for borrowing was long-term capital investment in land through bonds, and that a particular driver of the Colony’s

extensive use of credit was slave ownership. We also show that those who benefited from the Colony's thriving credit market were rich, not poor.

Johan Fourie and Christie Swanepoel, 2018. [“Impending Ruin’ or ‘Remarkable Wealth’? The Role of Private Credit Markets in the 18th-Century Cape Colony”](#). *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 44(1): 7-25.

### **Jannie Roussouw. Politics and Policies: determinants of South Africa's monetary policy problems in the 1980's.**

The interim and final reports of the DeKock Commission (Republic of South Africa 1985) brought monetary policy in South Africa closer to the international consensus of the 1980s, where explicit nominal anchors supporting a policy commitment were widely shared principles. A nominal anchor for monetary policy was introduced for the first time in South Africa in 1986. Despite the adoption of a nominal anchor, the 1980s were characterized by sustained high inflation and financial instability. This paper assesses the role of politics and policies in the period running up to and following the announcement of a nominal monetary policy anchor for South Africa. It is shown that all politics and policies contributed to financial instability and to sustained inflation in the 1980s.

Jannie Roussouw, 2018. [“Politics and Policies: determinants of South Africa's monetary policy problems in the 1980's”](#). *Economic History of Developing Regions*, 33: 51-68.

## **Working Papers**

### **Sumner La Croix. The KhoKhoi Population: A Review of Evidence and Two New Estimates.**

Fourie and Green construct estimates of the Khoikhoi population over the 1652-1780 period using benchmarks for the initial and terminal Khoi populations and benchmarks for the punctuated population declines from smallpox epidemics in 1713 and 1755. I review the evidence underlying each of the four population benchmarks and argue for a revised 1780 benchmark. Qualitative evidence also points to a higher rate of population decline between 1652 and 1723 and a smaller rate of decline between 1723 and 1780. Using the Fourie-Green methodology and adopting 3 of their 4 population benchmarks, I develop two revised estimates of the Khoi population to supplement the original Fourie and Green estimates.

Sumner La Croix, 2018. [“The KhoKhoi Population: A Review of Evidence and Two New Estimates”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 39

### **Prince Young Aboagye and Jutta Bolt. Economic Inequality in Ghana, 1891-1960.**

This paper contributes to a growing literature on understanding drivers of pre-industrial inequality by constructing social tables for colonial Ghana. Ghana is generally perceived as fairly equal in terms of income distribution, both historically and today. We show, however, that income inequality rose rapidly during the colonial period, to inequality levels comparable to many contemporary African



countries. We argue that the introduction and expansion of cocoa cultivation at the end of the 19th century in the forest belt of the country marked the most important development that shaped both national and regional inequality trends. Initial land abundance in the forest area provided opportunities for its population to engage in cocoa growing which increased the overall standards of living in the forest area. Areas where soil quality did not favour cocoa growing fell behind in terms of living standards, resulting in increasing national income inequalities from the 1930s onwards. Due to high set up costs of cocoa farms and increasingly polarized access to economic resources, only a wealthy minority was able to establish substantial cocoa farms, gaining much more than other social classes. The capital intensity of the export crop along with access to economic resources such as land seems an important factor driving inequality trends in Africa.

Prince Young Aboagye and Jutta Bolt, 2018. [“Economic Inequality in Ghana, 1891-1960”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 38

### **Katharine Frederick. A comparative analysis of East and West African cotton cloth production from the early modern to the post-colonial era**

This article examines why “traditional” cotton textiles industries tended to decline in southern and central East Africa during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries while cloth production persisted in much of northern East Africa and West Africa – where per-capita cloth imports were significantly higher – well into the post-colonial period. Comparative analysis reveals that relatively resilient industries tended to arise and persist where textile traditions were adopted comparatively early, allowing industries and demand for domestic cloth to develop several centuries before global integration and colonization; in areas with relatively dense populations and access to large markets; where centralized states developed and pre-colonial institutions helped encourage industrial growth; where local endowments and geography favored income-enhancing cash-crop cultivation; and where nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial intervention and fiscal institutions were comparatively less disruptive to existing socio-economic organization.

Katharine Frederick, 2018. [“A comparative analysis of East and West African cotton cloth production from the early modern to the post-colonial era”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 37

### **Emmanuel Akyeampong. African Socialism; or the Search for an Indigenous Model of Economic Development**

Ralph Austen in African Economic History (1987) noted how few African countries explicitly choose capitalism on independence, and for those who did it was a default model or a residual pattern. ‘African socialism’ was popular in the early decades of independence and pursued by several countries, including Ghana, Guinea, Senegal and Tanzania, the cases considered in this paper. The term had multiple meanings, and its advocates were quick to stress that they were not communist, and some said they were not even Marxist. This paper explores the argument that African socialism was a search for an indigenous model of economic development for a generation that was justifiably ambivalent about capitalism, but wary of being put in the communist camp in the Cold War era. Importantly, advocates of African socialism often proposed bold and transformative visions for their countries. These visions might be worth revisiting, devoid of the paradigm of socialism.

