



African Economic History Newsletter

Issue #53, February 2022

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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If you want to publicize your own research, events or organize a panel for an upcoming conference, please send a message to aehtnetwork@gmail.com and I will include your news in our quarterly round up.

Best regards,

Johan Fourie
on behalf of the African Economic History Network

News and Announcements

CALL FOR PAPERS!

**15th Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network (AEHN)
Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC), October 13-14, 2022**

Deadline for sending abstracts: March 30, 2022

The African Economic History Network (AEHN), in association with the Research Institute of Text Analysis and Applications (IATEXT) and the Faculty of Geography and History at ULPGC, announce a Call for Papers for the 15th Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network (<https://iatext.ulpgc.es/en/AEHN2022>).

The conference theme is “Crossroads in African Economic History”. The Canary Islands being at a geographic crossroads between Africa, Europe and America has a long tradition for intercontinental exchange. In the frame of this conference, we hope it will become a place for encounters and exchanges of ideas, approaches (including international comparative approaches), methods and sources.



ULPGC
Universidad de
Las Palmas de
Gran Canaria

The conference will be held on 13-14 October 2022 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain. The plan is to organize the meeting on campus at ULPGC. Due to Covid-19 and the uncertain times we currently live in, we may have to decide to hold the meeting in a hybrid mode (online and in person). A final decision regarding the format will be made and communicated as soon as possible.

Papers on all aspects of African economic history are welcome, but preference will be given to those that pertain to the conference theme. Although the conference working language will be English, papers in French will also be accepted for some specific sessions. Abstracts no longer than 500 words should be submitted to aehn2022@ulpgc.es no later than 30 March 2022. Some bursaries will be available for

graduate students and faculty from Africa. If applicable, please indicate the need for a bursary in your submission.

For further inquiries please contact daniel.castillohidalgo@ulpgc.es (co-Organizer)

Host Committee

Dr. Daniel Castillo Hidalgo, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Dr. Dácil Juif, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

Gran Canaria official tourism video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ud9ZUBjHC8>

CALL FOR PAPERS!

Call for Papers for a special issue in *Business History* on Middle East and North Africa. Deadline ends March 31.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is currently growing and is seen to be one of the emerging business and economic regions of the world, with much happening recently. However, the MENA region has always been historically involved in global trade (Gelderblom and Trivellato, 2019, Aldous, 2019). In fact, before the Americas were discovered (end of the fifteenth century period), the Middle East region played an important role in world trade, and this included the famed West-East and East-West trade (Pereira and Malik, 2013; 2015; 2018). More specifically, the main West-East trade included the 'Silk Road/Route', that ran across the region from historical cities such as Aleppo to Baghdad, Rayy, Nishapur, Marv, and Samarkand, and through Kashgar to the T'ang capital, Chang'an (Xi'an) regions. Similarly, when it came to the East-West trade, items such as silk, porcelain, spices, dates, textiles, and horses moved in the opposite direction.

The slave trade also saw gold being traded from Sub-Saharan Africa and transported across the desert in exchange for textiles and salt. As a consequence, slaves were brought from East Africa to Egypt and to the Indian subcontinent in return for spices and textiles (Pereira and Malik, 2015; 2018). Other items such as food grain and salt were imported into Anatolia and further east from northern Europe. Dates also formed a major export to Europe from the Arab world, as was ivory and gold from sub-Saharan Africa.

Historically, cross border business involving this region dates back to the regime of the Ottoman Empire, which saw a significant trade between Western countries, and this was prevalent even during the wars. Thereafter, the Levant Company (founded in 1581, when agreements were enacted with France in 1569, when France took over from Venice as the leading trading nation in the Levant); the English East India Company (founded in 1600); and the Dutch East India Company (founded in 1602), all traded with the MENA countries (Pereira and Malik, 2015; 2018).

Given the above background, not much has been researched or written on these historical aspects. This special issue call for papers thus solicits papers that delve into the historical aspects of business in the context of the region.

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.

Frontiers in Economic History Blog

Frontiers in African Economic History – AEHN's blog – diffuses research-based content and promotes discussion concerning the study of long-term African development. The blog provides authors a platform to disseminate easily accessible summaries (700 words) of their recently published research (articles, book chapters, book reviews, theses), publishes interviews with key scholars in the field, and discusses relevant developments. We welcome blog contributions and suggestions. Please contact the editors ([Felix Meier zu Selhausen](#), [Michiel de Haas](#) and [Kate Frederick](#)) to discuss possible posts at: frontiers.aehn@gmail.com.

Jörg Baten and Kleoniki Alexopoulou. [Elite Violence and Elite Numeracy in Africa from 1400 CE to 1950 CE: Evidence from an African Game of Thrones](#) (14 December 2021)

How can we trace early African development? To gain insights, we constructed a new long-term and regionally comparative data set from 1400 to the 20th century based on two core concepts of economic and human development, namely, elite numeracy and elite violence.

