



## African Economic History Newsletter

### Issue #59, August 2023

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 publicise your own research, events, seminars or organise a panel for an upcoming conference, please send a message to [walters@sun.ac.za](mailto:walters@sun.ac.za) and I will include your news in our quarterly round up.

**Leoné Walters**  
on behalf of the African Economic History Network

# Network updates

## 2023 AEHN MEETING NEWS

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network

*Agency in African Economic History: Networks, capital and African development*

**Where:** Future Africa, University of Pretoria, South Africa

**When:** 5 - 6 October 2023

**Keynote speakers:** Prof Alois Mlambo (University of Pretoria) and Prof John Turner (Queen's University Belfast)

**To register:** <https://forms.gle/FzzCV4GE2bPEw3BC8>

**Or email:** [aehn2023@gmail.com](mailto:aehn2023@gmail.com)

The abstracts submitted for this year's meeting have been accepted. **If you wish to attend (without submitting a paper), please register by completing the form before 22 September 2023.**

Organising Committee:

Dr Carolyn Chisadza, Department of Economics, University of Pretoria

Prof Tinashe Nyamunda, Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria

Dr Christie Swanepoel, Department of Economics, University of the Western Cape



**Faculty of Humanities**  
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotho



**Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences**  
Fakulteit Ekonomiese en Bestuurswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Disaense tša Ekonomi le Taolo



## **AEHN WORKING PAPER SERIES**

### **Colonial Influences and African Women's Segregation? Evidence from Anglican Converts in Urban British Africa**

**Felix Meier zu Selhausen and Jacob Weisdorf**

Using educational and occupational statistics derived from 30,000 marriage registers obtained from six major cities in British colonial Africa, we show how early colonial mission education helped African men access formal labour. Women were relegated to informal and homemaking activities instead, even if mission schooling facilitated their social mobility via marriage. The early-colonial rise in gender inequality was followed by a remarkable decline herein after World War II helped by the Africanisation and feminisation of the civil service alongside Western women's liberalisation movement. This process was relatively faster in West Africa where women's pre-colonial economic independence contested colonial ideals of domestic virtue.

### **Welfare Experiences of Portuguese Angolan Miners: A Longitudinal Comparative Study, 1918-1974**

**Leo Dolan**

This paper provides the first quantitative assessment of living standards in Angola during the colonial period, with a specific focus on the Companhia de Diamantes de Angola (Diamang), the largest and most profitable company in Portuguese colonial history. Employing the "barebones subsistence basket" deflation method to measure welfare ratios, the paper examines the progression of living standards from 1918 to 1974. The research findings illustrate a significant shift from below-subsistence wages to an unprecedented rise in welfare ratios after 1960, signifying a remarkable deviation from the welfare trajectory observed in other colonial empires. By presenting the first comprehensive and high-quality dataset covering an extensive time frame, exclusively dedicated to examining worker living standards in colonial Portuguese Africa, this study challenges conventional perspectives on the outcomes of extractive labour regimes. Furthermore, it establishes a precedent for the importance of further exploration into other neglected colonial contexts. Consequently, this research not only contributes to the discourse on economic history but also enhances our understanding of Africa's distinctive colonial experiences.

## **FRONTIERS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY BLOG**

### **Local Advantage in a Global Context. Competition, Adaptation and Resilience in Textile Manufacturing in the 'Periphery', 1860-1960**

**Kate Frederick and Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk**

Deindustrialization theories have long purported that industrial production in sub-Saharan Africa and most other parts of the Global South fell into rapid decline by the nineteenth century due to rising competition – and often coercion – by industrializing nations in the Global North. In contrast, we find that domestic textile manufacturers across sub-Saharan Africa and Java wielded certain advantages during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which allowed them to compete and even flourish amid globalization and colonization. Chief among these was their ability to cater to complex and diverse local consumer tastes.

### **Education and Polygamy: Evidence from Cameroon**

**Yannick Dupraz and Pierre André**

Has secular education contributed to the decline of polygyny in Africa? To answer this question we study a wave of public school construction in late colonial Cameroon. We find that school openings simultaneously increased education and the chances of being in a polygynous union for men and, more surprisingly, for women. The reason is not that educated women preferred polygyny, but that they married more educated men, who were more likely to take additional wives.

# News and announcements

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Quantifying the Long Run History of Africa *University of Manchester*

#### Arthur Lewis Lab Conference #4

Part of the CEPR Economic History programme. With support from the ESRC New Investigator Grant, “Measuring the Great Divergence: A study of global standards of living, 1500-1950”, and the Arthur Lewis Lab for Comparative Development, University of Manchester.

**Dates:** October 27 and 28, 2023

*Note: This conference is expected to take place offline only.*

**Opening address:** Leigh Gardner (London School of Economics)

**Keynote speakers:** Jutta Bolt (University of Groningen), Marlous van Waijenburg (Harvard University), Leonard Wantchekon (Princeton University), Jacob Weisdorf (University of Rome, Sapienza)

**Closing address:** Gareth Austin (University of Cambridge)

**Roundtable:** Has History condemned Africa to be poor?

**Conference organizers:** Helder Carvalho, Jordi Caum, and Nuno Palma, University of Manchester.

**Conference theme:** We plan to accept papers that cover all periods of African economic history, but with a focus on the period prior to 1950.

#### Deadlines:

- **September 11** – deadline to send us a paper proposal
- September 25 – we will communicate the accepted proposals (and possibly a waiting list)
- October 16 – final program will be posted

**For applications, please email a paper proposal to [Nuno Palma](#). You can apply with only a title and abstract, but complete manuscripts have a higher chance to get accepted into the program. A poster session may also take place. Applications by PhD students are encouraged.**

#### Costs and funding:

There will be no conference fee. We have secured ESRC funding which will cover catering costs and dinner, as well as travel and accommodation costs for graduate students who do not have funds from their own institutions. We expect presenters to be a mix of junior and senior scholars. Pending on other ongoing funding applications, we may be able to fund additional benefits for those who need this in order to attend. However, it is unlikely that we will be able to fund full travel and accommodation costs for all participants. Tenured faculty, in particular, will be expected to cover their travel and accommodation costs.