Emmanuel Akyeampong, 2017. [“African Socialism; or the Search for an Indigenous Model of Economic Development”](#), *AEHN Working Paper* No.36

**Jeanne Cilliers and Martine Mariotti. The Shaping of a Settler Fertility Transition: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century South African Demographic History Reconsidered.**

Using South African Families (SAF), a new database of settler genealogies, we provide the first comprehensive analysis of women’s fertility in settler South Africa between 1700 and 1900. Differences in parity rates across geographic regions suggest couples knew how to limit fertility prior to the global onset of the first fertility transition. We date the start of South Africa’s fertility transition to cohorts born in the 1850s, having children from the 1870s. This timing is similar to other settler communities and earlier than many European countries despite somewhat different economic and social circumstances.

Jeanne Cilliers and Martine Mariotti, 2018. [“The Shaping of a Settler Fertility Transition: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century South African Demographic History Reconsidered.”](#)

**Mduduzi Biyase. Education and economic growth in Cape and Natal colonies: learning from history.**

This paper uses archival data from colonial South Africa over the 1859–1910 period to investigate the impact of education on economic growth. The analysis applies fixed effect to account for unobserved colony-level heterogeneity and minimise the omitted variable bias. It also employs fixed effects two-stage least squares (FE-2SLS) estimator to account for a possible endogeneity bias due to reverse causation between economic growth and education or other forms of endogeneity problem. The results suggest that levels of education (proxied by spending on education) have a robust positive impact on economic growth. Results are robust to addressing the potential reverse causality of education influencing economic growth and using alternative measures of education (proxied by enrolment rate).

Mduduzi Biyase, 2018. [“Education and economic growth in Cape and Natal colonies: learning from history”](#).

**Stan du Plessis and Sophia du Plessis. Which Comes First: Good Governance or Prosperity? A Historical Experiment from the South African Republic and the Orange Free State**

Two neighbouring republics, with a common history and culture, followed very different paths of development in the second half of the nineteenth century. Extraordinary mineral wealth was discovered during this period in the South African Republic (ZAR), the neighbour where political and economic stability was fragile compared with the Republic of the Orange Free State (OFS). We connect these divergent development paths to the literature on the resource curse, especially the recent literature on the conditional resource curse where the quality of the institutional structure plays a crucial role in the outcomes of a large resource discovery. By introducing a new objective measure for the quality of institutions, namely the accuracy of boundaries on maps, we provide evidence of the

institutional quality in the ZAR prior to the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand. The statistical technique that we use, Procrustes analysis, is an innovation in economic analysis. The evidence supports Acemoglu and Robinson's account of the development path in the ZAR, and the later Union of South Africa, as compromised by the conditional resource curse.

Stan du Plessis and Sophia du Plessis, 2018. ["Which Comes First: Good Governance or Prosperity? A Historical Experiment from the South African Republic and the Orange Free State"](#), *Stellenbosch Working Paper Series No. WP02/2018*.





# UPCOMING EVENTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

## YSI Regional Convening, Harare Zimbabwe, 16-18 August

- **Deadline for paper submissions** : 20 May 2018 (Submit to the Young Scholars Directory)

Young Scholars based in Africa are invited to convene in Harare, Zimbabwe. The event serves to strengthen the African network of new economic thinkers pursuing a new economic paradigm. Attendees will be able to attend the annual conference of the Zimbabwe Historical Association in the same trip.

Themes covered will include:

1. African Economies in Transition
2. New Approaches to African Economic History
3. Revisiting and Confronting the Challenges of African Development
4. Rethinking Cooperatives and the African Agenda
5. The Current Challenges of a Complex Reality
6. A Critical Engagement with Financial Stability in Africa
7. The Gender Division of Labour; Diversity and Change
8. Inequality in Africa
9. Rethinking Political Economy: the State & Pluralist Economics Teaching
10. Perspectives on the Challenges for Sustainable Development in Africa

For more information visit <https://www.ineteconomics.org/events/ysi-africa-convening-1>

## Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association, in Montreal, Canada, September 7-9, 2018.

- **Deadline for Poster Submissions:** 21 May 2018
- **Deadline for Dissertation Submissions:** 15 May 2018 (The dissertation session, convened by Carola Frydman and Mark Koyama will honor six dissertations completed during the 2017-2018 academic year.)

The theme for EHA 2018 is “‘From Plague, Famine, and War, Save us, O Lord’ Shocks and Disasters in Economic History”. The age-old prayer refers to disasters that have blighted lives throughout history. The theme is an invitation for papers on the broader economic-historical aspects of such crises—environmental, climatic, humanitarian, economic, and other. Plagues and famines kill few nowadays, and deaths from state-based conflicts are also in decline. But they still matter, not least because they may well threaten again as global warming intensifies. The theme of the 2018 meetings embraces topics such as the economic causes and consequences of wars and of other disasters; comparative and interdisciplinary analyses of famines and plagues from classical antiquity to modern times; analyses of the institutions that attempted to counter them; of their proximate and remoter causes (e.g. climate change); of their changing incidence over time; of the welfare gains from their

eradication; and of their short- and long-run economic, demographic, and political consequences. Proposals on macroeconomic and financial crises and, indeed, on any other topic, are also welcome.