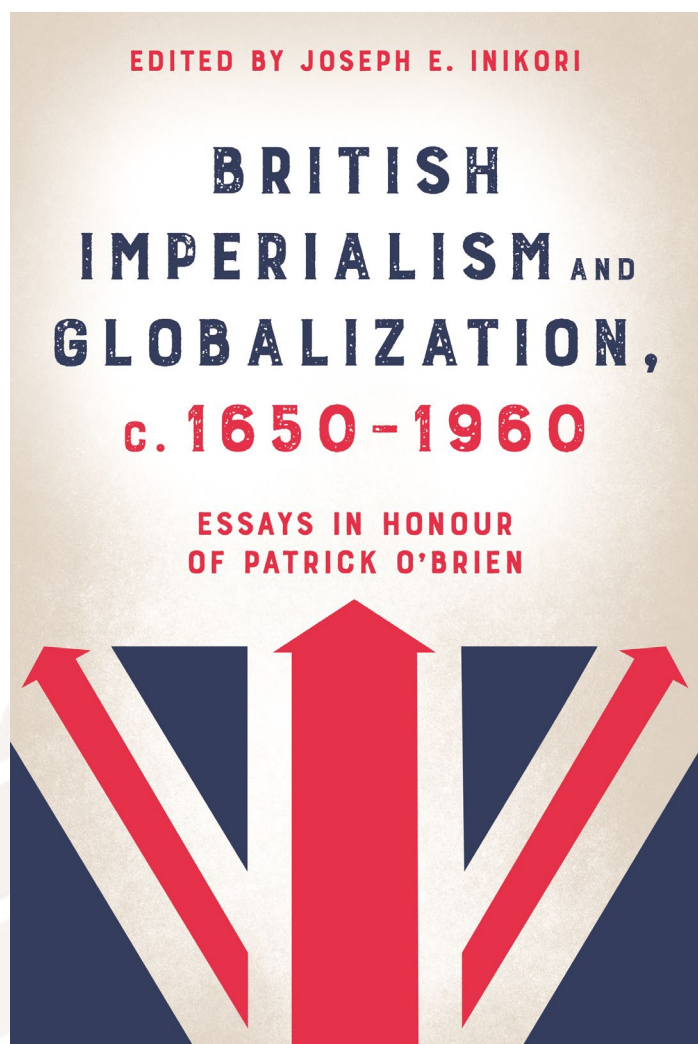
Get in touch!

If you want to publicize your own research, events or organize a panel for an upcoming conference, please send a message to aehtnetwork@gmail.com and I will include your news in our quarterly round up. The next issue will appear in February 2022.



NEW RESEARCH IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Now in print



BRITISH COLONIALISM IN AFRICA: FOUR CHAPTERS IN JOSEPH INIKORI'S VOLUME, WITH A DISCOUNT FOR AEHN MEMBERS

Joseph E. Inikori, ed., *British Imperialism and Globalization, c. 1650-1960: Essays in Honour of Patrick O'Brien* (Boydell Press: Woodbridge, UK, January 2022), xv + 325 pages.

Special 35% Discount Offer to AEHN Members: Boydell are offering a 35% discount on the print edition (which is hardback). This offer code is unique to the African Economic History Network. When entered at the checkout, special offer code BB987 will give a 35% discount on the print edition: <https://boydell.co.uk/3npNhH7>. The offer ends 31 July 2022. (There are also two e-book versions, to which the offer is not applicable). This volume honours Patrick O'Brien's contribution to the establishment of global economic history as a coherent and respected academic field. It has chapters by Anthony Howe, Giorgio Riello, Kenneth Pomeroy, Prasanna Parthasarathi, Tirthankar Roy and John Singleton. The other four chapters are on Africa, together comprising pp. 97-224:

British Imperialism and Globalization: British West Africa, 1821-1900

Joseph E. Inikori

This chapter begins with a brief demonstration of the negative impact of British mercantilist policy during the trans-Atlantic slave trade era (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) on the integration of commodity production in West Africa into the Atlantic commodity production chain that evolved between 1450 and 1850. This provides the context for showing the positive impact of the policy changes of the new British Empire, the free trade empire, on the integration of the economies of British West Africa into the global economy from the middle decades of the nineteenth century to 1900. The chapter offers much archival evidence to show how this was done — the establishment of Pax Britannia to end the socio-political crises inherited from the trans-Atlantic slave trade; the encouragement of commodity production for export through plant breeding and search for wild plants that could be exploited for export; and the building of transportation infrastructure.

'More and More One Cog in the World Economic Machine': Globalization, Development, and African Agency in British West Africa

Gareth Austin

This chapter reconsiders the interaction of colonial rule, the extension and integration of markets domestically and internationally, and economic development for the case of British West Africa, which, in comparisons between colonial regimes, was noted for the policy of maintaining a virtual African monopoly of land ownership. Taking account of recent quantitative research on living standards in Ghana and Nigeria, the paper shows that these rose significantly under colonial rule, propelled by African initiatives in export agriculture. But steps towards industrialization were minimal. In parallel, the paper emphasizes that the implications of colonial policies for market integration were, at all levels, very mixed; that colonial administrative capacity was very limited, and that despite colonial rule, the shifts towards integration in the world market, and progress in economic development, were to a great extent a function of African agency. Perhaps paradoxically, and with ambiguous economic consequences, positive indigenous responses to the commercial opportunities presented by the world market served to rebuff the pressure for the imposition of the kind of property rights system that a line of writers from Marx to Acemoglu have seen as uniquely conducive to long-term economic development.

Globalization and the Rationality of Colonial Expansion: the British Empire and West Africa, in the Nineteenth Century

Ralph Austen

My chapter examines the relationship between global markets for African vegetable oil exports and British acquisition/retention of colonial territories both before and during the 'scramble for Africa' of the late 1800s. Up to now most historians have found it difficult to perceive the demand for such commodities as a major incentive for colonial expansion because their prices (particularly that of palm oil, the main British import) were going down during this period. Very recently Ewout Frankema, Jeffrey Williamson, and Pieter Woltjer (FWW) in an important new article (with an accompanying African Commodity Trade Database) challenge existing understandings of the West African export market and thus suggest that there was 'an economic rationale for the West African scramble.' Using this data along with other quantitative sources and the rich literature on 'trade and politics' during this era in West Africa, I examine British colonial expansion (and efforts at divestment) during the 'free trade' era of the early and mid-1800s and then relate it to French initiatives (the focus of the FWW argument) during the second half of the century. My conclusion is critical of, but also indebted to, the new approach to African economic history represented by FWW.