# Decolonizing Monetary Policy

*YSI Workshop in Cairo*

**13 – 14 December 2023, Egypt**

*A workshop to study monetary policy in the context of the post 1945 transformation of retreating empires, and newly emerging nation-states*

Widely seen as a turning point for decolonization, World War II also marked a new phase in international finance, as the dollar increasingly clearly displaced sterling. This workshop gives young academics an opportunity to meet in Cairo on December 13th and 14th 2023, to explore relatively understudied colonial monetary systems, institutions and finance. Centering money and monetary institutions in discussions of economic and social dynamics in the Global South, this call for papers is for young academics interested in unpacking the decolonial turn in finance and money.

The YSI Economic History, Africa and History of Economic Thought Working Groups are calling for a two-day workshop aimed at delving into the transformation of retreating empires and the rise of newly emerging nation-states within a post-war financial infrastructure emblemized by the U.S.-led Bretton Woods institutions and the Marshall Plan. This workshop provides an opportunity to reflect on the historical experience of the Global South from diverse perspectives, regional, national and global, and to assess the current position of these economies in the world economy. The event will be hosted in Cairo by the Centre d'Etudes et de Documentation Economiques, Juridiques et sociales – Cedej.

While economic history has been biased toward European and American economic history, this workshop focuses on African, South America, Turkish and South Asian economic history. We encourage young scholars from various backgrounds and nationalities to submit papers on topics related but not limited to:

- Colonial monetary relationships
- Historical financial infrastructure
- Post-War institutions and Empire
- Colonial vs. State Money
- Decolonization, neo-colonization, dependence

The two-day workshop offers an opportunity for early career researchers in the Global South to engage with mentors from the alumni of the YSI community and other senior economic historians to explore further the debate on decolonising money.

**To apply, please submit a short CV as well as a long abstract of 500 words by no later than August 30th to [decolonisingmoney@gmail.com](mailto:decolonisingmoney@gmail.com).**

Note that we only accept unpublished papers. Lodging will be paid in Cairo for everyone and some limited travel support will be available. Please indicate in your application whether you would like to apply for travel support.

For more information contact any of the organizers.

**PROJECT ORGANIZERS**

Maylis Avaro, Mostafa Abdelaal, Atiya Hussain, Peter Uledi

## OPPORTUNITIES



**LEAP**  
Laboratory for the  
Economics of Africa's Past

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☎ +27 21 808 3590  
🌐 [www.leap Stellenbosch.org.za](http://www.leap Stellenbosch.org.za)

### Bursary Opportunity: LEAP Graduate Studies Bursary 2024

**Organisation:** Department of Economics, Stellenbosch University

**Study Level:** Graduate Studies (Honours or Masters)

**Field:** Economics

**Year:** 2024

**Nationality:** Students from SADC countries

**Interest:** Economic history


**Recommended Skills:** Strong technical ability - undergraduate statistics courses or graduate econometrics courses

The Laboratory for the Economics of Africa's Past (LEAP), a centre within the Department of Economics at Stellenbosch University, invites applications for its 2024 Graduate Studies Bursary from students residing in SADC countries. The programme welcomes Economics students interested in economic history topics. Although formal training in this area is not a prerequisite, a strong technical ability, ideally gained through undergraduate statistics or graduate econometrics courses, is highly recommended.

The successful candidates will receive a competitive bursary valued at R180 000 with a potential extension for an additional year.

**The deadline for applications is 18 August 2023.** Applications should be sent to [leap@sun.ac.za](mailto:leap@sun.ac.za) and should include a) a cv, b) a full academic transcript, c) a cover letter, and d) at least one reference letter from a supervisor or lecturer (preferably two).

Don't miss this chance to further your academic pursuits in the field of economics with a focus on Africa's past. Apply now for the LEAP Graduate Studies Bursary 2024.

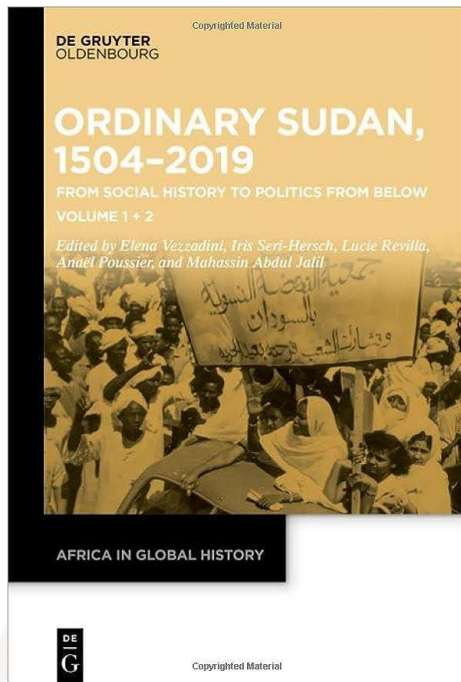
The LEAP logo is stylized with the letters 'L', 'E', 'A', and 'P' in a bold, geometric font. The 'L' and 'E' are connected, and the 'A' and 'P' are also connected. The letters are filled with a pattern of small, repeating geometric shapes.  
📍 The Laboratory for the Economics of Africa's Past (LEAP), Stellenbosch University, Private Bag X1, Matieland, 7602

# New research in African economic history

## FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

### Ordinary Sudan, 1504–2019: From Social History to Politics from Below

Edited by Elena Vezzadini, Iris Seri-Hersch, Lucie Revilla, Anaël Poussier and Mahassin Abdul Jalil



This book starts from the premise that the study of "exceptionally normal" women and men – as conceived by microhistory – has radical implications for understanding history and politics, and applies this notion to Sudan. Against a historiography dominated by elite actors and international agents, it examines both how ordinary people have brought about the most important political shifts in the country's history (including the recent revolution in 2019) and how they have played a role in maintaining authoritarian regimes. It also explores how men and women have led their daily lives through a web of ordinary worries, desires and passions.

