

Fachbereich 02, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources (Prof. Björn Vollan)
Fachbereich 06, Economic and Social History (Dr. Marie Huber)
Wintersemester 2023-24

Seminar
Economic History of African Development

Date: 22. - 25. January 2024
at Marburger Haus, Kleinwalsertal (Österreich)

Arrival: Monday, 22nd January 2024, preferably before 6pm
Departure: Thursday, 25th January 2024, not before 1pm

Ski and winter hiking seminar at the Marburger Haus, Kleinwalsertal

Please note that this seminar will take place at the Marburger Haus in Kleinwalsertal (Austria). The website of Marburger Haus can be found here: <https://www.marburgerhaus.at/>. The address is: Wäldelestraße 16, A-6992 Hirschegg, Austria. The nearest town in Germany is Oberstdorf.

Accommodation for students at Marburger Haus is in triple rooms.

Due to the location of the event at Marburger Haus, participants must pay their own travel and accommodation costs. Arrival will be on Monday, January 22, 2024, by 6:00 pm. Departure will be on Thursday, January 25, 2023, from 13:00.

The cost of accommodation is €51 per night per person, or €153 for three nights (+ €15 short-term stay). This includes accommodation in a triple room, meals (half board with breakfast, packed lunch, three-course dinner), municipal tax and short-term surcharge. In addition, there are the costs for the journey to and from Kleinwalsertal. The travel time with DB from Marburg is about 6,5 hrs (costs € 60 without Bahncard, oneway) or take the Flixbus to Ulm (< € 20, oneway). Cheaper options might be available.

The students' presentations will take place in the mornings between 09:00 and 13:00. In the afternoon, participants can go skiing or on a winter hike.

Due to the time constraints and capacities in the Marburger Haus the participation is limited to 12 persons.

Recommended prerequisite for participation

The course is open to Master students from economics, history and other social sciences with an interest in economic development, history and some understanding of statistical methods. Participants should have completed their 1st semester already.

Application and allocation of seminar places

Please apply by email to bjoern.vollan@wiwi.uni-marburg.de latest by midnight on **Sunday, August 20, 2023**.

- Please write "Application Masterseminar WS 2023-24" in the subject line.
- Please attach a tabular CV and a short letter of motivation with your topic preferences (1-12)

You will be notified by email on Wednesday, August 23, 2023 whether you have received a seminar place. You will then have until August 28, 2023 to transfer the money to the account. If the money is not received on time, the place will be given to someone on the waiting list.

Information meeting and kick-off-meeting

Please share your questions about the seminar on the padlet (<https://padlet.com/bjoernvollar/mein-wundervolles-padlet-goipbk6qy9ar612l>) until 10th of July. We will post our answers there and share info about a potential (non-mandatory) information meeting for those of you having questions about the seminar. This will be **Thursday 13th July 2023 (time and online/offline will be on padlet)**.

A kick-off event to assign seminar topics will be held on **Thursday, October 19, 2023 (via zoom)**. Please note: Attendance at the kick-off event is required to participate in the seminar.

Learning objectives

In this seminar, students will learn about historical roots of African development through the lens of natural experiments on the one hand and a critical and comparative historical approach on the other. Through case studies and empirical analysis, students will learn how historical events have shaped economic outcomes in different African countries. The seminar will examine how factors such as colonial borders, resource extraction, and institutional legacies have influenced economic development in Africa. By the end of the seminar, students will have a deeper appreciation for the varied historical trajectories of inequality in Africa and be able to evaluate policy proposals through a more nuanced lens.

Topics for presentation and seminar paper

Each topic has an assigned paper using a natural experiment to identify the effect of historical events on outcomes today. Additionally, students are required to engage with the historical literature of their topic.

Day 1 (pre-colonial) Effect of Slave Trade	
1	Slave Trade and Development
2	Indigenous Slavery
3	Slave Trade and Trust
4	The end of the slave trade
Day 2 Colonial Origins of Development	
5	Settler Mortality: The initial evidence
6	Settler Mortality: Critique and Reply
7	Colonial Budgeting
8	Colonial Infrastructure
Day 3 Roots of Conflict	
9	Climate and Pastoralism
10	Artificial borders
11	Social organization
12	Extractive concessions

Lecturers

Björn Vollar started his PhD in 2004 working in Namibia and South Africa on collectively managed natural resources and behavioral economics. He also worked in Burkina Faso or Ethiopia and has a strong interest in development and historical path dependencies.

Marie Huber studied the relationship of tourism, development and nationalist politics of heritage in Ethiopia for her PhD. She has worked on aviation in postcolonial Africa and currently works on (West)German economic relations to African countries as well as more generally on industrialization and management in Africa. She has a broader interest in the global history of development.

Examination

- 30 minutes presentation during the block seminar; followed by moderation of a 15-minute discussion. Attendance is compulsory during the seminar.
- Term paper, 10 pages, to be submitted by 15.03.2024 via upload in ilias.

Please note the guidelines for scientific work https://www.uni-marburg.de/en/fb02/research-groups/economics/sustuse/folder_docs/sustuse_thesis-guide_extern.pdf :

Overall Literature

Natural Experiments of History (edited by Jared Diamond and James A. Robinson), 2011. <https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674060197>

Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design Based Approach (https://jonnyphillips.github.io/FLS6415/Class_5/Dunning%20Natural%20Experiments.pdf)

Nunn, Nathan. „The Importance of History for Economic Development“. *Annual Review of Economics* 1, Nr. 1 (September 2009): 65–92. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.economics.050708.143336> .

