

AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #40 JANUARY, 2019

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.

In this issue:

1. Network News and Announcements
2. New Abstracts in African Economic History
 - 4 New Journal Articles
 - 6 New Working Papers
3. Upcoming Events in African Economic History
 - 3 Upcoming Conferences
 - 1 New Lecture Series
4. Opportunities in African Economic History
 - 1 Vacancy

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 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 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.

The latest working papers include:

Calmut Links, Johan Fourie and Erik Green, 2018. [“Was Slavery a Flexible Form of Labour?: Division of Labour and Location Specific Skills on the Eastern Cape Frontier”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 42.

Jens Andersson, 2018. [“Tax Stabilisation, Trade and Political Transitions in Francophone West Africa over 120 years”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 41

Jutta Bolt and Leigh Gardner. [“Tax Compliance under Indirect Rule in British Africa”](#), AEHN Working Paper No.40

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

African voices at the World Economic History Conference



One Question | 2018 World Economic History Congress at MIT

680 views

3 0 SHARE SAVE ...

For more on the proceeding visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAkbwqbRfRU>.

NEW ABSTRACTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Articles

Denis Cogneau. [The Economic History of Africa: Renaissance or False Dawn.](#)

Though it is currently benefiting from a renewal of interest, the economic history of Africa raises intense methodological controversies that are echoed in two books recently published by Morten Jerven, *Poor Numbers* and *Africa: Why Economists Get It Wrong*. A large proportion of these controversies relate more generally to the differences between economists and historians, at least in terms of their dominant practices. In its quest for the institutional “fundamentals” of economic development, much research in this field is content to work with a summary and imperfect base of data, an approach that Jerven is right to criticize. Analyses often suffer from an insufficient knowledge of social contexts, and compress historical time between a “before” and a “now.” They also rely on debatable statistical assumptions. Nevertheless, though extant archives present limitations that are both qualitative (the sources are predominantly colonial) and quantitative, a modest renaissance remains a possibility and would offer more space for better controlled comparative analyses.

Denis Cogneau, 2018. [“The Economic History of Africa: Renaissance or False Dawn”](#), *Les Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 71(4): 539-556.

Boris Samuel. [Studying Africa’s Large Numbers.](#)

Morten Jerven's work offers a historical perspective on the techniques used by national administrations and international organizations to quantify and analyze the growth of African economies. In his view, the work of statisticians and economists has largely failed to account for national economic and social realities since the beginning of the structural adjustment period. The informalization of economies, the weakness of statistical institutions, and the lack of methodological rigor among international experts have led to the production of statistical fictions. Jerven's analysis calls into question the usual narratives produced by quantitative economic history, such as that of an African economic failure since 1960. It also opens a dialogue with the sociology of quantification, highlighting cases where growth calculations appear arbitrary. However, his methodology suffers from a number of weaknesses. While his earliest works were based on detailed national case studies, Jerven's recent analyses have focused on the critique of continent-wide discourses, in particular international comparisons and econometric studies of growth. His work has thus moved away from a careful ethnography of numbers toward a focus on the denunciation of global practices. This shift prevents the author from making precise reflections on the various roles of numbers in African societies, the multiple positions and modes of action that quantification engages, or the specific historical trajectories which calculations of African growth are supposed to represent.

Boris Samuel, 2018. [“Studying Africa’s Large Numbers”](#), *Les Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 71(4):557-579.

Rebecca Simson. Africa's clientelist budget policies revisited: public expenditure and employment in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, 1960–2010.

