



African Economic History Newsletter

Issue #61, February 2024

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 leone.walters@uct.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

AEHN ANNUAL MEETING – CALL FOR PAPERS

17th Annual Meeting of the
African Economic History Network

26 - 27 September 2024



Changes and Continuities in African Economic History: Mobilities, Environment and Development

Faculty of Economics, Department Memotef-Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

The African Economic History Network (AEHN), in association with Sapienza University of Rome and Fondazione Sapienza is pleased to announce a Call for Papers for the 17th Annual Meeting of the African Economic History Network. The meeting will take place at the Faculty of Economics, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, on 26 and 27 September 2024.

The theme revolves around changes and continuities in African economic history, with a special focus on mobilities, environment and development.

Papers on all aspects of African economic history are welcome, but preference will be given to those that pertain to the conference theme. Abstracts no longer than 500 words should be submitted to aehn2024@gmail.com.

Deadline for abstract submission: 2 March 2024

Notification of accepted papers: **2 April 2024**

Stipends will be available for scholars and early career researchers from Africa to assist towards the costs of travel and accommodation. To apply, please indicate in your application that you wish to be considered.

Keynotes will be given by Prof. Gareth Austin (King's College, Cambridge University) and Prof. Carolyn Chisadza (University of Pretoria).

Organizing Committee

Prof. Donatella Strangio, Sapienza University of Rome

Prof. Gabriele Cappelli, University of Siena

Dr Alessandro De Cola, University of the Free State

Prof. Giacomo Gabbuti, Institute of Economics of the *Sant'Anna* School of Advanced Studies

Dr. Matteo Nardozi, Sapienza University of Rome

Prof. Karin Pallaver, University of Bologna

Prof. Luca Puddu, University of Palermo



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ROMA SAPIENZA

Young
Scholars
Initiative

AEHN WORKING PAPER SERIES

If you have an African economic history paper that you would like to submit to AEHN Working Papers for consideration, please contact the editors Leigh Gardner (l.a.gardner@lse.ac.uk) and Felix Meier zu Selhausen (f.p.meierzuselhausen@uu.nl). This working paper series is intended to disseminate research results to other scholars in order to encourage discussion and suggestions before journal publication.

FRONTIERS IN AFRICAN 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 (Jeanne Cilliers, Kate Frederick, Abel Gwaindepi and Rebecca Simson) to discuss possible posts at: frontiers.aehn@gmail.com.

Malthus in the Middle East

Yuzuru Kumon and Mohamed Saleh

Using the 1848 and 1868 Egyptian population censuses, this paper shows that Egyptian rural families were barely regulating fertility in the mid-19th century, and that the rural population was controlled instead via (very) high child mortality rates. Rural middle-class men (mainly village headmen) had higher fertility than unskilled workers, because of their higher polygyny rates, and not because of greater fertility within marriage.

Inequality Regimes in Africa from Pre-Colonial Times to the Present

Michiel de Haas, Ewout Frankema and Marlous van Waijenburg

We chart the long-run patterns and drivers of inequality in Africa from the slave trade era to the present. Our analysis dismantles mainstream narratives about the colonial roots of persistent high inequality in post-colonial Africa and shows that existing inequality concepts and theories need further calibration to account, among other things, for the role of African slavery in historical inequality regimes.

Colonial Origins and Quality of Education: Evidence from Cameroon

Yasmine Bekkouche and Yannick Dupraz

Do the colonial origins of education systems matter for student performance today? To answer this question, we study Cameroon, a country where a Francophone education system with French colonial roots coexists with an Anglophone system with British colonial roots. We find that students in the Francophone system perform better in mathematics in Grade 5. Although we find that Francophone schools have better classroom equipment and that their teachers use more vertical teaching methods, we fail to fully explain the Francophone advantage.

News and announcements

WORLD ECONOMIC HISTORY CONGRESS - CALL FOR SESSIONS



28 July – 1 August 2025
Lund, Sweden

Deadline for submissions: 15 March 2024

We have a particularly strong desire to attract sessions related to the theme *Equality and Sustainability Challenges*. However, submissions are welcome on the economic and social histories of all places and periods, and on the

exploration of varied sources and methods, and on the theory and uses of economic history itself.

The 20th World Economic History Congress will convene from 28 July–1 August 2025 in Lund, Sweden. The theme for the Congress is *Equality and Sustainability Challenges*, which highlights some of the central issues facing humanity today and also connects to a broad and diverse range of historical problems. To address both the challenges and to find insights from the historical record for that endeavour, a range of perspectives will be necessary.

The IEHA has a particularly strong desire to attract sessions related to this theme. However, submissions are welcome on the economic and social histories of all places and periods, and on the exploration of varied sources and methods, and on the theory and uses of economic history itself. We also invite members to employ and analyse diverse strategies for representing the past.

Sessions may be proposed by any member of the international economic history community, whatever their institutional affiliation or status, as well as by scholars in related disciplines. Given the diversity of our membership, we will consider any submission that advances the study, teaching and public presentation of economic history. We welcome panel proposals that highlight scholarship emerging from economic history, business history, financial history, demographic history, environmental history, global and world history, social history, urban and agrarian history, gender studies, material culture, methodological approaches to historical research, history of economics and economic thought, science and technology studies, and other related fields.

The programme of the Lund Congress will be organised on the same principles as previous Congresses. The 5-day Congress will have approximately 180 sessions, with each day divided into time blocks of 90 minutes each (two before lunch and two after lunch). As in the past, it will be possible to combine two sessions into larger coherent units.

