

Economics 420
Professor Joel Mokyr
Winter 2014

The New Economics of History: Syllabus and Readings

Note: This is a course in economic history. The course will be devoted to recent papers in economic history written in the language and tradition of modern economics. In the past decade, a great deal of economic history has been written by scholars (some full-time economic historians, others part-timers and interlopers) who are applying economic theory and econometric methods to historical issues and have produced and utilized new and innovative databases. The purpose is to survey a sample of this recent literature and stimulate similar research.

After an introductory lecture by me, the course will be student-driven. Each student will be in charge of a number of class presentations of the chapters and papers below (starting with week 2). The readings will be allocated on a first-ask first-serve basis, subject to the constraint that all papers have to be covered and that distribution is about as equitable as is humanly possible. Each student should prepare a powerpoint lecture of about 30-45 minutes on her/his papers, summarizing the most interesting and important findings, while reviewing the methodology and sources used.

All papers and chapters articles have been placed on the blackboard site of this course.

Week 1 (Jan 5): Introduction/Mokyr

Background reading:

Enrico Spolaore and Romain Wacziarg. 2013. "How Deep Are the Roots of Economic Development?" *Journal of Economic Literature*. Vol. 51, pp. 1-45.

Week 2: (Jan. 10 and 12): Long-term Economic growth

Oded Galor, *Unified Growth Theory* (2011), chs. 1-2 (pp. 1-66) and ch. 5, pp. 140-78

Galor, Oded and Moav, Omer. 2002. "Natural Selection and the Origins of Economic Growth." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 117, No. 4 (Nov.), pp. 1133-91.

Michael Kremer, 1993. "Population Growth and Technological change: One million BC to 1990." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 108, No. 4 (August), pp. 681-716.

Mayshar, Joram, Moav Omer, and Neeman, Zvika. "Geography, Transparency and Institutions," working paper.

Week 3: (Jan. 17 and 19): The Great Malthusian Debate

Gregory Clark, *A Farewell to Alms*, pp. 1-189.

Matranga, Andrea. 2013. "The Best "Mistake" in the History of the Human Race." Working paper.

Kelly, Morgan and Ó Gráda, Cormac. "The Preventive Check in Medieval and Pre-industrial England" and "Living Standards and Mortality since the Middle Ages." Mimeo.

Hans-Joachim Voth and Nico Voigtländer, "The Three Horsemen of Growth: Plague, War and Urbanization in Early Modern Europe (2008)" and "How the West Invented Fertility Restriction (2010)", [Package].

Week 4: Issues in the Early Rise of Europe

Jeremiah Dittmar, 2011. "Information Technology and Economic Change: The Impact of the Printing Press." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Vol. 126, No. 3 (August), pp. 1033–72.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and Robinson, James A., 2005. "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth." *The American Economic Review* 95 (2005), pp. 546-579.

Davide Cantoni and Noam Yuchtman, "Medieval Universities, Legal Institutions, and the Commercial Revolution," unpub. ms.

Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian, 2010. "The Columbian Exchange: A History of Disease, Food, and Ideas." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. Volume 24, Number 2 (Spring), pp. 163–188. Jonathan Hersch and Hans-Joachim Voth, "Sweet Diversity: Colonial Goods and the Rise of European Living Standards after 1492." Unpublished. [Package].

Murat Iyigun, "Luther and Suleyman," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* Nov. 2008, pp. 1465–94.

Noel D. Johnson and Mark Koyama, "Tax Farming and the Origins of State Capacity in England and France," *Exploration in Economic history* 2013 (forthcoming).

[If time allows only: Joel Mokyr, 2006c. "Mobility, Creativity, and Technological Development: David Hume, Immanuel Kant and the Economic Development of Europe." idem., 2007. "The Market for Ideas and the Origins of Economic Growth in Eighteenth Century Europe." [Heineken Lecture]. To be presented by the author.

Week 5: Economic Problems of the Industrial Revolution

Hansen, Gary D. and Prescott, Edward C. 2002. "Malthus to Solow," *American Economic Review* Vol. 92, No. 4 (Sept.), pp. 1205-1217 and Jones, Charles I. 2001. "Was the Industrial Revolution Inevitable? Economic Growth Over the Very Long Run". *Advances in Macroeconomics* 1 (2): 1-42 (package)

Matthias Doepke and Fabrizio Zilibotti, 2008. "Occupational Choice and the Spirit of Capitalism,"

Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 123(2), pp. 747-793, May.

Oded Galor and Omer Moav, “Das Human Kapital: A Theory of the Demise of the Class Structure”. *Review of Economic Studies*, 73, 85-117 (January 2006).

Sascha Becker, Erik Hornung, and Ludger Woessmann, “Education and Human Capital in the Industrial Revolution,” *AEJ: Macroeconomics* July 2011, pp. 92–126.