Michalopoulos, Stelios, und Elias Papaioannou. „Historical Legacies and African Development“. *Journal of Economic Literature* 58, Nr. 1 (1. März 2020): 53–128. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.20181447> .

Austin, Gareth. “The ‘Reversal of Fortune’ Thesis and the Compression of History: Perspectives from African and Comparative Economic History.” *Journal of International Development* 20, no. 8 (2008): 996–1027. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.1510>.

Green, Toby. “Africa and Capitalism: Repairing a History of Omission.” *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics* 3, no. 2 (2022): 301–32. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cap.2022.0012>.

Seminar Topics and literature

Part 1 (pre-colonial) Effect of Slave Trade

The transatlantic slave trade had a devastating impact on Africa, causing the forced migration of millions of people, disrupting communities, and fueling conflicts. The most skilled and productive people were captured and sold into slavery disrupting traditional societies, leading to the depopulation of some areas and the concentration of power and wealth in others.

1.1. Slave Trade and Development

Whatley, Warren. „How the International Slave Trades Underdeveloped Africa“. *The Journal of Economic History* 82, Nr. 2 (Juni 2022): 403–41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050722000110>.

1.2. Indigenous Slavery

Bezemer, Dirk, Jutta Bolt, und Robert Lensink. „Slavery, Statehood, and Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa“. *World Development* 57 (Mai 2014): 148–63. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.12.004>.

1.3. Slave Trade and Trust

Nunn, Nathan, und Leonard Wantchekon. „The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa“. *American Economic Review* 101, Nr. 7 (1. Dezember 2011): 3221–52. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.101.7.3221>.

1.4 The end of the slave trade

Fenske, James, und Namrata Kala. „1807: Economic Shocks, Conflict and the Slave Trade“. *Journal of Development Economics* 126 (Mai 2017): 66–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2016.12.004>.

Part 2 Colonial Origins of Development

There has been a long debate about ultimate factors for development between the influence of geography vs that of institutions or human capital. One of the most influential streams of work uses early settler mortality as an instrumental variable to estimate the influence of colonial institutions on development today.

2.1 Settler Mortality: The initial evidence

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, und James A Robinson. „The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation“. *American Economic Review* 91, Nr. 5 (1. Dezember 2001): 1369–1401. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.91.5.1369>.

2.2 Settler Mortality: Critique and Reply

———. „The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation: Reply“. *American Economic Review* 102, Nr. 6 (1. Oktober 2012): 3077–3110. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.102.6.3077>.

Albouy, David Y. „The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation: Comment“. *American Economic Review* 102, Nr. 6 (1. Oktober 2012): 3059–76. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.102.6.3059>.

Assenova, Valentina A., und Matthew Regele. „Revisiting the Effect of Colonial Institutions on Comparative Economic Development“. Herausgegeben von Cheng-Yi Xia. *PLOS ONE* 12, Nr. 5 (8. Mai 2017): e0177100. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0177100>.

2.3. Colonial Budgeting

Huillery, Elise. „History Matters: The Long-Term Impact of Colonial Public Investments in French West Africa“. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1, Nr. 2 (1. März 2009): 176–215. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.1.2.176>.

2.4. Colonial Infrastructure

Jedwab, Remi, Edward Kerby, und Alexander Moradi. „History, Path Dependence and Development: Evidence from Colonial Railways, Settlers and Cities In Kenya“. *The Economic Journal* 127, Nr. 603 (1. August 2017): 1467–94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eoj.12347>.

Part 3 Roots of Conflict

Conflict has been a significant obstacle to development in Africa, hindering economic growth, and destabilizing governments. It has resulted in the displacement of people, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of lives, causing long-lasting impacts on social, economic, and political structures. We address the potential origins of conflict like resource competition, ethnicity and forms of colonialism.

3.1. Climate and Pastoralism

McGuirk E, Nunn N. Transhumant Pastoralism, Climate Change, and Conflict in Africa. Working Paper. <https://scholar.harvard.edu/nunn/publications/nomadic-pastoralism-climate-change-and-conflict-africa>

3.2. Artificial borders

Michalopoulos, Stelios, und Elias Papaioannou. „The Long-Run Effects of the Scramble for Africa“. *American Economic Review* 106, Nr. 7 (1. Juli 2016): 1802–48. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20131311>.

3.3. Social organization

Moscona, Jacob, Nathan Nunn, und James A. Robinson. „Segmentary Lineage Organization and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa“. *Econometrica* 88, Nr. 5 (2020): 1999–2036. <https://doi.org/10.3982/ECTA16327>.

3.4. Extractive concessions

Lowes, S and E Montero (2020), “Concessions, Violence, and Indirect Rule: Evidence from the Congo Free State”. https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/lowes_montero_rubber.pdf

Historical readings (Part 1 and 2): Selected chapters from the following books will be assigned for each topic:

Austin, Gareth. *Labour, Land, and Capital in Ghana: From Slavery to Free Labour in Asante, 1807-1956*. Rochester Studies in African History and the Diaspora, v. 18. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004.

Green, Toby. *A Fistful of Shells: West Africa from the Rise of the Slave Trade to the Age of Revolution*. University of Chicago Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226644745.001.0001>.

Historical readings (Part 3):

Blaikie, Piers. *The Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries*. London; New York: Longman, 1985.

Boone, Catherine. *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

McCann, James C. *Green Land, Brown Land, Black Land: An Environmental History of Africa, 1800–1990*. Portsmouth, NH; Oxford: Heinemann; James Currey, 1999.