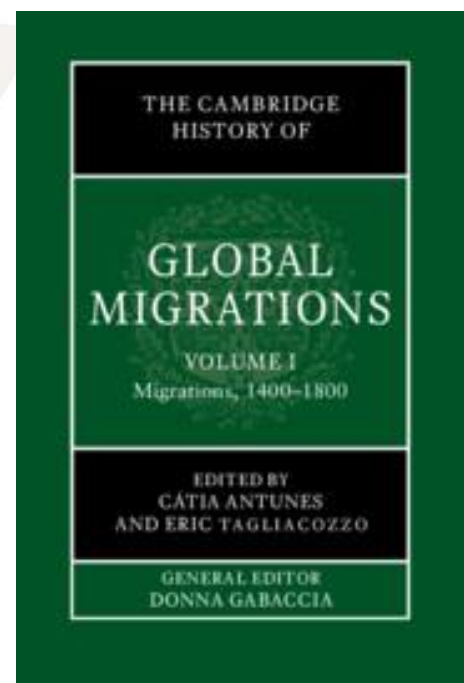
The book includes contributions by historians, anthropologists, and political scientists who often have a dual commitment to Middle Eastern and African studies. While focusing on the complexity and nuances of Sudanese local lives in both the past and the present, it also connects Sudan and South Sudan with broader regional, global, and imperial trends.

### The Cambridge History of Global Migrations

Edited by Cátia Antunes and Eric Tagliacozzo

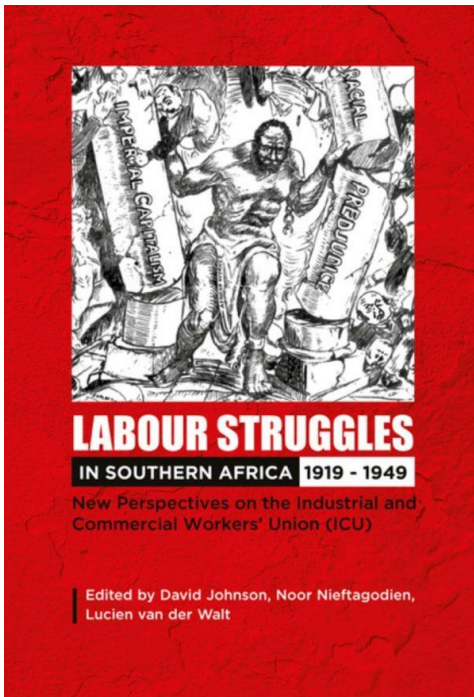
Volume I documents the lives and experiences of everyday people through the lens of human movement and mobility from 1400–1800. Focusing on the most important typologies of pre-industrial global migrations, this volume reveals how these movements transformed global paths of mobility, the impacts of which we still see in societies today. Case studies include those that arose from the demand of free, forced and unfree labour, long and short distance trade, rural/urban displacement, religious mobility and the rise of the number of refugees worldwide. With thirty chapters from leading experts in the field, this authoritative volume is an essential and detailed study of how migration shaped the nature of global human interactions before the age of modern globalization.

See Chapters 2 - Africans on the Move: The Transatlantic Slave Trade (Damian Alan Pargas) and 30 - Refugees in Africa, 1490–1820 (Rémi Dewièrè)



## Labour Struggles in Southern Africa, 1919-1949: New Perspectives on the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU)

David Johnson, Noor Nieftagodien and Lucien van der Walt



This collection provides fresh perspectives on the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa (ICU). By far the largest black political organisation in Southern Africa before the 1940s, the ICU was active in six African colonies as well as in global trade union networks.

Thirteen original chapters by major scholars examine different aspects of the ICU's record in the 1920s and 1930s, assessing its achievements and its failures in relation to the post-apartheid present. In its syndicalist One Big Union approach to protecting workers' rights; its emphasis on economic freedoms; its internationalism; and its robust protection of women and migrant workers, the ICU challenged fundamentally the axioms, tactics, and programmes of rival organisations like the African National Congress. More than simply an exercise in excavating a crucial chapter in struggle history, this volume demonstrates that the traditions and legacies of the ICU are of great relevance to contemporary Southern Africa.

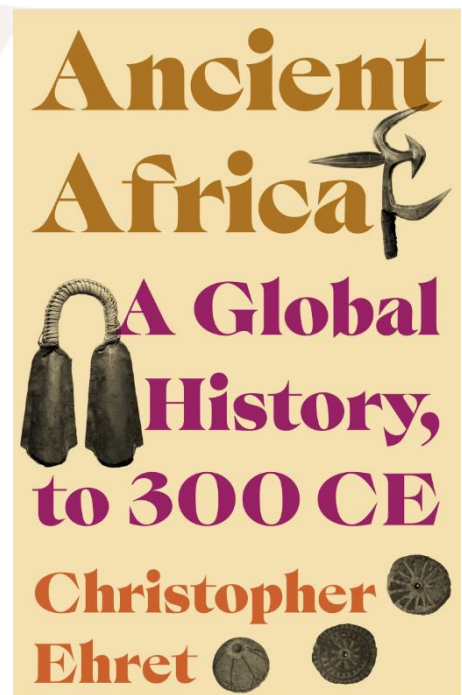
## Ancient Africa: A Global History, to 300 CE

Christopher Ehret

This book brings together archaeological and linguistic evidence to provide a sweeping global history of ancient Africa, tracing how the continent played an important role in the technological, agricultural, and economic transitions of world civilization. Christopher Ehret takes readers from the close of the last Ice Age some ten thousand years ago, when a changing climate allowed for the transition from hunting and gathering to the cultivation of crops and raising of livestock, to the rise of kingdoms and empires in the first centuries of the common era.

Ehret takes up the problem of how we discuss Africa in the context of global history, combining results of multiple disciplines. He sheds light on the rich history of technological innovation by African societies—from advances in ceramics to cotton weaving and iron smelting—highlighting the important contributions of women as inventors and innovators. He shows how Africa helped to usher in an age of agricultural exchange, exporting essential crops as well as new agricultural methods into other regions, and how African traders and merchants led a commercial revolution spanning diverse regions and cultures. Ehret lays out the deeply African foundations of ancient Egyptian culture, beliefs, and institutions and discusses early Christianity in Africa.