* 'An economic rationale for the West African scramble? The commercial transition and the commodity price boom of 1835-1885,' *Journal of Economic History* 78:1 (2018), 231-67.

Erik Green, 'Window of Opportunities: The Great Depression, Protectionism, and the Rise of Profitable Settler Agriculture in Africa'

The establishment of profitable European settler agriculture overseas has received considerable scholarly attention. Much of this literature focus on the 'New World' and the European off-shoots. It is generally argued that the golden age of these settler societies were 1870 to 1913. A globalization wave gave the settler farmers access to migrant labour and global markets. By contrast, European settler agriculture in British Africa became profitable during the inter-war period, characterized by falling terms of trade, volatile global markets and eventually a global depression and increased protectionism. This chapter compare three such cases – tea production in Nyasaland, coffee in Kenya and tobacco in Southern Rhodesia. The chapter shows that increased protectionism facilitated the growth of profitable settler agriculture. It enabled the settlers to enter highly competitive markets.

Research papers in print

Michiel de Haas. The Failure of Cotton Imperialism in Africa: Seasonal Constraints and Contrasting Outcomes in French West Africa and British Uganda. *Journal of Economic History*.

Cash-crop diffusion in colonial Africa was uneven and defied colonizers' expectations and efforts, especially for cotton. This study investigates how agricultural seasonality affected African farmers' cotton adoption, circa 1900–1960. A contrast between British Uganda and the interior of French West Africa demonstrates that a short rainy season and the resulting short farming cycles generated seasonal labor bottlenecks and food security concerns, limiting cotton output. Agricultural seasonality also had wider repercussions, for colonial coercion, investment, and African income-earning strategies. A labor productivity breakthrough in post-colonial Francophone West Africa mitigated the seasonality constraint, facilitating impressive cotton output growth post-1960.

De Haas, M., 2021. The Failure of Cotton Imperialism in Africa: Seasonal Constraints and Contrasting Outcomes in French West Africa and British Uganda. *The Journal of Economic History*, 81(4), pp.1098-1136.

Stephen Broadberry and Leigh Gardner. Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1885–2008: Evidence from eight countries. *Explorations in Economic History*.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has been absent from recent debates about comparative long-run growth owing to the lack of data on aggregate economic performance before 1950. This paper provides estimates of GDP per capita on an annual basis for eight Anglophone African economies for the period since 1885, raising new questions about previous characterizations of the region's economic performance. The new data show that many of these economies had levels of per capita income which were above subsistence by the early twentieth century, on a par with the largest economies in Asia until the 1980s. However, overall improvements in GDP per capita were limited by episodes of negative growth or "shrinking", the scale and scope of which can be measured through annual data.

Broadberry, S. and Gardner, L., 2022. Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1885–2008: Evidence from eight countries. *Explorations in Economic History*, 83, p.101424.

Bastian Becker. The colonial struggle over polygamy: Consequences for educational expansion in sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic History of Developing Regions*.

Christian missions in colonial Africa have contributed significantly to the expansion of formal education and thereby shaped the continent's long-term economic and political development. This paper breaks new ground by showing that this process depended on local demand for education. It is argued that disagreements over norms, and in particular the struggle over polygamy, which resulted from missions' insistence on monogamy in traditionally polygamous areas, lowered African demand for education. Analyses of geocoded data from historical and contemporary sources, covering most of sub-Saharan Africa, show that the struggle is associated with worse educational outcomes today. Effects are not limited to formal attainments but carry over to informal outcomes, in particular literacy. The findings attest to considerable heterogeneity in missionary legacies and suggest that local conditions should be given greater consideration in future studies on the long-term consequences of colonial-era interventions.

Becker, B., 2021. The colonial struggle over polygamy: Consequences for educational expansion in sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic History of Developing Regions*, pp.1-23.

Tom Westland. How accurate are the prices in the British colonial Blue Books? Economic History of Developing Regions.

Despite the widespread use of the British colonial Blue Books as a statistical source, there has been little investigation of their reliability. This article compares retail price reports in the Blue Books with annual averages constructed from weekly market reports published in four colonial African newspapers. It finds that the Blue Books can sometimes be an unreliable guide to staple prices, with the median error in the order of 25%, though some series are reasonably accurate and some are very inaccurate. Estimating annual averages was complicated by high price volatility and seasonality. In a simulation, the article shows that colonial officials would have usually needed to gather price quotations reasonably frequently in order to be likely to obtain accurate annual averages. A new effort to find non-official sources for prices, especially for staples, and for the early colonial period, would help to refine estimates of living standards and agricultural market dynamics in colonial Africa.

Westland, T., 2021. How accurate are the prices in the British colonial Blue Books? Economic History of Developing Regions, pp.1-25.

Ideen A. Riahi. Why Eurasia? A probe into the origins of global inequalities. Cliometrica.

The abundance of domesticable mammals in Eurasia facilitated its early transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural economies, with dramatic consequences for human history. This paper empirically examines the origins of these biogeographical advantages and finds that the extinction of large mammals during the past 100,000 years was a decisive force in the evolution of mammal domestication. In Eurasia's domestication cradles, humans had sufficient incentives to continually practice herd management as a hunting strategy to prevent the depletion of their vital common resources. These strategies changed some targeted species and made them more receptive to human domination. The absence of these conditions (human incentive and animal receptivity) in other regions resulted in the paucity of domestication. The paper presents the most comprehensive empirical analysis of the origins of animal domestication and the roots of global inequalities to date and unearths a critical channel for the influence of deep history on comparative economic development.