The session proposals should contain:

- Name, title, affiliation, and contact information of the session organiser
- Possible co-organisers (optional)
- Title of the session
- Description of the session's aim, contribution, and relevance (max 5,000 characters with blanks)
- Researchers invited to participate in the session, or those already confirmed, and their affiliations

The call for sessions will close on March 15, 2024. Sessions should be submitted via the portal at this [link](#). Please note that unlike in past years, there will be **ONLY ONE** call for sessions. Decisions will be finalised in June 2024.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Symposium on Trade and Indigenous Nations

Globalization is about the world becoming smaller and different peoples, cultures, and economic systems coming into increasingly frequent contact. These interactions can be peaceful and mutually beneficial, but they can also be coercive and exploitive. While much of the literature on the economics of globalization focuses on the twentieth century, a smaller but important literature considers the long period of globalization associated with European conquest and colonization in Africa, the Americas, Oceania, and elsewhere. This episode of globalization led to massive and frequently traumatic changes in the economic, political, and demographic structure of Indigenous peoples and nations.

We seek to publish a research symposium with articles that address broad themes in the rapidly emerging literature on the effects of the European colonization on Indigenous peoples and nations. The issue will be of special interest to the readers of the Canadian Journal of Economics and to scholars of international trade, as well as the literature on Indigenous economies, both historical and contemporary. We are particularly interested in research that emphasizes trade or that possesses some international or spatial aspect. The word international should be taken broadly to indicate interactions between Indigenous nations and colonizing nations or amongst Indigenous nations.

Some of the specific questions that we have in mind include, but are not confined to, the following:

- How did pre-colonialization Indigenous market structures affect the impact of globalization?
- How did opportunities for trade with colonizing nations enhance or diminish Indigenous economic outcomes both over the short run and with more persistence over the long run? How should we interpret this in the context of vast swaths of economic theory and evidence suggesting that trade is “good”?
- Did trade introduce or correct what economists think of as market failures, including but not limited to resource extraction and management?
- How did the evolution of property rights structures intersect with trade relationships?
- How important was trade for the spread of disease, settlement, or conquest?
- How did trade and transportation technologies and the reservation (in the US) / reserve (in Canada) system interact? How did the spatial remoteness of reservations/reserves shape trade activity for Indigenous nations?
- How do historical patterns of colonization and trade persist into the present?
- How will new patterns of trade caused by climate change affect Indigenous nations in affected areas?

All forms of economic research are invited to apply including reduced-form and structural econometric work, applied theory, the introduction of new data sets and techniques, and qualitative research. The guest editors in charge of this symposium are Rob Gillezeau and Peter Morrow.

The submission deadline is May 1st, 2024. Interested authors should submit their papers through CJE's ScholarOne portal (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cje-rce>). In Step 1 of the submission process, select "Special Issue Paper" as manuscript type. Detailed instructions for manuscript submissions can be found at the journal's website (<https://www.economics.ca/cpages/cje-authors>). In addition, papers that will be accepted into this issue will be organized into a conference fall 2024. Limited travel bursaries will be available.

The Connected World: New Perspectives in Global Economic History

Workshop and Special Issue

Revista de Historia Industrial – Industrial History Review (RHI-IHR)

The Dana Studio, Science Museum, London

05 June 2024, 9am-5:30pm

The Revista de Historia Industrial–Industrial History Review would like to invite you to submit a paper proposal for an in-person workshop on “The Connected World: New Perspectives in Global Economic History” (June 05, 2024). It will be organized by Alka Raman (University of Manchester), together with RHI-IHR, The University of Manchester, and The Science Museum (London). The workshop is aimed at discussing the accepted proposals and selecting five papers to be included in a special issue, guest edited by Alka Raman, to be published in 2025.

About

Global Economic History departs from a conventional view of economic history via its starting position – the historical inter-connectedness of the different regions of the world. This novel starting position allows Global Historians to offer new insights into old questions of Economic History pertaining to industrialisation and economic growth through reassessments of global circulation of people, goods, ideas, techniques, diseases, and institutions, among other parameters. The discipline is forging new ground with the help of innovative new approaches and methodologies. Whether through bold new micro material evidence-based research or by shifting the lens from Eurocentric to a genuinely global perspective or by incorporating evidence and investigative techniques from adjacent disciplines, new work in Global Economic History is altering the landscape of how we view our shared economic and industrial past by transcending not only national but also methodological boundaries.

The Workshop

RHI-IHR Guest Editor Dr Alka Raman invites papers on any aspect of, and using any methodology in, Global Economic History for the workshop, ‘The Connected World: New Perspectives in Global Economic History.’ The workshop will be held at the Science Museum in London on 05 June, 2024. The scope of the workshop is not limited by time period, geography or methodology. The workshop aims to open new avenues of research with new questions, tools, as well as discussions on methods and approaches to Global Economic History amongst a collegial group of academics. Early career researchers are especially encouraged to submit abstracts. We welcome papers addressing, but not limited to, the following themes:

- Technological Innovations and their Impact on Global Historical Developments
- Innovative Approaches to Studying Industry, Trade, Finance, and Economic Systems
- History of Industrialisation involving Social, Economic, Institutional, Environmental or Demographic Change
- Digital Humanities and Global Economic History
- Cross-disciplinary Collaborations: Industrial History, Global History, Economic History, Cultural and Religious Studies
- Interactions between Humans and the Environment
- Migration from a Global Perspective

Submission Guidelines

Prospective participants are requested to submit abstracts of no more than 500 words alongside a brief one-page CV. **The deadline for submission is 29 February 2024.** **Submission outcomes will be sent out by 31 March 2024.** Shortlisted papers will be invited to the workshop.

Following the shortlist, the paper – or alternatively a long abstract of 2,000 words – should be sent by 26 April 2024.

The organizers will fund the venue as well as coffee/tea breaks and lunch. Travel and accommodation should be covered by the participants.

If you submit a paper for the workshop, we will assume that you will be submitting the paper in the Special Issue with the RHI-IHR and expect the paper to not have been submitted elsewhere.