A monumental achievement by one of today's eminent scholars, Ancient Africa offers vital new perspectives on our shared past, explaining why we need to reshape our historical frameworks for understanding the ancient world as a whole.



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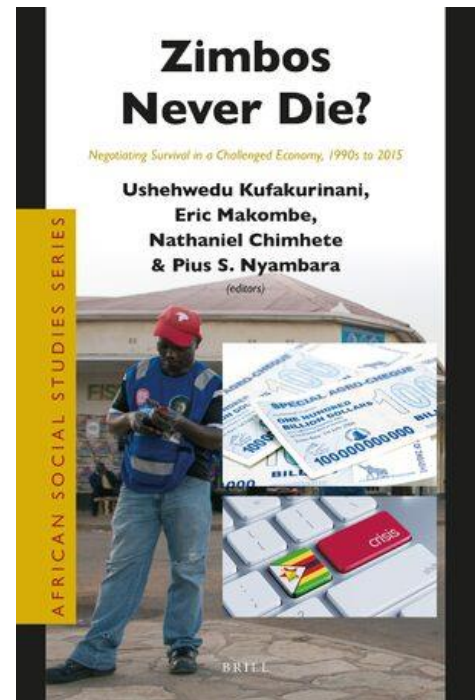


## Zimbos Never Die? Negotiating Survival in a Challenged Economy, 1990s to 2015

Edited by **Ushehwedu Kufakurinani, Eric Kushinga Makombe, Nathaniel Chimhete and Pius Nyambara**

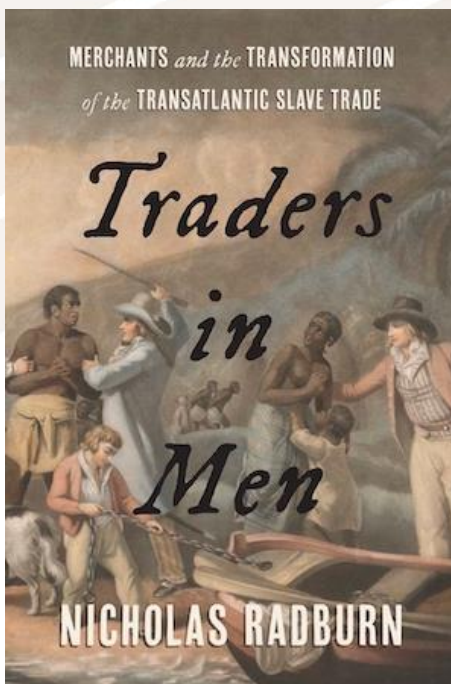
This book seeks to explore how the Zimbabwean society and its institutions have survived if not succumbed to continuous economic crises in the country. From the 1990s Zimbabwe experienced a sustained economic decline challenged by both internal and external strains. Coupled with internal mis-governance and corruption, the nation plunged into a political and economic crisis which culminated in the second highest world inflation rate for an economy that is not at war. In the face of the harsh and continuously deteriorating economic environments, Zimbabweans as individuals as well as part of institutions adopted various strategies to negotiate and survive the economic scourge.

Contributors include Wellington Bamu, Nathaniel Chimhete, Anusa Daimon, Innocent Dande, Sylvester Dombo, Tinotenda Dube, Rudo Gaidzanwa, Tafara Evelyn Kombora, Ushehwedu Kufakurinani, Bernard Kusena, Eric Kushinga Makombe, Albert Makochekeka, Blessed Masawi, Ivo Mhike, Joseph P. Mtisi, Joseph Mujere, Wesley Mwatwara, Pius S. Nyambara, Tinashe Nyamunda, Mark Nyandoro, Takesure Taringana and Nicola Yon (Mutimurefu).