Riahi, I.A., 2022. Why Eurasia? A probe into the origins of global inequalities. Cliometrica, 16(1), pp.105-147.

Margaret McMillan and Albert Zeufack. Labor Productivity Growth and Industrialization in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives.

Manufacturing has made an important contribution to raising living standards in many parts of the world. Concerns about premature deindustrialization have made some observers skeptical about the potential for manufacturing to play this role in Africa. But employment in African manufacturing has grown rapidly over the past 20 years. These employment gains have been accompanied by: (i) large increases in the number of small manufacturing firms; (ii) limited employment gains in large firms; and (iii) robust labor productivity growth in Africa's large firms. Limited employment growth in Africa's large manufacturing firms is partly a result of the capital intensity of the manufacturing sub-sectors in which African countries are most engaged – the processing of resources, and partly a result of rising capital intensity in manufacturing. The potential for manufacturing to raise living standards in Africa depends on indirect job creation by large firms through backward and forward linkages and increasing labor productivity in small firms.

McMillan, M.S. and Zeufack, A., 2021. Labor Productivity Growth and Industrialization in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives. 36(1): 3-32.

Tavneet Suri and Christopher Udry. Agricultural Technology in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives.

Economic development typically involves a structural transformation in which a dominantly agrarian economy moves towards being more manufacturing and services-based. However, economies of countries across Africa have an especially high reliance on agriculture, both for output and jobs, compared with the rest of the world. The high shares of agriculture in GDP and employment in Africa largely reflect the low level of GDP per capita on the continent (Herrendorf et al. 2014). Figure 1 shows that agriculture is almost 20 percent of GDP in Africa, compared with a world average of about 5 percent. Moreover, the share of agriculture in GDP of the African region has remained stable over the last 50 years, whereas the share for other regions that started high in 1970—South East Asia and South Asia—has fallen a lot. Panel B shows how agricultural shares of employment have declined across regions of the world in the last 30 years. Africa now has the highest share of employment in agriculture at about 50 percent, given the declines in the South Asia region, while the world average of employment in agriculture is closer to 30 percent.

Suri, T. and Udry, C. 2022. Agricultural Technology in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives. 36(1): 33-56.

Taryn Dinkelman and L. Rachel Ngai. Time Use and Gender in Africa in Times of Structural Transformation. Journal of Economic Perspectives.

Many African countries are still in the early stages of structural transformation. Typically, as economies move through the structural transformation, activities once conducted within the household are outsourced to the market. This has particular implications for women's time use. In this paper, we document that current patterns of female time use in home production in several African countries closely resemble historical time use patterns in the US. We highlight two stylized facts about women's time use in Africa. First, in North Africa, women spend very few hours in market work and female labor force participation overall is extremely low. Second, although extensive margin participation of women is high in sub-Saharan Africa, women tend to work in the market for only a few hours each week, with the rest of their work hours spent in home production. These two facts suggest two types of constraints that could slow down the reallocation of female time from home to market as economies grow: Social norms related to women's market work, and a lack of infrastructure (e.g. household infrastructure and childcare facilities) to facilitate marketizing home production. We discuss recent empirical evidence related to each set of constraints and highlight new avenues for research.

Dinkelman, T. and Ngai, L.R. 2022. Time Use and Gender in Africa in Times of Structural Transformation. Journal of Economic Perspectives 36(1): 57-80.

Oriana Bandiera, Ahmed Elsayed, Andrea Smurra and Céline Zipfel. Young Adults and Labor Markets in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives.

Every year millions of young adults join the labor market in Africa. This paper uses the Jobs of the World Database to compare their job prospects to those of their counterparts in other low-income regions. We show that employment rates are similar at similar levels of development but young adults in Africa are less likely to have a salaried job, especially when the size of their cohort is large. Building on existing evidence on the impacts of interventions targeting both the demand and supply sides of the labor market, we discuss policy priorities for boosting the growth of salaried job creation in the region.

Bandiera, O., Elsayed, A., Smurra, A. and Zipfel, C. Young Adults and Labor Markets in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives. 36(1): 81-100.

Nathan Canen and Leonard Wantchekon. Political Distortions, State Capture and Economic Development in Africa. Journal of Economic Perspectives.

This article studies the role of political distortions in driving economic growth and development in Africa. We first discuss how existing theories based on long-run structural factors (e.g., pre-colonial and colonial institutions, or ethnic diversity) may not capture new data patterns in the region, including changes to political regimes, growth patterns, and their variation across regions with similar historical experiences. We then argue that a framework focused on political distortions (i.e., how political incentives impact resource allocation and economic outcomes) may have multiple benefits: it encapsulates many distortions observed in practice, including patronage, variations in contract enforcement and the role of political connections in firm outcomes; it provides a framework that unifies results in Africa and elsewhere, and leaves a wide scope for policy analysis. We conclude by overviewing reforms that may curb such distortions, including changes to campaign financing rules, bureaucratic reform, free trade agreements and technology.

Canen, N. and Wantchekon, L. Political Distortions, State Capture and Economic Development in Africa. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 36(1): 101-124.

Shunsuke Tsuda. Refugee inflows, surplus farm labor, and crop marketization in rural Africa. Journal of Development Economics

This paper sheds light on the structure of factor and output market frictions to investigate long-term effects of refugee inflows on host farmers. Combining a canonical agricultural household model, the natural experimental setting of mass refugee inflows into Tanzania in the early 1990s, and longitudinal panel data from the host economy, I show that refugee inflows cause market-specific gains and losses. Refugee inflows tighten the off-farm labor market participation constraint, implying an increase in surplus farm labor and labor market inefficiency. On the other hand, I observe a positive impact on the transition from subsistence to crop marketization. This transition is revealed to be primarily due to a reduction in fixed transaction costs around refugee camps, not due to an increase in consumption demand by refugees. While the overall impact on agricultural labor productivity is negative, the “surplus farm labor effect” and the “crop marketization effect” act in opposite directions.