What can be learned about policy prioritization in Africa by examining long-run trends in public expenditure and employment? Many have contended that Africa's post-colonial leaders pursued economically unproductive budget policies that prioritized the growth of their patronage networks over socially beneficial spending, resulting in bloated payrolls, persistent deficits, and a large rent-seeking public service. Using a purpose-built dataset of annual public expenditure and employment series from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda for 1960–2010 against which to test these assumptions, this article questions whether there was anything exceptional about the growth or composition of East Africa's post-independence expenditure. All three states grew and contracted in roughly the same periods as other regions of the world, although their contraction after 1980 was particularly marked. Industrial policy and capital investments influenced budget priorities in the early independence era, while military expenditure and debt service payments escalated in the late 1970s. The government wage bill, meanwhile, fell as a proportion of total spending over the same period. To finance employment growth while the wage bill contracted, governments allowed real wages to plummet in the 1970s–90s. In light of these external constraints and legacies, this article questions whether a budget unencumbered by patronage would have looked very different.

Rebecca Simson, 2018. [“Africa's clientelist budget policies revisited: public expenditure and employment in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, 1960–2010”](#), *The Economic History Review*, published 16 December 2018.

Federico Tadei. The long-term effects of extractive institutions : evidence from trade policies in colonial French Africa.

Despite having convincingly linked colonial extractive institutions to African current poverty, the literature remains unclear about which exact institutions are to blame. To address this research question, in this paper I identify trade policies as one of the main components of colonial extraction by showing their long-term effects on African economic growth. By using the gap between prices paid to African producers in the French colonies and competitive prices as a measure of rent extraction via trade monopsonies, I find a negative correlation between such price gaps and current development. This correlation is not driven by differences in geographic characteristics or national institutions. Moreover, it cannot be explained by the selection of initially poorer places into higher colonial extraction. The evidence suggests that trade monopsonies affected subsequent growth by reducing development in rural areas and that these effects persisted for a long time after independence.

Federico Tadei, 2018. [“The long-term effects of extractive institutions : evidence from trade policies in colonial French Africa”](#), *Economic History of Developing Regions*, 33(3):183-208.

Working Papers

Calmut Links, Johan Fourie and Erik Green. Was Slavery a Flexible Form of Labour?: Division of Labour and Location Specific Skills on the Eastern Cape Frontier.

The flexibility of slave labour as an economic institution has often been assumed as a given. In general, some capital investment is necessary to retrain novice slaves but essentially they could be substituted for any other form of labour. This paper refutes the claim of the flexibility of slave labour through employing a longitudinal study for the Graaff-Reinet region of the Cape colony. We calculate Hicksian elasticity of complementarity coefficients for each year of a 21-year combination of cross-sectional tax datasets (1805-28) in order to test whether slave labour was substitutable with other forms of labour. We find that Khoe, family and slave labour are not substitutable over the period of the study. This lends credence to the finding that slave and settler family labour were two different inputs in the agricultural production process. Indigenous Khoe and slave labour also remain complements throughout the period of study even when Khoe labour becomes scarce after the frontier conflicts, confirming the notion that slave labour at Graaff-Reinet was not a flexible labour source. We argue that the lack of substitutability of slave labour was due to the need of the settlers to acquire labour with location-specific skills such as the indigenous Khoe.

Calmut Links, Johan Fourie and Erik Green, 2018. [“Was Slavery a Flexible Form of Labour?: Division of Labour and Location Specific Skills on the Eastern Cape Frontier”](#), AEHN Working Paper No. 42.

Stelious Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou. Historical Legacies and African Development.

As Africa's role on the global stage is rising, so does the need to understand the shadow of history on the continent's economy and polity. We discuss recent works that shed light on Africa's colonial and precolonial legacies. The emerging corpus is remarkably interdisciplinary. Archives, ethnographic materials, georeferenced censuses, surveys, and satellite imagery are some of the sources often combined to test influential conjectures put forward in African historiography. Exploiting within-country variation and employing credible, albeit mostly local, identification techniques, this recent literature has uncovered strong evidence of historical continuity as well as instances of rupture in the evolution of the African economy. The exposition proceeds in reverse chronological order. Starting from the colonial period, which has been linked to almost all of Africa's post-independence maladies, we first review works that uncover the lasting legacies of colonial investments in infrastructure and human capital and quantify the role of various extractive institutions, such as indirect rule and oppression associated with concessionary agreements. Second, we discuss the long-lasting impact of the "Scramble for Africa" which led to ethnic partitioning and the creation of artificial modern states. Third, we cover studies on the multi-faceted legacy of the slave trades. Fourth, we analyze the contemporary role of various precolonial, ethnic-specific, institutional and social traits, such as political centralization. We conclude by offering some thoughts on what we view as open questions.