## Traders in Men: Merchants and the Transformation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

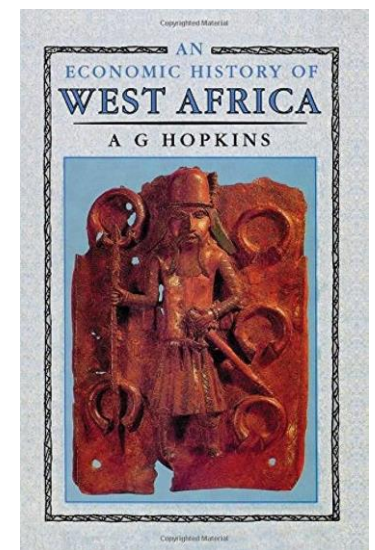
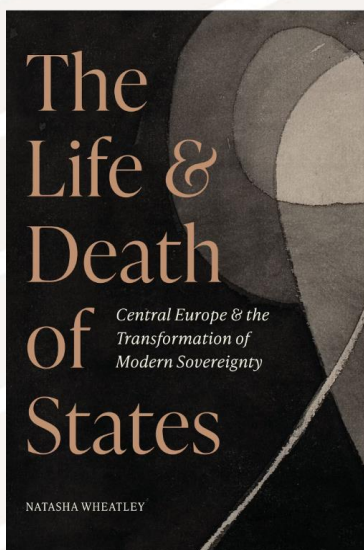
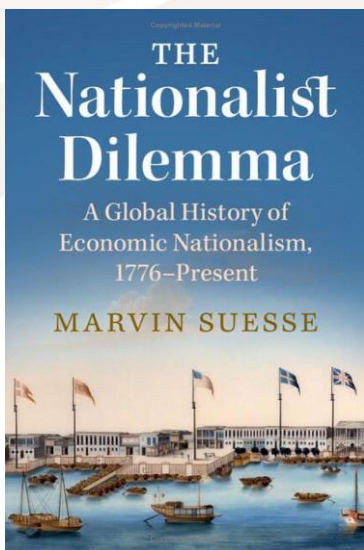
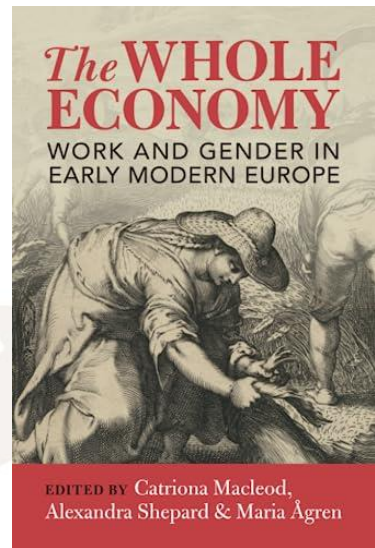
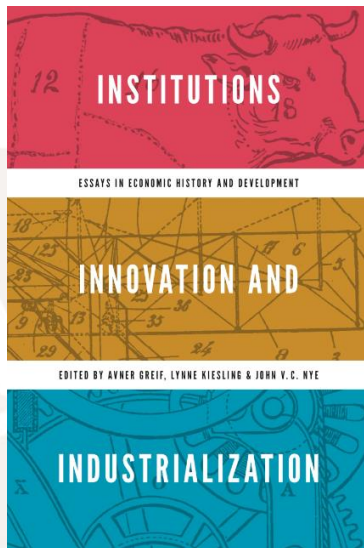
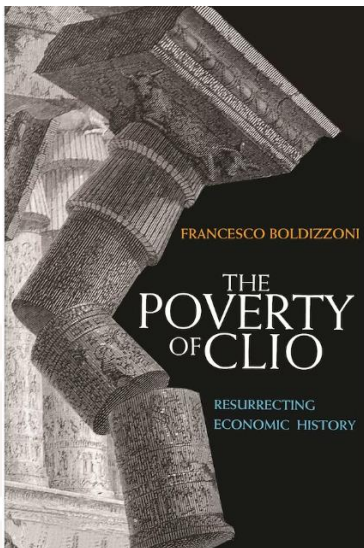
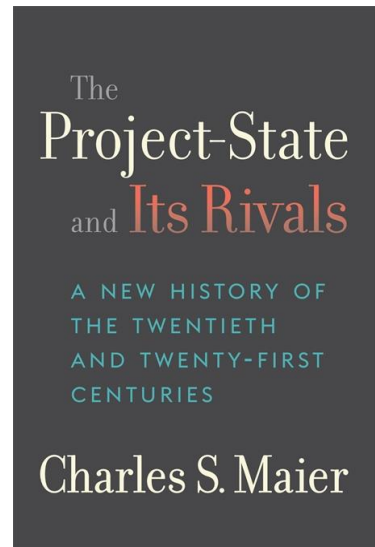
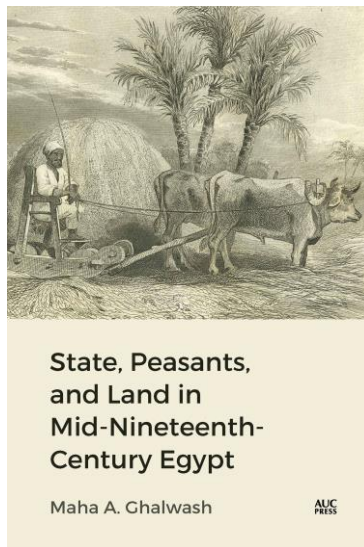
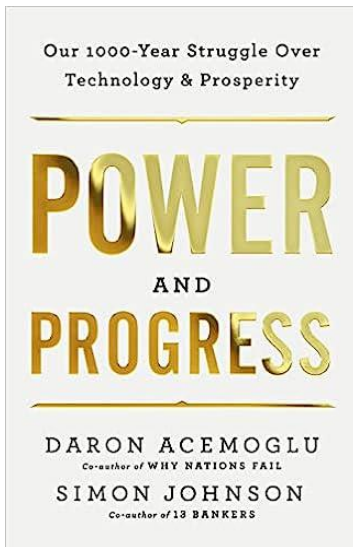
**Nicholas Radburn**



During the eighteenth century, Britain's slave trade exploded in size. Formerly a small and geographically constricted business, the trade had, by the eve of the American Revolution, grown into a transatlantic system through which fifty thousand men, women, and children were enslaved every year.

In this wide-ranging history, Nicholas Radburn explains how thousands of merchants collectively transformed the slave trade by devising highly efficient but violent new business methods. African brokers developed commercial infrastructure that facilitated the enslavement and sale of millions of people. Britons invented shipping methods that quelled enslaved people's constant resistance on the Middle Passage. And American slave traders formulated brutal techniques through which shiploads of people could be quickly sold to colonial buyers. Truly Atlantic-wide in its vision, this study shows how the slave trade dragged millions of people into its terrible vortex and became one of the most important phenomena in world history.

Other new books in economic history



Celebrating 50 years in print

## ARTICLES

### Colonial origins and quality of education evidence from Cameroon

*World Development*

**Yasmine Bekkouche and Yannick Dupraz**

We revisit the question of colonial legacies in education by focusing on quality rather than quantity. We study Cameroon, a country where a Francophone education system with French colonial origins coexists with an Anglophone system with British colonial origins. This allows us to investigate the impact of different teaching practices on students' test scores. We find that pupils schooled in the Francophone system perform better in mathematics in Grade 5, with test scores higher by two thirds of a standard deviation. Thanks to detailed school survey data, we are able to account for a wide array of inputs of the education production function, such as the economic and social conditions of students, the material conditions of the schools and classrooms, as well as some information on the teachers' practices and pedagogical culture. We find that Francophone schools have better classroom equipment and that Francophone teachers use more vertical teaching methods, but that these differences cannot explain why Francophone students perform better in mathematics. In the end, we cannot pin down the exact mechanism behind our result.

### The colonial gap: An analysis of income distribution in the Port of Dakar, 1911–1940

*Economic History of Developing Regions*

**Daniel Castillo Hidalgo**

This study presents new empirical evidence on the structure of income of African workers in the Port of Dakar between 1911 and 1940. It provides a systematic series of public wages earned by the African and European workforce in a colonial seaport. This series includes income structure by skill tier of public employees and labourers employed at the port. Did wage structure evolve according to relative increases in human capital accumulation in this major colonial seaport? In this investigation, I use data collected from the annual budgets of the port to seek explanations for the structural differences in income in three consecutive decades between 1911 and 1940. I found that the skill premium between highly skilled and unskilled African workers was 3.8 on average during the period analysed. Moreover, the skill premium between mid-skilled and unskilled workers is estimated to be 2.7. Furthermore, top and senior European staff (less than 10% of the staff) accounted for 36% of the overall income. I provide quantitative evidence on how colonial allowances were the key element that contributed to the increasing income gap between European and African workers in similar job categories.