Please submit abstracts and CVs to: alka.raman@manchester.ac.uk

For any queries, please contact: alka.raman@manchester.ac.uk

Publication

The final version of the manuscripts for the Special Issue review process must be sent by 31 October 2024. After a process of double-blind review, five of the submitted papers will be selected for a Special Issue of the *Revista de Historia Industrial – Industrial History Review* edited by Alka Raman. Papers that were shortlisted for the workshop and submitted to the RH-IHR, but do not make it to the Special Issue will be considered for publication in the regular issues of RHI-IHR, if accepted in the peer review process.

Barcelona, Manchester and Siena, 19 December 2023

The Editorial Board of the Revista de Historia Industrial – Industrial History Review (RHI-IHR) and the Workshop Organisers.

50th Anniversary Issue of Social Science History

What is the relationship between the past and the present? What is the nature of how change occurs or does not occur over time? This anniversary issue explores the multiple possibilities. For example, in some cases, the present is seen in the past, as a repetition of it. This can be conceptualized as cycles of history that reoccur over time. However, another conceptualization is the past as a creator of the present—that is, the past in different ways leads to the present. These paths might be linear, path dependent, or historically constructed. Yet another idea is that past and present are unique, and in fact, unrelated.

Thus, the relationship between the past and present takes many different forms. Scholars who emphasize the repercussions of a new and unexpected shock imply discontinuity and rupture between past and present. In contrast, the literatures that document the later life consequences of early life or intergenerational experience tend to focus attention on continuities and the past as a creator of the present. Similarly, the long-term persistence of the structures of inequality suggests a process of replication and even stasis. Even social scientists who use statistical models to analyze historical data over time implies some kind of relationship between the past and later points. Variety exists within fields: both technology history and historical institutionalism offer up examples of developments that are path dependent along with ones that represent a complete break from the past. Whatever the field, the model, the literature and most importantly, the historical question, how the relationship between the past and present is perceived, is key to social science history research. These are just a few of the many possibilities!

The Fall 2026 issue is the 50th anniversary of Social Science History. For this issue, the theme of “past and present” will be explored. Papers should address this theme in some way, either theoretically, empirically, substantively (or some combination of them). All papers must be suitable for publication in *Social Science History* (<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/social-science-history>) and will undergo peer review before publication.

200-word abstracts are due by April 2nd, 2024, and a final paper must be ready for review by January 15, 2025. Abstracts should be sent to socialsciencehistory@ssha.org.

SEMINAR SERIES

African Economic History Seminar



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Faculty of History

Lent Term 2024

When: four Tuesdays, 17:00-18:30

Where: Audit Room, King's College, Cambridge and online*

Convenors: Gareth Austin and Bronwen Everill

16 January: Michiel de Haas (Wageningen University)

'East African Grain Markets in Long-Run Perspective, c. 1900-2020' (co-authored with Tom Westland, Ewout Frankema and Tanik Joshipura)

13 February: Eric Makombe (University of Zimbabwe)

'Consumer Experiences in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe: Trends and Developments, 1980 to 2023'

27 February: Rebecca Simson (Oxford/London School of Economics)

'Elite Persistence in Sierra Leone: What Can Names Tell Us?'

12 March: Hélder Carvalhal (University of Manchester)

'Living Standards in Angola, 1760-1960' (co-authored with Nuno Palma)

The Zoom link will be sent to everyone on the seminar mailing list. To subscribe, wherever you are in the world, please visit <https://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/event-series/african-economic-history>. When possible, the speaker provides a paper in advance, which will be sent to those committing themselves to attending.

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www.hist.cam.ac.uk



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LEAP SEMINAR SERIES 2024

Register at leap@sun.ac.za for the online seminars



Joung Yeob Ha
28 Feb



Francesco Ferlenga
6 Mar



Caterina Chiopris
13 Mar



Mariama Sow
20 Mar



Miriam Venturin
3 Apr



Marie Beigelman
10 Apr



Madison Arnsbarger
17 Apr



Tim Ngalande
24 Apr



Tom Raster
8 May

OPPORTUNITIES

Postdoctoral Research Fellow – UFS, South Africa

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



UFS
THE HUMANITIES

The International Studies Group (ISG) at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa, has vacancies for postdoctoral Research Fellows starting in June 2024, with an annual stipend of ZAR 275,000. The positions are full-time for one year, with the possibility of extension for a further two years contingent on satisfactory progress. The ISG, headed by Professor Ian Phimister, is a research-intensive department, made up of post-doctoral Fellows and PhD students. Although the group particularly specialises in Central and Southern African history, applications are encouraged from candidates with any specialisation in African and/or global and imperial history.

Criteria

Essential

A PhD of not more than two years standing at the time of appointment

Excellent written, oral and interpersonal skills

A project to produce original research outputs

Desirable

Previous experience of supervising student dissertations

Experience of departmental administration

Proven track record of attracting external research funding

Application Process

Applicants are asked to send a CV, along with a covering letter outlining their suitability for the position and their proposed research and publication plans. **These should be emailed as one document to Ms Tari Gwena at gwenat@ufs.ac.za by 12pm on 15 February 2024.** In addition, applicants should arrange for two letters of recommendation to be sent to the above address. Shortlisted candidates will be notified by 8 March. If you have not been contacted by this date, please assume your application has been unsuccessful.

New research in African economic history

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

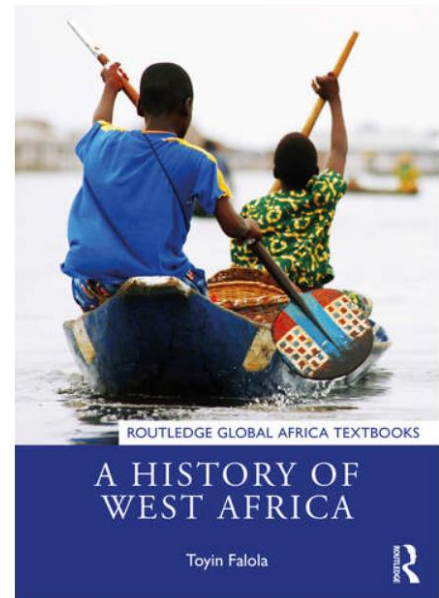
A History of West Africa

Toyin Falola

This book introduces readers to the rich and fascinating history of West Africa, stretching all the way back to the stone age, and right up to the modern day.