Stelious Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou, 2018. [“Historical Legacies and African Development”](#), NBER Working Paper, No. 25278.

Sédi-Anne Boukaka, Giulia Mancini and Giovanni Vecchi. Poverty and Inequality in Francophone Africa, 1960's-2010's.

The paper provides first generation estimates of poverty and inequality rates for three countries in francophone Africa – Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon – in the aftermath of independence. Sources – a large collection of historical household budgets – are new, as is the method that allows to connect historical sources to modern household budget surveys, and to deliver nationally representative estimates. The second part of the paper identifies the trend of poverty and inequality in Côte d'Ivoire for the years 1965-2015; we find that mean income growth failed to reduce poverty during the fifteen years of economic boom post-independence (1965-1979) because of increasing inequality. Conversely, in the following period (1979-2015) poverty changes are mostly guided by the evolution of growth.

Sédi-Anne Boukaka, Giulia Mancini and Giovanni Vecchi, 2019. [“Poverty and Inequality in Francophone Africa”](#), 1960's-2010's, HHB Working Papers Series, No. 16.

S.M. Karimou. Impact of agricultural output on economic growth in West Africa: Case of Benin.

The aim of this study is to analyse the impact of agricultural output on economic growth in West Africa using the case of Benin. Time series data covering the period of 1961 to 2014 were used. The data were analysed through a Vector Error Correction Model (VECM). The results reveal that there is a long run, or equilibrium, relationship between agricultural output, industrial output, capital and GDP. The error correction model indicates that 21.6 percent of the discrepancy between long run and short run GDP is corrected within a year. The variance decomposition shows that the largest contribution to shocks in GDP is its feedback shocks. The contribution of agricultural output to shocks in GDP is less than 2% for the first three year period and about 6% for the ten year period. Capital contribution to shocks in GDP is about 3% for the first three years and more than 15% for the ten year period. Hence, apart from feedback and capital shocks, GDP is most influenced by agricultural output. Therefore, capital formation is primordial to economic growth in Benin but the economic activity upon which capital should be primarily invested is agricultural production.

S.M. Karimou, 2018. [“Impact of agricultural output on economic growth in West Africa: Case of Benin”](#), International Association of Agricultural Economists Conference Paper.

Rim Mouelhi and Monia Ghazali. Structural Transformation in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia: Patterns, Drivers and Constraint.

This paper conducts an analysis of the structural transformation in three MENA countries, Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt over a long time span (1960-2010). We examine labor productivity evolution and structural change (SC) contribution to productivity growth over different sub-periods. We analyze the contribution of the different economic sectors to the aggregate SC in the three countries. An econometric analysis is also performed to identify the main factors underlying the intensity and the pattern of structural change. Results suggest that the three countries initiated and achieved some

progress in the structural transformation over the 1970's, 1980's and early 1990's. However, this process has stagnated at low levels of income and has remained unfinished. Deindustrialization occurred at an early stage of development in the three countries, in contrast to what has been noticed in developed and emergent countries.

Rim Mouelhi and Monia Ghazali, 2018. [“Structural Transformation in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia: Patterns, Drivers and Constraint”](#), Economic Research Forum Working Paper no. 1231.

Thomas A. Koelble. The politics of violence and populism in post-colonial democracy: The role of political society in South Africa.