Tsuda, S., 2022. Refugee inflows, surplus farm labor, and crop marketization in rural Africa. *Journal of Development Economics*, p.102805.

António Afonso and Max Reimers. Does the introduction of stock exchange markets boost economic growth in African countries? Journal of Comparative Economics.

We assess whether the introduction of private equity capital markets affects economic growth in African countries. We address this issue by focussing on stock exchange markets as the predominant type of new equity markets, using a Diff-in-Diff regression method. The analysis uses a panel data set from 48 Sub-Saharan countries over the time range of 1970–2018. 23 countries are part of the “treated” group – which introduced international stock exchanges – and 25 “untreated” countries serve as the control group. Our results show that when compared with the time period prior to the introduction of stock exchange markets, GDP per capita rises by the amount of 532 US\$ (around 40% of the Sub-Saharan average) after the introduction of equity capital markets in the treated countries. Over the ten years post introduction, the effect is hump-shaped, with effects becoming statistically significant from the first year after implementation, with a peak in the 5th year, and it then becomes statistically insignificant from then onwards.

Tsuda, S., 2022. Refugee inflows, surplus farm labor, and crop marketization in rural Africa. *Journal of Development Economics*, p.102805.

Carlos da Silva Jr. Enslaving Commodities: Tobacco, Gold, Cowry Trade, and Trans-Imperial Networks in the Bight of Benin (c. 1690s–c. 1790s). African Economic History.

This article will explore the importance of three specific commodities (tobacco, gold, and cowry shells) for the operation of the Bahian slave trade in the Bight of Benin during the eighteenth century, focusing on the trans-imperial trading networks involving Portuguese, Dutch, and English merchants on the west African coast. The goal is to demonstrate the relationship between such commodities and the transatlantic and local economy linked to the slave trade. It linked transoceanic commercial networks, which affected in several ways the political, social and economic organization of African societies, as well as playing a critical role in the organization of new trading networks between Bahian-based businessmen, Western Indian and West African traders in eighteenth-century Atlantic slave trade.

da Silva Jr, C., 2021. Enslaving Commodities: Tobacco, Gold, Cowry Trade, and Trans-Imperial Networks in the Bight of Benin (c. 1690s–c. 1790s). *African Economic History*, 49(2), pp.1-30.

Damian T. Akara and Melchisedek Chetima. Patriarchal Obstruction and Female Responses to Wage Labor Recruitment in the Coastal Plantations of the Cameroon Development Corporation. African Economic History.

In 1947, most of the former German plantations at the coast of Cameroon were brought under the umbrella of a statutory body, the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC). Like the former German planters, the CDC management faced enormous difficulties in maintaining a stable labor force on its estates. As a result, it decided to recruit women on a permanent rather than casual basis as a strategy of keeping male workers and their families within the plantation locale and to put an end to the short spells of work by migrant laborers in the estates. Unfortunately, women's favorable response to the call for recruitment in the plantations met with stiff resistance from some of their male kin. Against this background, this paper argues that in spite of attempted male obstruction, a number of women, especially from the Grassfields, defied the odds to force their way through the barriers of the established patriarchal order into the so-called "men's reserve." In seeking wage labor, women hoped to change the status quo with the ambition of gaining financial independence, which would eventually serve as backbone to their social and economic empowerment and emancipation.

Akara, D.T. and Chetima, M., 2021. Patriarchal Obstruction and Female Responses to Wage Labor Recruitment in the Coastal Plantations of the Cameroon Development Corporation. *African Economic History*, 49(2), pp.31-52.

Somo M. L. Seimu and Marco Zoppi. The Influence of Settlers' Community in Shaping the Colonial Agricultural Marketing Policies in Tanzania. African Economic History.

When the British colonial government took over Tanzania, colonial officials championed and encouraged the inhabitants in Kilimanjaro to grow coffee along with settlers. The authorities gave priority to the local smallholders, relegating settlers to a minor role within colonial agriculture and the coffee economy in particular. This generated a vigorous protest among the settlers against the government policy. The tension would bring a number of remarkable developments, including the establishment of the Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association (KNPA) and, later, the promulgation of legislation regulating coffee farming and marketing via cooperatives, such as the Co-operative Societies Ordinance No. 7 of 1932 and the Native Coffee Control Ordinance No 26 of 1937. This paper examines the interlocked dimensions and intricacies related to the coffee industry policies, and their impact on agricultural policies in Kilimanjaro region as well as across the country. In particular, the paper discusses how the settlers' opposition influenced the promulgation of segregative, monopolistic and protectionist legislations, and the role of control Boards in this process. To do so, this paper relies on existing literature as well as underutilized primary sources obtained from the Tanzania National Archives (TNA) in Dar Es Salaam.

Seimu, S.M. and Zoppi, M., 2021. The Influence of Settlers' Community in Shaping the Colonial Agricultural Marketing Policies in Tanzania. *African Economic History*, 49(2), pp.53-76.

Martin S. Shanguhya. The Local Native Council, Economic Imperatives, and Colonial Forest Preservation in Western Kenya, c. 1900–1950. *African Economic History*.