Over the course of twenty seven short and engaging chapters, the book delves into the social, cultural, economic and political history of West Africa, through prehistory, revolutions, ancient empires, thriving trade networks, religious traditions, and then the devastating impact of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and subsequent colonial rule. The book reflects on the struggle for independence and investigates how politics and economics developed in the post-colonial period. By the end of the book, readers will have a detailed understanding of the fascinating and diverse range of cultures to be found in West Africa, and of how the region relates to the rest of the world.

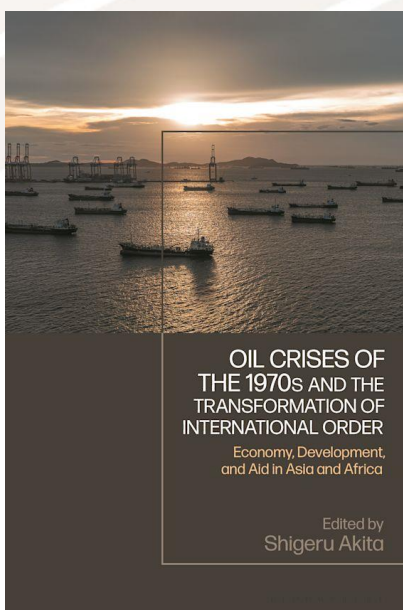
Drawing on decades of teaching and research experience, this book will serve as an excellent textbook for entry-level History and African Studies courses, as well as providing a perfect general introduction to anyone interested in finding out about West Africa.



Oil Crises of the 1970s and the Transformation of International Order: Economy, Development, and Aid in Asia and Africa

Edited by Shigeru Akita

The 1970s are widely seen as a turning point for the world economy and a transformative decade for the international order. This volume explores the role played by the oil crises in this transformation, focusing particularly on their impact in previously little-studied regions such as Asia and Africa.



Examining the intersection between the oil crises and the Third World project, their impact on Asian economic development and the contrasting responses of two African countries, this collection covers new ground on the global and regional effects of the crises, and ties them into the key transformations of the international economy and the Cold War order. Arguing that they were instrumental in reshaping the Asian economies, helping to instigate the boom known as the 'East Asian Miracle', it also demonstrates how the individual responses of countries reflected their own specific circumstances.

With chapters from leading scholars such as David Painter and Dane Kennedy, this book shows how the origins, course and consequences of the oil crises of the 1970s are crucial to understanding the transformation of the international order in the late twentieth century.

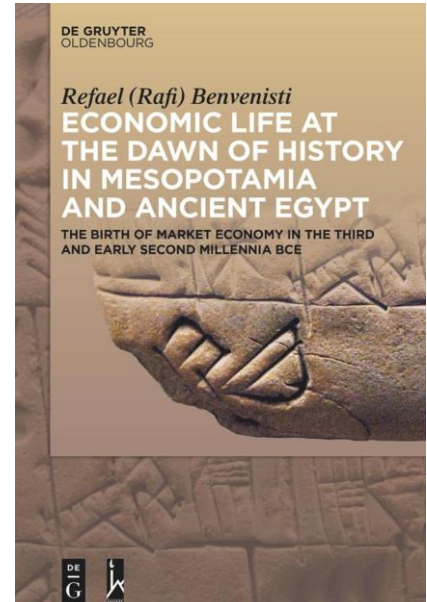
Economic Life at the Dawn of History in Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt: The Birth of Market Economy in the Third and Early Second Millennia BCE

Refael (Rafi) Benvenisti

The book is a study of the emergence of market economy with modern economic institutions in the early civilizations of Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt from the third and early second millennium B.C.E. The study covers the Sumerian, Old Assyrian and Old Babylonian periods. The economic analysis is based on Institutional Economics theory, and the data on the Old Assyrian period is based on the work of many scholars that transliterated, translated and studied many of the 23,000 documents of the Old Assyrian traders found in old Kanesh in Central Turkey.

The book includes chapters on the institutions of: property rights; the markets and means of exchange; the organization and finance of trade; and enforcement institutions from the judicial, social and political systems.

In addition, it gives a detailed analysis of: the early means of exchange (money) like the use of volume measure of barley and weight measure of copper and silver in Sumer; various instruments establishing property rights such as Kuduru border stones, seals and inserted cones in walls; detailed analysis of the communication system and its components; and the description of the modern financial instruments used to include, for example, limited partnerships.



Africa: Diversity and Development

Tony Binns, Etienne Nel, Alan Dixon and Kenneth Lynch



Africa: Diversity and Development introduces and de-mystifies Africa's diversity and dynamism, and considers how its peoples and environments have interacted through time and space.

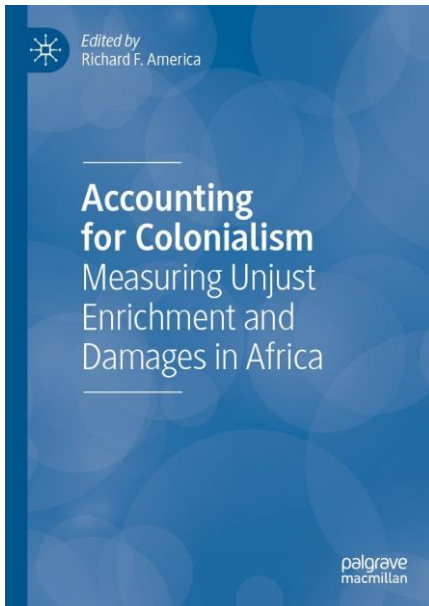
The book examines the background and diversity of Africa's social, cultural, economic, political and environmental systems, as well as key development issues which have affected Africa in the past and are likely to be significant in shaping the future of the continent. These include: the impact of HIV/AIDS; sources of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction; the state and governance; the nature of African economies in a global context and future development trajectories. This second edition features new chapters on history and governance, health, separate chapters on rural and urban development and updated content on all aspects of the continent, particularly aspects of culture and ethnicity. It is richly illustrated throughout with diagrams and plates and contains a wealth of detailed up-to-date case studies and current data.