This paper argues that current levels of violence and populism in post-colonial spaces such as South Africa are a consequence of a socio-history of violent dispossession, exploitation and impoverishment and is perpetuated by the continuation of the socio-economic and political conditions rooted in that history of exceptional violence, inequality and injustice. A switch in the political system does not reduce violence by itself. The disposition towards violence can only be shifted by a fundamental shift away from the economics and politics of the apartheid era. Since such a shift is unlikely to occur under current conditions, the perpetuation of violence and populist politics are likely to remain key features and constitutive elements of post-apartheid democracy.

Thomas A. Koelble, 2018. [“The politics of violence and populism in post-colonial democracy: The role of political society in South Africa”](#), Discussion Papers, Research Unit: Democracy and Democratization no. SP V 2018-102.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Conferences

The 3rd European Society of Historical Demography Conference, Pécs, Hungary 26-29 June, 2019

The third conference of the ESHD will be held at the University of Pécs, Southern Hungary. The European Society of Historical Demography (ESHG), the Council of ESHD, Hungarian Demographic Research Institute, the Foundation for Demographic Research, and the University of Pécs as the organizers of the conference have the pleasure to invite you to join the event in Pécs, Hungary, on 26- 29 June, 2019.

Paper submissions closed but additional attendance is welcome.

The Economic History Society Annual Conference, Queen's University Belfast 5-7 April, 2019

Registration, sessions, and meetings will all be located on campus. The Saturday reception and dinner will be in the Titanic Museum. Note that the registration fee includes the Saturday reception and a tour of the Titanic Museum, but not the Saturday dinner which must be booked via the online booking facility.

Registration is currently open. It will close close 1 week prior to the conference (i.e. 29 March 2019).

For more information visit <http://www.ehs.org.uk/events/annual-conference.html>.

Digital Humanities Workshop, The Perspective of Africa Lorentz Centre Leiden, 1-5 July 2019

In 2019 the ADHO Digital Humanities conference will take place from 9-12 July in Utrecht, The Netherlands. In the week before DH2019, i.e. 1-5 July 2019, the Lorentz Center in Leiden (also The Netherlands) will host a satellite workshop aimed at the articulation of the specific developments in the field of DH that are taking shape in Africa and their potential to enhance the global DH agenda. In addition, attention will be given to capacity building and the planning of initiatives along the lines of 'science4development'. The programme will include introductions into the infrastructural support for DH and the most widely used data analysis methods with the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Who can apply

The workshop will welcome students and early-career scholars from the African continent for a week of lectures, tutorials, presentations, networking and debate. The selected participants are expected to attend DH2019 in Utrecht as well.

Travel bursaries

Grants to cover the costs for travel and accommodation during the Lorentz workshop and DH2019, plus the conference fee for DH2019 can be applied for.

How to apply

Applicants are expected to prepare/collect the following:

- curriculum vitae, including contact details (max 1 page);
- letter of motivation (700-1000 words);
- letter of support from their supervisor (max 1 page);
- statement on the estimated height of the financial contribution by the participant and/or their institute.

(These four elements are to be submitted as one PDF-file.)

In their motivation letter applicants should indicate:

- their research interests and/or current planned research;
- their digital skills and the DH competences they would like to develop and/or to improve
- their earlier involvement in DH events (workshops, etc.) as a participant or otherwise.

Details on how to submit an application can be found on the workshop website: <https://dhafrica.blog/home/how-to-apply/>

Important dates

Deadline for applications: 31 January 2019

Notification of acceptance: 13 February 2019

Submission of participants' profiles: 1 June 2019

Seminar Series

African Economic History Series, Cambridge

Lent Term 2019

Time: alternate Tuesdays, 5-7 pm; Venue: Audit Room, King's College.

Convenors: Gareth Austin and Bronwen Everill.