Graduate students are encouraged to attend the meeting. The association offers subsidies for travel, hotel, registration, and meals, including a special graduate student dinner. The Allan Nevins and Alexander Gerschenkron prizes will be awarded to the best dissertations on North American and non-North American topics respectively.

For more information visit <http://eh.net/eha/economic-history-association-2018-annual-meeting/>

### **13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the African Economic History Network in Bologna, Italy, October 12-13 2018**

- **Deadline for Paper Submissions:** 15 May 2018 (abstracts of 500 words should be submitted to [aehn2018@unibo.it](mailto:aehn2018@unibo.it)).

Papers on all aspects of African Economic History are welcome but preference will be given to those which pertain to the conference theme: "Transitions in African Economic History".

Bursaries are available for graduate students and faculty from Africa. If necessary please indicate this on your submission slip.

For more information visit the network website.

### **"Connecting the local and the global in nineteenth century Southern and Central Africa" UFS Workshop, Bloemfontein, South Africa, 10-12 October 2018**

During the last three decades of the long nineteenth century, globalisation in Southern and Central Africa manifested itself in various ways in different places and times. Much attention has hitherto been paid to South Africa, and in particular the Transvaal, where the discovery of minerals brought with it the twin challenges of accelerated modernisation and globalisation. Yet, the forces at play reverberated much further than the gold and diamond mines of Johannesburg and Kimberley.

Across the region, people, animals, goods and capital were drawn together through intricate connections that reached beyond the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Networks emerged that were both local and transnational, formal and informal, between individuals and groups, as well as companies, states and institutions – all within a society undergoing rapid transformation. It is this shifting balance of local and global forces that we seek to elucidate.

This workshop forms the first part of a wider, British Academy funded project that is investigating the relationship between capital and the state in the late-nineteenth century Transvaal. The aim of the project is to trace the networks that converged around the state, which sought to seize upon the opportunities for influence and patronage presented by the sudden influx of wealth.

In order to understand and contextualise the process in the Transvaal, it is imperative to understand the global forces at play, as well as their wider regional implications. For this reason we seek to explore a wide range of themes in a workshop that draws together the local and the global perspectives. It is an opportunity to examine broader transnational connections and portals of globalisation, and the varied experiences it brought from the Cape to the Congo. The aim is to stimulate conversation and debate, and to enhance our understanding of late-nineteenth century Southern and Central Africa.

This workshop is sponsored by a British Academy Newton Advanced Fellowship, and is hosted by the International Studies Group at the University of the Free State. It will take place in Bloemfontein from 10-12 October, 2018. Contributions will be taken up into an edited volume on the connected history of Southern and Central Africa in a global perspective. Please contact Lindie Koorts ([koorts.lindie@gmail.com](mailto:koorts.lindie@gmail.com)) to confirm attendance by 31 May 2018.



# OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

## **Tufts University** **African History, History Department** **Lecturer**

The Department of History at Tufts University is seeking a part-time lecturer to teach undergraduate survey courses in African history for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. Candidates should be able to teach a two-part survey on the history of Africa and contribute one upper-level course or seminar. We invite candidates who focus on any subject or any geographic area except North Africa and Francophone West Africa to apply.

Qualifications: A Ph.D. in African History/Studies and strong college-level teaching experience are preferred; ABDs will be considered.

Application instructions: All applications must be submitted via Interfolio at <https://apply.interfolio.com/48651>. Please submit a letter of application, C.V., a short description and syllabus of the proposed courses, and have three recommendation letters uploaded directly to Interfolio by your recommenders.

For questions about the position, please contact department administrator Annette Lazzara at [Annette.lazzara@tufts.edu](mailto:Annette.lazzara@tufts.edu).

Review of applications begins immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

## **University of California – San Diego** **Temporary Lecturer, Economics**

The Economics Department at UC San Diego is committed to building an excellent and diverse faculty, staff, and student body, and invites applications from candidates whose experience has prepared them to contribute to our commitment. The Department invites applications for one or more Lecturer positions. The Department is looking primarily for Lecturers in macroeconomics and econometrics, although applications in any area will be accepted. Appointments will likely be part-time, though possibly full time, from one quarter up to one year's duration, for the 2018/19 Academic Year.

Candidates are required to have a Bachelor's degree in economics or a related field. Preferred candidates will have a Ph.D. in economics or a related field, prior university level teaching experience, experience managing large classrooms (100-300 students), outstanding teaching evaluations and demonstrate strong or potential contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the context of a large public university.

**Additional Information:** <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/apply/JPF01521>

**Deadline:** 30 June 2018