### The development of colonial health care provision in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire: ca. 1900–55

*Economic History of Developing Regions*

**Arlinde C.E. Vrooman**

Colonial administrations introduced various social infrastructures in Africa. This paper analyses and compares the development of colonial governments' health care provision and policies in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire from circa 1900 to 1955. Using qualitative and quantitative information from colonial reports, a new dataset captures the development of four factors relevant to these aims: health care expenditures, health care facilities, medical staff, and patients. Deflated health care expenditures per capita were found to be higher in Ghana than in Côte d'Ivoire in almost all years. The number of health care facilities per capita was larger in Côte d'Ivoire than in Ghana, and facilities were more geographically dispersed. Ghana had a lower number of medical staff per capita than Côte d'Ivoire as of the 1920s. Medical staff from Côte d'Ivoire formed the majority of the staff base as early as the mid-1910s. Finally, the analysis shows that the number of patients treated in health care facilities in Ghana was low until the 1920s, and took off as more facilities became available during the 1940s. These findings provide evidence that even two countries that are relatively similar (apart from their colonial history) can have different colonial health care trajectories.

## **The Effect of Pre-Colonial Ethnic Institutions and European Influences on Contemporary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa**

*The Journal of Development Studies*

**Leoné Walters, Carolyn Chisadza and Matthew Clance**

Present-day education outcomes in Africa cannot independently be attributed to pre-colonial ethnic institutions, exposure to historical missionary activity or colonial rule. It is instead the complementarity or contention between these European influences and pre-colonial ethnic institutions such as political centralisation that result in education outcomes we observe today. Using geolocated DHS literacy outcomes for thirteen sub-Saharan African countries, our findings suggest pre-colonial political centralisation and European influences have heterogeneous effects on contemporary literacy, depending on the interaction between these institutions. This paper contributes to debates on colonial and pre-colonial ethnic influences on African development, moving beyond country-level analysis.

## **What about the race between education and technology in the Global South? Comparing skill premiums in colonial Africa and Asia**

*The Economic History Review*

**Ewout Frankema and Marlous van Waijenburg**

Historical research on the race between education and technology has focused on the West but barely touched upon 'the rest'. A new occupational wage database for 50 African and Asian economies allows us to compare long-run patterns in skill premiums across the colonial and post-colonial eras (c. 1870–2010). Our data reveal three major patterns. First, skilled labour was considerably more expensive in colonial Africa and Asia than in pre-industrial Europe. Second, skill premiums were distinctly higher in Africa than in Asia. Third, in both regions, skill premiums fell dramatically over the course of the twentieth century, ultimately converging to levels long observed in the West. Our paper takes a first step to explain both the origins of the Africa–Asia gap and the drivers of global skill premium convergence, paying special attention to the colonial context that shaped demand, supply, and labour market institutions.

## **Tradition and mortality: Evidence from twin infanticide in Africa**

*Journal of Development Economics*

**James Fenske and Shizhuo Wang**

Traditions can limit investment in early life health, even if they have been abandoned. We introduce data on historic twin infanticide and merge it with recent birth records from 23 African countries. We use the full sample and a border sample of adjacent societies with and without past twin infanticide. Both samples provide no evidence that past twin infanticide predicts greater differential twin mortality today. This null result is likely a consequence of suppression efforts by Africans, missionaries, and colonial governments. Where these channels were weak, we find evidence of greater twin mortality today.

## **The development of the arid tropics: Lessons for economic history**

*Economic History of Developing Regions*

**Tirthankar Roy**

For centuries, the world's tropical regions have been poorer than the temperate-zone countries. Does tropicity make the struggle for economic development harder? What do people caught up in the struggle do? The paper defines 'tropicality' as the combination of aridity and seasonal rainfall, and in turn, high inter- and intra-year variability in moisture influx. In the past, this condition would generate a variety of adaptive strategies such as migration and transhumance. In the twentieth century, the response pattern changed from adapting to moisture supply towards control of moisture supply. This process unleashed conflict and environmental stress in the vulnerable geography of the semi-arid tropics.

## Living standards of copper mine labour in Chile and the Central African Copperbelt compared, 1920s to 1960s

*Economic History of Developing Regions*  
**Dácil Juif and Sergio Garrido**

Large-scale copper mining has been the main industry in Chile and the countries conforming the Central African Copperbelt for about one century. While a relatively extensive social science literature exists on the mostly adverse macroeconomic and institutional effects of a high reliance on mineral exports and revenues, we address the effects on the labour force employed by this industry. We perform a novel inter-continental – as well as dynamic-historical – comparative assessment of the living standards of the domestic copper mineworkers in the three countries from ca1920 to ca1960. There are important similarities and disparities in levels and trends of real wages and other welfare provisions. In explaining the gap across continents, we discuss labour shortage and labour provision, productivity, and mobilization. We also highlight the underlying role of colonialism in determining the inter-continental differences. Copper miners are further found to have been better paid than other workers in all three countries.

## Legal origins of corporate governance: Choice of law in Egypt, 1887–1914

*The Economic History Review*  
**Cihan Artunç**

This paper revisits the classic question of legal origins: whether laws originating from common or civil law traditions are more effective in promoting governance rules with stronger shareholder and investor protection. But corporate governance cannot be easily disentangled from other sources that can influence firm outcomes. This paper disentangles these effects by assembling a new dataset of corporations in Egypt between 1887 and 1914. Egypt had an unusual system of incorporation. The main legal system was a close French transplant but entrepreneurs – Europeans and Egyptians alike – had the option of incorporating under any European law. This practice allowed extraordinary legal flexibility in choice of law, governance provisions, and board composition. The new findings show that companies incorporated under British law provided weaker shareholder protection than companies incorporated under French laws, especially in giving weaker voting rights to minority shareholders, preventing oversight over directors' borrowing powers, and limiting director rotation. These rules mattered for firm performance. Corporations with weaker investor protection had higher failure risk, were less profitable, and had lower firm value.