This textbook is a refreshing interdisciplinary text which enhances understanding of the background to Africa's current position and clarifies possible future scenarios. It will be a valuable resource for students taking modules on Africa, African Development and Geography of Africa, and will also prove useful to students in the wider fields of Geography, Development Studies, Global Studies, Environment and Society and African Politics.

Accounting for Colonialism: Measuring Unjust Enrichment and Damages in Africa

Edited by Richard F. America

This book examines qualitatively and quantitatively the exploitation of African through colonialism and imperialism. The contribution included build on previous qualitative analyses of the effects of imperialism and colonialism in Africa. Chapters expand on that body of work and introduce new ways to measure some of the benefits that accrued to Europe and North America through centuries of systematic underpayments and overcharges that one can consider abuse of dominance. The collection also adds to an ongoing process that is related to the growing work related to reparations.



This book, thereby, contributes to a process of changing international development assistance policy. It helps to create a basis for officially estimating the continuing gains from past and current actions against African economic, social, and political institutions and systems.

This edited volume, which showcases a diversity of scholars and their perspectives, attempts to establish wrongful benefits and damages from almost 600 years of international harm to the African continent.

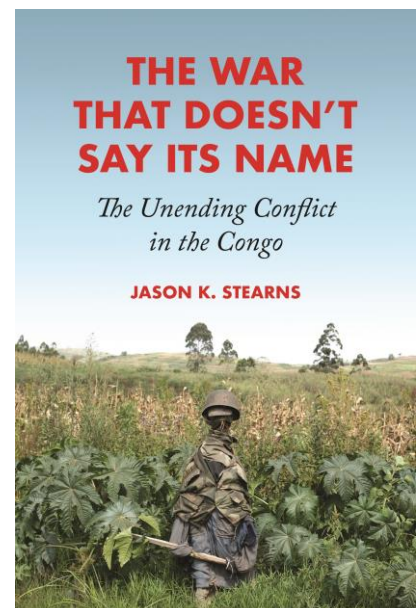
The War That Doesn't Say Its Name: The Unending Conflict in the Congo

Jason K. Stearns

Well into its third decade, the military conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been dubbed a “forever war”—a perpetual cycle of war, civil unrest, and local feuds over power and identity. Millions have died in one of the worst humanitarian calamities of our time. The War That Doesn't Say Its Name investigates the most recent phase of this conflict, asking why the peace deal of 2003—accompanied by the largest United Nations peacekeeping mission in the world and tens of billions in international aid—has failed to stop the violence. Jason Stearns argues that the fighting has become an end in itself, carried forward in substantial part through the apathy and complicity of local and international actors.

Stearns shows that regardless of the suffering, there has emerged a narrow military bourgeoisie of commanders and politicians for whom the conflict is a source of survival, dignity, and profit. Foreign donors provide food and urgent health care for millions, preventing the Congolese state from collapsing, but this involvement has not yielded transformational change. Stearns gives a detailed historical account of this period, focusing on the main players—Congolese and Rwandan states and the main armed groups. He extrapolates from these dynamics to other conflicts across Africa and presents a theory of conflict that highlights the interests of the belligerents and the social structures from which they arise.

Exploring how violence in the Congo has become preoccupied with its own reproduction, The War That Doesn't Say Its Name sheds light on why certain military feuds persist without resolution.



Foundations of Agbozume: The Keta-Sómeawo in Ghana, A.D. 1000 - 1930

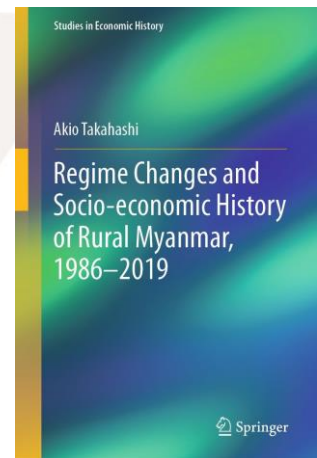
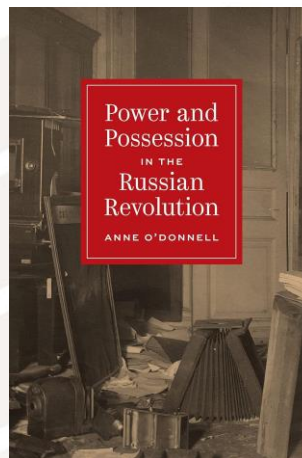
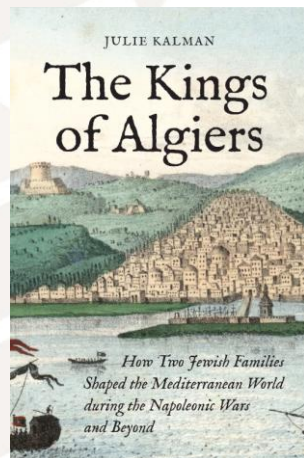
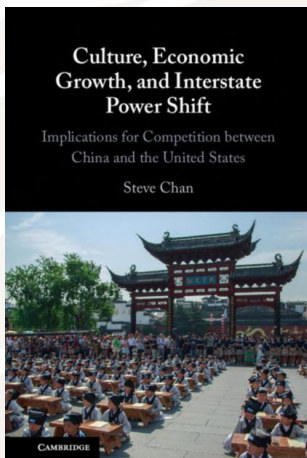
Philip Atsu Afeadie and John Mark Kwame Worclachie