29 January: A. G. Hopkins (Cambridge), 'Approaching a 2nd Edition of An Economic History of West Africa'

12 February: Stephanie Decker (Aston University), 'The historical roots of entrepreneurial growth aspirations in Africa'

26 February: Benedetta Rossi (University of Birmingham), 'Struggles over slavery, struggles over power, Africa 1926-1946'

12 March: Ushehwedu Kufakurinani (University of Zimbabwe), 'Gender and the Colonial Labour Market, 1890-1980'

OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

**Post-doctoral fellow in Economic History / Demography
Lund University**

Type of employment: Limit of tenure, two years.

Extent: 100 % Location: Department of Economic History, Lund First day of employment: January 1, 2019 or by appointment. The holder of the position will be affiliated with the Centre for Economic Demography.

Subject area

Economic History and Demography

Job assignments

The holder will work in the research program The Landskrona Population Study, with demographic analyses of longitudinal individual-level data during the period 1900-2010. The program is based on socioeconomic and demographic micro data, with information on various demographic outcomes, occupation and income for about 350,000 unique individuals in the city of Landskrona and surrounding rural areas. Work tasks involve empirical analyses of different demographic processes (health and mortality, gender and family, socioeconomic stratification and mobility) including data management, statistical analysis, and writing academic papers for publication, independently and in collaboration with other members of the research team. The post-doctoral fellow should be willing to interact with students and to participate actively in the common activities at the Centre for Economic Demography. The position may involve a limited amount (max 20%) of teaching and/or supervision of Bachelor and Master's Theses.

The Rise and Fall of the Industrial City: The Landskrona Population Study

The aim of this research program is to analyze long-term demographic processes connected to industrialization, modern economic growth and the profound societal transformation of the 20th century. These changes have completely altered living conditions across the developed world, not only in terms of nutrition, consumption and overall quality of life, but also in loosening many of the demographic constraints that dominated people's lives for so long. The broad outline of these processes is well known through research at the macro level but we still know very little about the micro-level foundations, which is of great value to fully understand and explain the processes. Within the Landskrona Population Study (LPS) we study these vital economic and demographic changes in Sweden through the lens of an industrial city which has experienced this transformation.

The LPS is based on a unique data infrastructure, the Scanian Economic-Demographic Database, containing economic and demographic longitudinal data at the individual level for the full 20th century (ca 350,000 individuals). It focuses on four fundamental and interrelated economic-demographic processes: (1) Inequality in health and mortality, (2) Changing family patterns and gender relations, (3) Social and economic mobility, and (4) Immigration and integration.

Eligibility

To be qualified for employment as post-doctoral fellow, an individual must hold a PhD or an international degree equivalent in Economic History or related discipline (e.g. Economics, Sociology, Economic Geography, History), awarded no more than three years ago (unless the applicant has been on parental leave or leave due to illness). Applications will also be accepted from persons who have not yet completed their PhD, but this condition must be satisfied at the time of employment.

Basis of Assessment

Scholarly proficiency is the main requirement for employment.

The holder of the position should be competent and experienced enough to be able to carry out independent research, using state-of-the-art econometric models and demographic methods. Experience in working with historical population databases is a merit.

For appointment, the candidate must have demonstrated a high degree of research expertise as manifested in the quality of the PhD dissertation and other publications. Documented skills in quantitative analysis and data management are required. The main software used in the research program is STATA, and high-level skills in using this software is a merit. We also look for high-level communicative skills, good time management, and the ability to interact with the research community and building networks.

In addition to the above, the following set of criteria will be applied in the assessment of candidates:

- international experience;
- other results and distinctions which attest to the applicant's ability to do research;
- ability to engage and inform society at large about research.

The evaluation will take personal qualities, such as academic independence, willingness to collaborate, and communication skills, into consideration.

Applications Should Be Written In English And Must Include

Cover letter, Curriculum Vitae, Research plan where the applicant presents his/her own ideas for research to be conducted. Publications including publication list, Certificates, references, etc.

For more information contact martin.dribe@ekh.lu.se