This article examines the responses of Luyia communities to economic challenges and opportunities produced by restrictive British forestry policies in North Kavirondo District, western Kenya. Those colonial policies impeded access by peasant households to agricultural land in protected forests amid agricultural commercialization. The Local Native Council (LNC) aided this cause and launched sustained efforts to gain control of local forests and their revenue from government. Whereas historians have addressed the role of LNCs in Kenya, their role in resource management, particularly in forestry, remains unexplored. Consequently, the article makes three key scholarly contributions to colonial and economic history regarding forestry. First, it reveals the LNC's communal pursuits, beyond the individual self-seeking material accumulation tendencies that its African members have been associated with in Kenya's colonial historiography. Secondly, it places land at the center of local contestation over restrictive forestry programs, away from tangible forest products that inform colonial responses to those programs. Third, the article shows the inclination of dispossessed communities to negotiate or petition imperial capture of local resources on a collective, "pan-ethnic" basis, without recourse to active and subtle resistances evident in other colonial contexts.

Shanguhya, M.S., 2021. The Local Native Council, Economic Imperatives, and Colonial Forest Preservation in Western Kenya, c. 1900–1950. *African Economic History*, 49(2), pp.77-106.

Sarah Walters. African Population History: Contributions of Moral Demography. *Journal of African History*.

Improving knowledge about African historical demography is essential to addressing current population trends and achieving deeper understanding of social, economic, and political change in the past and present. I use census and parish register data from Tanganyika to address the origins of twentieth-century population growth, to describe how major changes in fertility and child mortality began in the 1940s, and to emphasise the significance of the large rise in fertility between the 1940s and 1970s. Through this work and my wider survey of parish registers in Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zambia, I consider the relationships between power, evidence, and meaning in these data sources. Alongside the macro gaps in Africa's population history are significant microsilences — lacunae in the sources and data which reflect the hegemonic structures within which they were produced. I suggest a moral demography approach to their analysis, borrowing from the reflexive and dialectic method found in studies of moral economy.

Walters, S., 2021. African Population History: Contributions of Moral Demography. *The Journal of African History*, 62(2), pp.183-200.

John K. Thornton. Revising the Population History of the Kingdom of Kongo. *Journal of African History*.

Research conducted into the demography of the Kingdom of Kongo some forty years ago, employing baptismal statistics left by missionaries, has been in need of revision thanks to challenges by more recent scholarship. This article revises the estimated population of Kongo by addressing these challenges, drawing on newly discovered documentary sources. Using this new evidence, the estimate for the kingdom's population in the mid-seventeenth century has been elevated from 509,000 to around 790,000. The original article's claims about levels of fertility and mortality have been retained. The article also addresses questions concerning the validity of missionary statistics

and the impact of the slave trade, which was small before 1700 but then increasingly large thereafter, reaching very high levels by the early nineteenth century. While a quantitative estimate of the later population is not possible given the limitations of sources for this period, it is likely that the population of the kingdom fell as slave exports peaked.

Thornton, J.K., 2021. Revising the Population History of the Kingdom of Kongo. *The Journal of African History*, 62(2), pp.201-212.

Sara Berry. A Death in the Family: Property, Inheritance, and Belonging in Late Colonial Asante. *Journal of African History*.

An inheritance dispute heard before one of the chiefs' courts established in Asante under indirect rule illustrates the multivalent, dynamic character of social institutions at a time of economic and political transition. Litigated in 1951, the dispute raised questions about the meaning of 'family' and 'belonging', and their significance for people's access to wealth and their obligations to one another. Played out against a backdrop of potentially far-reaching social and political change in Ghana and beyond, cases such as this one suggest that terms such as 'belonging' and 'family' are best understood as labels for complex social processes, rather than facts that determine people's social identities and entitlements.

Berry, S., 2021. A Death in the Family: Property, Inheritance, and Belonging in Late Colonial Asante. *The Journal of African History*, 62(2), pp.271-283.

Jelmer Vos and Paulo Teodoro de Matos. The Demography of Slavery in the Coffee Districts of Angola, c. 1800–70. *Journal of African History*.

This article uses demographic data from nineteenth-century Angola to evaluate, within a West Central African setting, the widely accepted theory that sub-Saharan Africa's integration within the Atlantic world through slave and commodity trading caused significant transformations in slavery in the subcontinent. It specifically questions, first, whether slaveholding became more dominant in Angola during the last phase of the transatlantic slave trade; second, whether Angolan slave populations were predominantly female; and third, whether slavery in Angola expanded further during the cash crop revolution that accompanied the nineteenth-century suppression of the Atlantic slave trade. Besides making a significant contribution to understanding the demographic context of slavery in the era of abolition, the article aims to display ways in which historians can use the population surveys the Portuguese Empire carried out in Africa from the late eighteenth century.

Vos, J. and de Matos, P.T., 2021. The Demography of Slavery in the Coffee Districts of Angola, c. 1800–70. *The Journal of African History*, 62(2), pp.213-234.

Gerardo Serra and Morten Jerven. Contested Numbers: Census Controversies and the Press in 1960s Nigeria. *Journal of African History*.

This article reconstructs the controversies following the release of the figures from Nigeria's 1963 population census. As the basis for the allocation of seats in the federal parliament and for the distribution of resources, the census is a valuable entry point into postcolonial Nigeria's political culture. After presenting an overview of how the Africanist literature has conceptualized the politics of population counting, the article analyses the role of the press in constructing the meaning and implications of the 1963 count. In contrast with the literature's emphasis on identification, categorization, and enumeration, our focus is on how the census results informed a broader range of visual and textual narratives. It is argued that analysing the multiple ways in which demographic sources shape debates about trust, identity, and the state in the public sphere results in a richer

understanding of the politics of counting people and narrows the gap between demographic and cultural history.