## The Middle-Eastern marriage pattern? Malthusian dynamics in nineteenth-century Egypt

*The Economic History Review*  
**Yuzuru Kumon and Mohamed Saleh**

Malthus predicted that fertility rises with income and that people regulate fertility via regulating marriage. However, evidence on the Malthusian equilibrium has been mostly confined to Europe and East Asia. We employ Egypt's population censuses of 1848 and 1868 to provide the first evidence on the preindustrial Malthusian dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa. At the aggregate level, we document rural Egyptian women having a high fertility rate that is close to the Western European level, combined with low age at marriage and low celibacy rate, that are closer to the East Asian levels. This resulted in a uniquely high fertility regime that was probably offset by the high child mortality. Next, we provide individual-level evidence on the positive correlation between fertility and income (occupation). We find that the higher fertility of rural white-collar men is attributed to their marriage behaviour, and not to marital fertility. Specifically, white-collar men's higher polygyny explains 45 per cent of their fertility advantage, whereas their higher marriage rate and lower wife's age at marriage explains 55 per cent. Therefore, polygyny was an additional factor that led to a steeper income–fertility curve than in Western Europe by enabling the rural middle class to out-breed the poor.

## **Social institutions, gender attitudes and female labour force participation in sub-Saharan Africa**

*South African Journal of Economics*

**Tendai Zawaira, Matthew Clance and Carolyn Chisadza**

Using data from the Ethnographic Atlas and World Values Survey within a structural equation modelling (GSEM) framework, we analyse how historical social institutions and current gender attitudes influence female employment outcomes, specifically female labour force participation in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). We find that patriarchal systems generally reduce female labour force participation, in relation to matriarchal systems. We also find that current gender attitudes have negative effects that appear to be dominated by the historical social institutions. The findings suggest that historical social institutions are important in understanding gender dynamics in SSA because they inform on gender identification and appropriate gender roles.

## **Legacies of loss: The health outcomes of slaveholder compensation in the British Cape Colony**

*Explorations in Economic History*

**Igor Martins, Jeanne Cilliers and Johan Fourie**

Can wealth shocks have intergenerational health consequences? We use the partial compensation slaveholders received after the 1834 slave emancipation in the British Cape Colony to measure the intergenerational effects of a wealth loss on longevity. We find that a greater loss of slave wealth shortened the lifespans of the generation of slaveholders that experienced the shock albeit these effects are usually small and mostly confined to older cohorts of slaveholders who likely exploited slaves both as labor and capital inputs. The lifespans of those of the second generation who survived infancy were unaffected by the shortfalls and no effects of the shortfall were found for the third generation.

## **WORKING PAPERS**

### **The Women Empowering Effect of Higher Education**

**Ahmed Elsayed and Alina Shirshikova**

We examine the effects of the large-scale construction of public universities in Egypt during the 1960s and 1970s. We found that opening a local university increased the likelihood of obtaining higher education degrees and had long-lasting positive effects on labor market and marriage outcomes, particularly for women. We give insights on internal migration as a channel and show that migration prior to university enrollment age decreased while migration after that age increased as an outcome of university construction. Local universities reduced men's migration for study and women's migration for early marriage. The paper highlights the importance of increasing access to higher education for positive social and labor outcomes, particularly for women.

### **The Impact of the Prehistoric Out of Africa Migration on Cultural Diversity**

**Oded Galor, Marc Klemp and Daniel Crisóstomo Wainstock**

Evidence suggests that the Out of Africa Migration has impacted the degree of intra-population genetic and phenotypic diversity across the globe. This paper provides the first evidence that this migration has shaped cultural diversity. Leveraging a folklore catalogue of 958 oral traditions across the world, we show that ethnic groups further away from East Africa along the migratory routes have lower folkloric diversity. This pattern is consistent with the compression of genetic, phenotypic, and phonemic traits along the Out of Africa migration routes, setting conditions for the emergence and proliferation of differential cultural diversity and economic development across the world.

## Prebisch and Singer in the Egyptian cotton fields

Osama Diab

This article explores new approaches to the study of colonial trade relationships between Egypt and Britain in the long 19th century. More specifically, it employs the Prebisch-Singer Hypothesis (PSH) to assess whether Egypt's barter terms of trade (BTT) with Britain has deteriorated or improved during the long 19th century. The article argues that the BTT evolution is key to understanding two central phenomena of the modern capitalist era away from Weberian- and Sombartian-style culturalist interpretations. First is the growing uneven development—known as the Great Divergence—between the 'core' and the 'periphery' of the global economic system, and second is the rise of anti-colonial sentiments and policies in the Global South.

## The South African Census Project

Joachim Wehner and Daniel de Kadt

Commencing in 2016 this project set out to digitize the entire historical census stock of South Africa, covering a century of data from the first census undertaken in the Cape of Good Hope in 1865 and until the 1960s. This note covers background, archive contents and digitisation, and our research agenda and initial outputs. Please cite this note if you use the images in research and publications.

## The Tools of Voter Suppression: Racial Disenfranchisement in the Cape of Good Hope

Joachim Wehner and Daniel de Kadt

History is replete with racially targeted voter suppression, yet empirical evidence on the consequences of specific efforts is rare. We study electoral reforms introduced by Prime Minister Cecil Rhodes and others in the Cape Colony (South Africa) at the turn of the 20th century. Using the complete voter roll for 1903 we estimate that over the preceding decade these reforms disenfranchised between 10,320 and 15,610 mostly Black and mixed-race voters, likely compounding into the future. Without suppression the electorate in 1903 would have been 7.6 to 11.5% larger, with the number of voters of colour 50 to 75% higher, magnitudes that we show could have altered election outcomes. Using unique features of the roll we quantify three tools -- a socioeconomic lever, a spatial lever, and a discretion lever -- that constituted the basic architecture of large-scale racially targeted voter suppression, culminating in mass racial disenfranchisement under apartheid.