At Keta, in the 16th century, the Keta-Sómeawo established a state and entrepôt at the intersection of local and regional trade, which fed trading activities in the Atlantic basin. And the Keta-Sómeawo cherished and guarded their independence and freedom from neighbouring states including Anlo and European merchants, who sought to dominate the Keta emporium. During the late 18th century, Danish merchants secured control over Keta. However, ineffective Danish leadership led to conflicts between the Keta-Sómeawo and the Danes who contracted Anlo support. Hostilities ended in February 1792 with defeat for the Anlo-Danish coalition. But the Keta-Sómeawo decided to re-settle eastward across the Keta lagoon, where they established a new state known as Sóme which again embodied the values of independence and freedom.

For economic development, the Keta-Sómeawo essentially continued with the tradition of fishing, salt production, and kete weaving. They were also active in the Atlantic slave trade which had become illegal. Alongside, the ports of Sóme served as marketplaces for “legitimate commerce” including palm oil, palm kernel, and associated enterprise of smuggling. Also, Sóme became a leading producer of copra on the Gold Coast.

The British colonial government sought to control the menace of smuggling and it extended colonial rule over Sóme. And the Keta-Sómeawo had to grapple with indirect rule which involved their subordination under Anlo who they had defeated in war, leading to the founding of Sóme. Surely, the Keta-Sómeawo met the greatest challenge to their age-long tradition of independence in British colonial rule and its legacy.

Other new books in economic history



ARTICLES

The Debt-Austerity Crutch: African Elite Agency in the Fourth (US) Cycle of Accumulation of Historical Capitalism

World Review of Political Economy
Salimah Valiani

For decades, African governments have cited debt servicing and international credit ratings as the reasons for continued policies of austerity. It is demonstrated here that though unjust and anti-developmental, as critics of so-called structural adjustment have argued, IMF prescriptions and other capitalist structural reforms have been a success from the perspective of world elites. It is shown how, from the 1970s, rich country elites, as well as African elites, have created the conditions for Africa to become a major locus for the maintenance of liberalized financial and trade flows. Comprador bourgeois capitalism, with a new twist—the amassing of public debt and offshore transactions—is argued to be the African expression of financial expansion in Giovanni Arrighi's fourth (US) systemic cycle of accumulation. A systemic, class-based explanation is offered for what is commonly understood as the anti-democratic nature of international financial institutions, and corruption of African leaders. The analysis provides an explanation for why, not a single African state has defaulted on external debt, as Argentina did, in 2001.

What happened to the workshop of West Africa? Resilience and decline of handicraft textiles in colonial northern Nigeria, 1911–52

The Economic History Review
Emiliano Travieso and Tom Westland

The Sokoto Caliphate of northern Nigeria was the workshop of West Africa in the pre-colonial nineteenth century, producing famous blue-black cloth that reached many markets south of the Sahara as well as across it. Under British colonial rule this large handicraft textile industry was faced with the winds of foreign competition. We rely on a newly digitized set of colonial district reports to measure the impact of trade on northern Nigerian textile manufacturing and find that (contrary to British expectations) areas closer to railway stations were less likely to experience industrial decline. We argue that the resilience of local textiles relied on the low opportunity cost of dry-season labour. Analysing a piece of tax microdata, we show that a low opportunity cost of labour outside of the rainy season was associated with a higher likelihood of engaging in textile by-employment. Seasonal changes in relative factor prices were a trap as well as a refuge. Part-time employment limited specialization and technological innovation, and can help to explain why northern Nigerian textiles eventually declined. Thus, beyond our particular case study, these results contribute to our understanding of the role of seasonality in determining the structure and pace of development of tropical economies.

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.

Income inequality and export-oriented commercialization in colonial Africa: Evidence from six countries

The Economic History Review

Ellen Hillbom, Jutta Bolt, Michiel de Haas and Federico Tadei

Limited knowledge of African historical inequality trajectories hampers our understanding of inequality outcomes today and leads to a major omission in debates about global inequality. Economies in colonial Africa were characterized by a process of export-oriented commercialization. We hypothesize that this process itself, the capital intensity of the commodities produced, and the relative importance of European and Asian expatriates and settlers in the economy shaped heterogeneous inequality outcomes. We evaluate these hypotheses using 33 social tables from six predominately agricultural countries between 1914 and 1969. Social tables capture income across the full distribution, aggregated in classes. We assess and improve the commensurability of the different social tables. We then apply different inequality metrics, and find that Gini and Theil coefficients and Inequality Extraction Ratios rose over time. Gini coefficients moved in conjunction with the real value of commodity exports per capita. Using Theil decompositions, we observe a trade-off between inequality among African classes on the one hand, and among non-Africans and between races on the other. Whenever present, non-Africans captured a large share of the export profits. Inequality patterns towards the end of the period suggest that capital-intensive commodities were associated with higher levels of inequality in the agricultural sector.

Changing local customs: The long run impacts of Christian missions on female genital cutting in Africa

Journal of Development Economics

Heather Congdon Fors, Ann-Sofie Isaksson and Annika Lindskog

We investigate the long-run impacts of Christian missions on female genital cutting (FGC) in Africa. Our empirical analysis draws on historical data on the locations of early European missions geographically matched with Demographic and Health Survey data on FGC practices of around 410,000 respondents from 42 surveys performed over a 30-year period in 14 African countries. We use ethnographic data on pre-colonial FGC to show that the location of missions was not correlated with the practice of FGC in the local population. Our benchmark estimates imply that a person living 10 km from a historical mission is 4–6 percentage points less likely to have undergone FGC than someone living 100 km from a mission site. Similarly, an additional mission per 1000 km² in one's ancestral ethnic homeland decreases the probability of having undergone FGC by around 8 percentage points. The effect is robust to numerous specifications and control variables.