Serra, G. and Jerven, M., 2021. Contested numbers: Census controversies and the press in 1960s Nigeria. *The Journal of African History*, 62(2), pp.235-253.

Working Papers

Leoné Walters, Carolyn Chisadza and Matthew Clance. [Slave Trades, Kinship Structures and Women Political Participation in Africa.](#) **African Economic History Network Working Paper No. 65.**

We study whether present-day women political participation in sub-Saharan Africa can be linked to the temporary gender ratio imbalances caused by the transatlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades, taking into account pre-existing gender norms influenced by kinship structures. Using individual-level data for 29 sub-Saharan African countries from the latest Afrobarometer surveys, ethnic region kinship and slave trade data, we find that a woman's ethnic region exposure to the transatlantic slave trade is associated with an increase in her likelihood to vote, however, only in non-patrilineal ethnic regions. This effect is mitigated in patrilineal ethnic regions, where women have less decision-making power. This paper contributes to the literature on the contemporary sub-national effects of the slave trades and the historical causes of gender gaps in political participation.

Morten Jerven, Jacob Weisdorf and Donatella Strangio. [A Case of its Own? A Review of Italy's Colonisation of Eritrea, 1890-1941.](#) **African Economic History Network Working Paper No. 66.**

This paper considers Italy's short but intense colonisation of Eritrea in light of the more well-known European colonial histories in Africa. We review the Italian historiography on Italy's involvement in Eritrea, supplementing it with novel archival data. The focus is on the activities of private enterprises and agricultural settlements, and on the Italian state's colonial spending, particularly during Fascism. We reflect on the actual effects of these factors on Eritrea's development, as against those predicted by the leading theories, and show how these highlight the somewhat atypical nature of the case of Eritrea.

Sascha Klocke and Morten Jerven. [A Case of its Own? The Nexus between Growth, Inequality, and Poverty: Lessons from Long-term Trends in Tanzania, 1961-2017.](#) **African Economic History Network Working Paper No. 67.**

What is the relationship between growth, inequality, and poverty? This is perhaps one of the most important questions of economic development that, in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, it has gained prominence against the backdrop of two decades of almost uninterrupted growth since the turn of the millennium. Despite strong growth, there have been doubts as to whether it translated into substantial poverty reduction. A missing piece in this puzzle is economic inequality, which, while often neglected in the past, is currently at the centre of attention in economic research. The aim of this paper is to re-evaluate the existing quantitative evidence and to disentangle the competing narratives concerning growth, inequality, and poverty for Tanzania, which provides an interesting case that is at once representative of the wider sub-Saharan African growth experience, while simultaneously highlighting the complexity of the growth-inequality-poverty nexus.

Lisa Cook, Linguère Mously Mbaye, Janet Gerson and Anthony Simpasa. [The Colonial Origins of Banking Crisis in Africa](#). African Development Bank Working Paper 358.

Could initial – colonial and early post-colonial – conditions explain episodes of systemic crisis in banking systems today? We exploit differences in ethnic concentration of initial ownership and management structure of Nigerian banks established during the colonial era to examine banking crisis and vulnerability of the financial system in contemporary Nigeria. Although banking institutions emerged from or were a reaction to British colonial banking structure, they pursued different practices with respect to ownership and management structure. To measure these initial conditions, we use historical data from the Nigerian banking system to construct an index of diversity in the initial ownership and management structure of each bank, where more diversity corresponds to a lower concentration of insiders, including family members, tribal affiliates, and political partners. We collected data from the “Blue Books”, British colonial banking records from 1887 to 1940, data on indigenous banks established during the colonial period from 1929 to 1960, and data on banks from 1960 to 2016. These data allow us to track the first Nigerian families, ethnic groups, and their associates who were part of the formation of the formal banking institutions in the country. We also collect individual and aggregate bank data from 2001 to 2016 collected from bank balance sheets, financial statements, annual reports, statistical bulletins, banking supervision reports, and other reports of the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation. Our estimates suggest that lower levels of diversity are associated with higher levels of risk for a bank. That is, lack of initial diversity in ownership and management of Nigerian banks may have played a role in the performance and fragility of the Nigerian banking system that lent itself to systemic crisis. Our findings are consistent with the broader recent literature that shows higher profit and stronger performance of more diverse firms relative to less diverse firms due to, for example, diversity-driven innovation and product development.

Marina Nistotskaya and Michelle D'Arcy. [A Case of its Own? No taxation without property rights: Formalization of property rights on land and tax revenues from individuals in sub-Saharan Africa](#). WIDER Working Paper Series No wp-2021-175.

The arguments that property rights and taxation positively affect development are well established in separate literatures, but the link between property rights and taxation is under-studied. To address this gap, we theorize that formalization of individual property rights facilitates economic exchange at scale, providing a viable opportunity for individuals to improve their economic standing, in exchange for which property owners assent to pay taxes. We illustrate the argument by comparing the historical evolution of tax states in early modern Europe and colonial Africa.

Merima Ali and Odd Fjeldstad. [Pre-colonial centralization and tax compliance norms in contemporary Uganda](#). WIDER Working Paper Series No wp-2021-188.

The paper examines the legacy of pre-colonial centralization on tax compliance norms of citizens in contemporary Uganda. By combining geo-referenced anthropological data on pre-colonial ethnic homelands with survey data from several rounds of the Afrobarometer Survey, respondents from the historically centralized homelands are found to exhibit a higher willingness to pay tax compared to respondents from non-centralized areas.

Denis Cogneau, Yannick Dupraz, Justine Knebelmann and Sandrine Mesplé-Somps. [Taxation in Africa from Colonial Times to Present Evidence from former French colonies 1900-2018](#). HAL Open Archive.