## How Can I Liberate the Slaves?" The Neglected Tradition of Developmental Abolitionism

Abel B. S. Gaiya

The abolition of slavery in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was a long process. In terms of the economic views of abolitionists, there has been an excessive focus on the economic ideas of liberal abolitionists and their approach to Civilization, Christianity and Commerce. However, there was a "developmental abolitionism" which has received little attention. Afro-American Martin R. Delany and Liberian James S. Payne were writers who approached abolitionism through this developmentalism. They favored more interventionist measures at building the material power and national autonomy of black nations to undercut the power of slave-using African chiefs, to provide indigenous Africans with employment, and to undermine the profitability of slave-based cotton production in the Americas. They also implicitly and indirectly approached labor scarcity with solutions ranging from promoting labor-saving technology to cultivating national prosperity that would improve emigration to Africa or increase birth rates.

## New evidence on life expectancy and development: is Sub-Saharan Africa different?

Charlie Yves Ngoudji Tameko and Paul Ningaye

This paper applies the standard  $\beta$ -convergence analysis and the log-t test methods to compare the convergence process of life expectancy and per capita GDP, using a sample of 89 countries between 1960-2019 and analyse the interrelation and the dynamics of these phenomena in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) after the international epidemiological transition. We use life expectancy at birth and

per capita GDP estimates from respectively the World Bank's Population Estimates and Projections and the Penn World Table. Our results show evidence of significant catching-up in life expectancy between SSA countries and the rich and the other poor world by 2019 after a slowdown period between 1985 and 2000 in which most SSA countries converge into multiple steady states. Further, we find that the world without SSA is converging economically in 2019 while significant cross-country variations and convergence clubs are noted when taking into consideration the region. Finally, our results indicate that the economic performances of SSA are not the only factors driving the health catch-up, the increasing convergence in the antimalarial policies' implementation in SSA after 2003 play great role in this process.

## **Colonialism, Cash Crops and Women in Africa**

**Martina Miotto**

I study the impact of European colonialism in Africa on the present status of women. The historical literature suggests that a critical determinant of persistent gender inequality is the colonial cash crop system. This favoured men's entry into the cash economy and excluded women, whose workload increased as they provided additional labour in their husbands' cash crop fields. By contrast, contemporary economic literature suggests that raising the status of women in the labour force could improve gender norms. I take districts with different levels of participation in cash crop agriculture during colonial rule and compare outcomes for the contemporary female descendants, using exogenous land suitability as the instrument for cash crop production. My findings show a persistent positive effect of cash crop agriculture on women's status, measured as higher agency within the household, less willingness to justify husbands' violence, and higher levels of education. No effect is found for labour force participation. The intergenerational transmission of culture plays a key role in explaining the long-run persistent effect, which is especially prevalent in regions whose cash crops were cocoa and palm oil, as women played a substantial role in producing these crops.

## **Estimating Historical Inequality from Social Tables: Towards Methodological Consistency**

**Dieter von Fintel, Calumet Links and Erik Green**

Research on long-term historical inequality has expanded to include previously neglected periods and societies, particularly in the global South. This is partly due to the resurgence of the social tables method in economic history, an approach which uses archival records to reconstruct income and wealth distributions in contexts where micro data is unavailable. This method can cause a downward bias in estimating inequality, but there is limited evidence of this bias in economic history. We collected a new data set of 108 historical social tables spanning over a 1000 years. We found that the compilers consistently made careful methodological choices that took data limitations into account. We found that the inequality estimates are not systematically related to the number of classes chosen or the size of the top class, but that choosing bottom classes that bundle together even small variations in income or wealth can introduce a downward bias to the inequality estimates. This drawback can be overcome by using methodological cohesion to mitigate the problem of limited information about the poorest classes in colonial archives.

## **Does Turkey Support Development in West Africa? The Example of Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast**

**Dirk Kohnert**

In the 19th and 20th centuries, Turkey considered only North Africa a substantial part of the Ottoman Empire and neglected sub-Saharan Africa unless vital interests were at stake. However, the apathy of successive Turkish governments changed with the 1998 "Africa Action Plan". Since then, the Turkish state has intensified its diplomatic, political, economic and cultural interactions with sub-Saharan Africa. Turkish-African relations received a further boost when Ankara declared 2005 the "Year of Africa". Although the predominantly Muslim region of North Africa is the focus of Turkish foreign policy due to their shared history, the importance of Sub-Saharan Africa has also increased due to the growing demand for military and medical supplies. Since 2005, Ankara promoted state-



building in sub-Saharan Africa, although it does not follow Western democratization policies. Turkey's growing economic, political and security involvement in Africa aims to open new markets for its manufactured goods, particularly its defense and security industries. Presenting itself as a relevant regional power without colonial ballast, Turkey sets itself apart from traditional Western players on the continent. Turkey's engagement in sub-Saharan Africa differed markedly from that of other emerging powers such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. While Ankara shared the disregard for Western sanctions due to BRICS members' democratic deficits, it went beyond traditional state-to-state relations and increasingly relied on cooperation with non-state actors. African partners value Turkish products and expertise. In addition, Ankara has taken a coordinated approach to working with African states and leaders, avoiding entanglements with international organizations or other alliances, as in Somalia and Kenya, but more recently in much of East, South and West Africa. This has been demonstrated using the example of the three West African countries Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast.

## **Africa's Industrialization Prospects: A Fresh Look**

**Wim Naudé and Fiona Tregenna**

This paper identifies the determinants of industrialization in 18 African countries, 1965 to 2018, using various estimators and applying a battery of robustness checks. Industrialization in Africa is driven by historical legacies such as colonialism; geographical factors such as rainfall and distance from international markets; economic factors such competition from China, market size and urbanization; and technological factors such as digital technology adoption. An inverse U-shape relationship between industrialization and GDP per capita is consistent with (premature) de-industrialization. Technological change and adoption of digital technologies are found to have an ambiguous relationship with industrialisation in Africa. The establishment of the AfCFTA is timely, but its benefits will only be realised if countries also improve infrastructure to overcome the negative consequences of adverse geography, improve trade facilitation to exploit learning-by-exporting from intra-African trade, and facilitate urbanization.