South Africa's Public Debt: Long-term Dependence, Structural Breaks and Multifractality

Journal of Economic Integration

Jean-Claude Kouakou Brou and Jamal Bouoiyour

This paper aims to analyse the evolution of public debt in South Africa using new and original methods. The case of South Africa has been little studied in the literature on debt because the level of debt in this country remains reasonable. Moreover, the use of non-standard methods allows for a fine-grained analysis of the public debt time series and, consequently, to draw unprecedented conclusions. Using the Multifractal Detrended Fluctuation Analysis (MF-DFA) method borrowed from solid state physics and medicine, we conclude that South Africa's debt has a multifractal character, which originates from the long memory effect. Thus, South Africa's public debt is unsustainable. The inefficiency of this market has been particularly exacerbated by the various shocks throughout the sample period.

A Disdain for Deserts: The Sahara Sea Project and Climatic Modification in North Africa, 1864–1885

Journal of World History
Tyson A. Luneau

Though a handful of European accounts of Saharan travel predate the 1830 French invasion of Algiers, this event marked a turning point in French experience with deserts. The period of French occupation fostered a growing belief in the Maghreb's gradual environmental degradation and a desire to "restore" its inherent fertility. The late-nineteenth century plan to create an artificial inland sea represents a grandiose, transformative vision of French colonialism. Influenced by Saint-Simonianism, the project's advocates aimed to use modern technology to fulfil a utopian dream of "reclaiming" the Sahara. Led by Captain François-Élie Roudaire, the project aimed to channel waters from the Mediterranean into saline depressions in the Tunisian and Algerian Sahara. This sea, it was hoped, would transform the northern Sahara into a milder and more hospitable environment. Although it garnered the support of Ferdinand de Lesseps and other notable figures, the project fell apart by the mid-1880s. While the vision of a vast inland Saharan sea occasionally resurfaced through the twentieth century, it never manifested in any genuine construction attempts. The Sahara Sea, however, characterizes aspects of the French colonial enterprise that would manifest in other social and technological developments throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods.

The slave trade and the origins of matrilineal kinship

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B
Sara Lowes and Nathan Nunn

Matrilineal kinship systems—where descent is traced through mothers only—are present all over the world but are most concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa. We explore the relationship between exposure to Africa's external slave trades, during which millions of people were shipped from the continent during a 400-year period, and the evolution of matrilineal kinship. Scholars have hypothesized that matrilineal kinship, which is well-suited to incorporating new members, maintaining lineage continuity and insulating children from the removal of parents (particularly fathers), was an adaptive response to the slave trades. Motivated by this, we test for a connection between the slave trades and matrilineal kinship by combining historical data on an ethnic group's exposure to the slave trades and the presence of matrilineal kinship following the end of the trades. We find that the slave trades are positively associated with the subsequent presence of matrilineal kinship. The result is robust to a variety of measures of exposure to the slave trades, the inclusion of additional covariates, sensitivity analyses that remove outliers, and an instrumental variables estimator that uses a group's historical distance from the coast as an instrument. We also find evidence of a complementarity between polygyny and matrilineal kinship, which were both social responses to the disruption of the trades.

The Suffering Subject: Colonial Flogging in Northern Nigeria and a Humanitarian Public, 1904–1933

Comparative Studies in Society and History
Steven Pierce

Shortly after the start of colonial rule in Northern Nigeria, a series of scandals over flogging brought international attention. A network of newspapers reported on flogging cases, particularly those involving women and educated, often Christian, Africans from outside the north. International attention focused on these cases as humanitarian outrages. The Nigerian administration and the Colonial Office deflected the scandals through a shifting series of strategies: justifying flogging as appropriate and humane, attempting to ensure floggings were only administered by Africans, carefully regulating the practices of flogging, and investigating cases of flogging to exculpate the officials responsible. These scandals led to a reform of the criminal justice system in 1933, but had long-lasting effects. They entrenched the trope of whipped bodies as a particularly "African" outrage. They helped to institutionalize the notion that particular judicial and governmental techniques were culturally specific. They politicized key markers of personal identity.

Flexible States in History: Rethinking Secularism, Violence, and Centralized Power in Modern Egypt

Comparative Studies in Society and History
Isaac Friesen

In recent decades, secularism has emerged as one of the most studied concepts in sociocultural anthropology, and Egypt a primary site of its analysis. This article considers trends in Egypt's modern and contemporary history in order to complicate the great explanatory power some anthropological works have granted to secularism. Above all else, it interrogates the manner in which the state's regulation of religion (which is the defining feature of Asadian conceptions of secularism) has unfolded in recent Egyptian history. First, I survey the different ways scholars have portrayed secularism in Egypt, focusing in particular on the insights and limitations of Asadian theories. A second section employs ethnographic data to uncover how ordinary Egyptians in the provincial capital of Beni Suef have experienced state power, religion, and secularism in their everyday lives. Contextualizing these ethnographic perspectives alongside several prominent instances of state violence between 2011 and 2013, I elucidate how, rather than typifying a secular state, Egyptian politics, above all else, have been driven by an opportunistic realpolitik. My final section brings historical and ethnographic perspectives into sustained conversation to argue that the state regulation anthropologists sometimes frame as secularism is better conceptualized as a form of state centralization. I conclude, in turn, that political developments in modern Egypt have most often been shaped by flexible national and imperial interests.

Using Digitized Newspapers to Address Measurement Error in Historical Data

The Journal of Economic History
Andreas Ferrara, Joung Yeob Ha and Randall Walsh

This paper shows how to remove attenuation bias in regression analyses due to measurement error in historical data for a given variable of interest by using a secondary measure that can be easily generated from digitized newspapers. We provide three methods for using this secondary variable to deal with non-classical measurement error in a binary treatment: set identification, bias reduction via sample restriction, and a parametric bias correction. We demonstrate the usefulness of our methods by replicating four recent economic history papers. Relative to the initial analyses, our results yield markedly larger coefficient estimates.