This paper sheds light on the fiscal trajectories of 18 former French colonies in Africa from colonial times to the present. Building upon our previous work about colonial public finance (Cogneau et al., 2021), we compile a novel dataset by combining previously available data with recently digitized data

from historical archives, to produce continuous and comparable public revenue data series from 1900 to 2018. This allows us to study the evolution of the level and composition of fiscal revenues in the post-colonial decades, with a special focus on the critical juncture of independence. We find that very few countries achieved significant progress in fiscal capacity between the end of the colonial period and today, if we set aside income drawn from mineral resources. This is not explained by a lasting collapse of fiscal capacity at the time of independence. From 1960 to today, the reliance on mineral resource revenues increased on average and dependence on international commodity prices persisted, with few exceptions. The relative contribution of trade taxes declined after the structural adjustments, and lost trade revenues were not compensated by a sufficient increase in domestic taxes. However, for the most recent period, we do note an improvement in the capacity to collect taxes on the domestic economy.

Emilio Depetris-Chauvin and Ömer Özak. Borderline Disorder: (De facto) Historical Ethnic Borders and Contemporary Conflict in Africa. Southern Methodist University, Departmental Working Paper series No 2105.

We explore the effect of historical ethnic borders on contemporary non-civil conflict in Africa. Exploiting variations across artificial regions (i.e., grids of 50x50km) within an ethnicity's historical homeland, we document that both the intensive and extensive margins of contemporary conflict are concentrated close to historical ethnic borders. Following a theory-based instrumental variable approach, which generates a plausibly exogenous ethno-spatial partition of Africa, we find that grid cells with historical ethnic borders have 27 percentage points higher probability of conflict and 7.9 percentage points higher probability of being the initial location of a conflict. We uncover several key underlying mechanisms: competition for agricultural land, population pressure, cultural similarity and weak property rights.



OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Courses and Seminars

University of Cambridge, Faculty of History

African Economic History seminar

Lent Term 2022

Time: five Tuesdays, 17:00-18:30

Venue: Audit Room, King's College (3 meetings)

Or online (2 meetings)

Convenors: Gareth Austin and Bronwen Everill

15 February Kate Ekama (Stellenbosch University)*

'From Mortgage Holders to Slum Landlords: Compensated Emancipation and the Building of Cape Town, 1830s-1840s'

[Venue: Zoom]

1 March Jelmer Vos (University of Glasgow)

'The Angolan Coffee Frontier, 1820-1920'

[Venue: in person; Audit Room, King's College]

15 March Filipa Ribiero da Silva (International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam)

[Venue: in person; Audit Room, King's College]



**LABORATORY FOR
THE ECONOMICS
OF AFRICA'S PAST**

ECONOMIC HISTORY WEBINAR SERIES SCHEDULE

16 February	Yiling Zhao (Peking University)
23 February	Dheeraj Chaudhary (University of Maryland)
02 March	Marie Christelle Mabeu (Stanford University)
09 March	Hanna Schwank (Boston University)
16 March	Maylis Avaro (University of Pennsylvania)
23 March	Tianyi Wang (Princeton University)
30 March	Lydia Assouad (Paris School of Economics)
06 April	Justine Knebelmann (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
13 April	Emiliano Travieso (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)
20 April	Chanda Chiseni (Lund University)
04 May	Max McDevitt (Boston University)
11 May	Awa Ambra Seck (Harvard University)
18 May	Song Yuan (University of Warwick)
25 May	Daniel Gallardo Albarrán (Wageningen University & Research)

Wednesdays 13:00 or 16:00 (GMT+2)

Please email leone.walters@gmail.com if you would like to join
Webinar link and details shared weekly by email

JOIN US!

LBS' Wheler Institute for Business and Development is launching an online open-access free course on African Economic History, running from February—April 2022. Visit the [course website](#).

- This masterclass aims to familiarize students with insights into the recent, burgeoning literature on the impact of Africa's history on contemporary development (JEL review). The online course will cover recent economic history contributions that use geospatial data from anthropological maps, colonial archives, secondary sources, and other sources to uncover the legacies of these phenomena.
- The course is inter-disciplinary aiming to provide a dialogue forum between economics, history, political science, cultural anthropology, even psychology. The lectures will abstract from econometric and economic theory technicalities zooming into the core ideas and hypotheses and the way economics may be helpful addressing them
- There will be ten 90 minutes main lectures (with a small break), covering pre-colonial social and political organization, Africa's slave trades, the Scramble for Africa, colonization, independence movements, the Cold War, and the Third Wave of Democratization.
- The lectures will be accompanied by ten special lectures (75 minutes), where guests will present interdisciplinary research. The special session will zoom on issues like prison labor, the role of private concessionary companies during colonization, Christian Missions, colonial tax policies, and delve into some country-cases. Our guests are prominent scholars in economics, history, political science, even linguistics with essential contributions to the field. You can have a look here for the entire teaching team.
- There will also be three plenary sessions, where guests will join the teaching team discussing
 - the controversy regarding foreign aid's impact with Bill Easterly (NYU) and Celestin Monga (Harvard Kennedy School)),
 - the psychology of Africans in comparison to other continents with Joe Heinrich (Harvard), author of international best-selling book WEIRD
 - the future of Africa with James Robinson (Chicago) and Chima Korieh (Marquette)

The course organization and main lectures are delivered by Nathan Nunn (Harvard University and NBER), Leonard Wantchekon (Princeton and African School of Economics), Stelios Michalopoulos (Brown, CEPR, and NBER), and Elias Papaioannou (London Business School and CEPR). We are particularly keen attracting students and young professionals outside economics from management, strategy, political science, and history. And we would like to engage with African scholars and interested parties from the continent.