WORKING PAPERS

Evolution and the future of compensation for expropriation in Zimbabwe: A historical review

Partson Paradza, Joseph Awoamim Yacim and Benita G. Zulch

Zimbabwe has a rich history of compulsory land acquisition, dating to the origins of colonial rule in 1890. This history is documented in policy documents, print and social media, and academic publications. However, to the researchers' knowledge for a complete history of the trajectory followed by the laws guiding expropriation and compensation from 1890 to 2022, multiple sources must be consulted. Currently, limited work (if any) does not provide a complete picture of the genesis/evolution of statutory compulsory land acquisition laws covering the entire period. Thus, the purpose of this study was to provide a complete history of compensation for expropriation in Zimbabwe while pointing out issues relative to equity and natural justice that occurred during the period under review. This paper was based on desktop research from 2018 to 2023. Documents which included statutes and government policies were obtained online from the official websites of government institutions. Systematic content analysis was adopted, and data coding was done manually based on themes derived from the data. The findings of this study supported the view that compensation for expropriation in Zimbabwe is complex and the international community can help to bring closure to the issue.

Human Capital Affects Religious Identity: Causal Evidence from Kenya

Livia Alfonsi, Michal Bauer, Julie Chytilová and Edward Miguel

We study how human capital and economic conditions causally affect the choice of religious denomination. We utilize a longitudinal dataset monitoring the religious history of more than 5,000 Kenyans over twenty years, in tandem with a randomized experiment (deworming) that has exogenously boosted education and living standards. The main finding is that the program reduces the likelihood of membership in a Pentecostal denomination up to 20 years later when respondents are in their mid-thirties, while there is a comparable increase in membership in traditional Christian denominations. The effect is concentrated and statistically significant among a sub-group of participants who benefited most from the program in terms of increased education and income. The effects are unlikely due to increased secularization, because the program does not reduce measures of religiosity. The results help explain why the global growth of the Pentecostal movement, sometimes described a "New Reformation", is centered in low-income communities.

Sectoral shifts and labour market outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa

Amie M. Jobe and Roberto Ricciuti

Using the Economic Transformation Database, this paper attempts to assess the magnitude of structural transformation and the effects of sectoral shifts due to structural transformation on the labour market performance of 18 sub-Saharan African countries over the period from 1990 to 2018. The first part of this study examines some patterns of structural transformation in Africa, focusing on sectoral output shares, sectoral employment shares, and the relative labour productivity of sectors. We find that Africa is gradually advancing towards structural transformation but at a very slow speed.

Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa: the Role of Inheritance

Sébastien Fontenay, Paula Gobbi and Marc Goñi

Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa is the highest in the world and it should continue boosting population growth for decades to come. In this paper, we showcase a new driver of fertility decisions that has been largely overlooked by demographers and economists: inheritance rules. In particular, we demonstrate that impartible inheritance (i.e. transmission of the deceased's property to a single heir) does not incentivize households to limit their number of children. Our main empirical strategy links data from the past on deep-rooted inheritance customs for more than 800 ethnic groups with modern demographic surveys covering 24 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Our spatial Regression Discontinuity Design exploiting ancestral borders reveals that belonging to an ethnic group with impartible inheritance customs increases fertility by 0.85 children per woman. We also establish, both theoretically and empirically, that the fertility differences across inheritance rules are larger in lands that are less labor intensive.

Trade, slavery, and state coercion of labor: Egypt during the first globalization era

Saleh, Mohamed

I investigate the effects of trade on labor coercion under the dual-coercive institutions of slavery and state coercion. Employing novel data from Egypt, I document that the cotton boom in 1861–1865 increased both imported slaveholdings of the rural middle class, and state coercion of local workers by the elite. As state coercion reduced wage employment, it reinforced the demand for slaves among the rural middle class. While the abolition of slavery in 1877 increased wages, it did not affect state coercion or wage employment. I discuss the political effects of the abolition as a potential explanation for these findings.

Occupational structure in a black settler colony: Sierra Leone in 1831

Stefania Galli

Occupational structure is a valuable proxy for economic development when more direct indicators are lacking. This study employs occupational structure for the Colony of Sierra Leone in 1831 with the aim of contributing to shed new light on African economic development at a very early stage. This

work is based on data extracted from the 1831 census, one of the first reliable censuses in African history. This source provides valuable information on the whole colonial population, including occupational titles for a vast part of it. The results show that the Colony was far from homogeneous, combining a largely primary oriented countryside with a more modern urban sector centre around the Freetown's harbour.

The 1992-93 EMS Crisis and the South: Lessons from the Franc Zone System and the 1994 CFA Franc Devaluation

Rodrigue Dossou-Cadja

The CFA franc devaluation on 11 January 1994 stands out as the most significant reform within the Franc Zone system since political independences of former African French colonies in 1960, yet a topic shrouded into profound taboo. So far, the economic literature has failed to draw any connection between this pivotal event in African macroeconomic history and its historical context: the 1992-3 European Monetary System (EMS) crisis. Using the narrative approach coupled with quantitative analysis (DCC-MGARH-X and SVARs) and powered by an unprecedented set of archival data from the Banque de France, the Bank of England, and the Bundesbank (the latter two from Eichengreen and Naef, 2022), as well as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), we document a brand-new route on understanding a certain integrated African-European common history. Evidence unveils the CFA franc devaluation as a fundamental role player in backing up credibility of the French franc amidst the 1992-3 EMS crisis. A 'new democratic Franc Zone's Transition Committee' at the Banque de France, appears as a key feature for the future of the Zone's management.