Hans-Joachim Voth and Nico Voigtländer. 2006. “Why England? Demographic Factors, Structural Change and Physical Capital Accumulation During the Industrial Revolution.” *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 319–61.

Avner Greif, Murat Iyigun and Diego Sasson, “Risk, Institutions and Growth: Why England and Not China?” IZA Discussion Paper No. 5598, March 2011.

Week 6: Mysteries of Persistence

Nunn, Nathan. 2009. “The Importance of History for Economic Development.” *Annual Review of Economics* Vol. I, pp. 65-92.

Hans-Joachim Voth and Nico Voigtländer, “Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Violence in Nazi Germany,” working paper.

Melissa Dell, 2010. “The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining *Mita*.” *Econometrica* Volume 78, Issue 6, pp. 1863–1903, November.

Guiso, Luigi, Sapienza, Paola, and Zingales, Luigi. 2008. “Long Term Persistence.” NBER Working Paper No. 14278.

Jha, Saumitra. 2008. “Trade, Institutions and Religious Tolerance: Evidence from India.” Stanford University Graduate School of Business Research Paper No. 2004

Alberto Alesina, Paola Giuliano and Nathan Nunn, “On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* May 2013, pp. 469-530.

Week 7: Institutions and the Evolution of Modern Economies

Greif, Avner. 1994. “Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: a Historical and Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies.” *Journal of Political Economy* Vol. 102, No. 5 (Oct.), pp. 912-50.

Rodrik, Dani, Arvind Subramanian and Francesco Trebbi. 2004. “Institutions Rule: The Primacy of Institutions over Geography and Integration in Economic Development” *Journal of Economic Growth*, pp. 131-165. and Glaeser, E.L., La Porta, R., Lopez-de-Silanes, F., Shleifer, A. 2004. “Do institutions cause growth?” *Journal of Economic Growth* Vol. 9, 271–303 [Package].

Acemoglu, Daron, Johnson, Simon, and Robinson James. “Institutions as a Fundamental Cause of Economic Growth.” In the *Handbook of Economic Growth*, edited by Philippe Aghion and Steven Durlauf, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2005, pp. 385-465 (counts for 2).

Oriana Bandiera, “Land Reform, the Market for Protection and the Origins of the Sicilian Mafia”, *JLEO*, 2003, pp. 218–43 and Paolo Buonnano et al., “Poor Institutions, Rich Mines: Resource curse and the origins of the Sicilian Mafia,” working paper, 2012 [Package].

Suresh Naidu and Noam Yuchtman, “Coercive Contract Enforcement: Law and the Labor Market in Nineteenth Century Industrial Britain,” *AER* 2013, in press (galleyproof copies).

Week 8: The New Economic History of Culture

Joel Mokyr, “Culture, Institutions, and Modern Growth,” in Sebastian Galiani and Itai Sened, eds., *Institutions, Property Rights, and Economic Growth*, forthcoming, 2014 [To be presented by the author, not an item of choice].

Guiso, Luigi, Sapienza, Paola, and Zingales, Luigi. 2006. “Does Culture Affect Economic Outcomes?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* Vol. 20, No. 2 (Spring), pp. 23-48.

Tabellini, Guido. 2008. “Institutions and Culture: Presidential address.” *Journal of the European Economic Association*, Volume 6, Issue 2-3, pp. 255–294, April-May 2008. Idem., 2010. “Culture and Institutions: Economic Development in the Regions of Europe” *Journal of the European Economic Association* Volume 8, Issue 4, pages 677–716, (June). [Package].

Sasha O. Becker and Ludger Woessmann, “Was Weber Wrong? A Human Capital Theory of Protestant Economic history.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2009, pp. 531-96; Davide Cantoni, “The Economic Effects of the Protestant Reformation: Testing the Weber Hypothesis in the German Lands” (working paper). [Package].

Week 9: Economic Riddles of China’s past

Loren Brandt, Debin Ma and Thomas Rawski, “From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China’s Economic Boom.” Unpublished.

Shiue, Carol H. and Wolfgang Keller. 2007. “Markets in China and Europe on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution” *American Economic Review*, Vol. 97 (4), pp. 1189-1216.

Greif, Avner and Tabellini, Guido, 2011. “The Clan and the City: Sustaining Cooperation in China and Europe.” Working Paper.

Sng, Tuan-Hwee. 2009. “Size and Dynastic Decline: The Principal-Agent Problem in Late Imperial China 1700-1850.” Unpublished.

Jia, Ruixue. 2011. "The Legacies of Forced Freedom: China's Treaty Ports." Unpublished and "Weather Shocks, Sweet Potatoes and Peasant Revolts in Historical China," unpublished [package].

Week 10: The New Economic History of Africa

Hopkins A. G. 2009. "The new economic history of Africa," *Journal of African History*, 50 (2009), pp. 155–77. and James Fenske, 2010. "The causal history of Africa: a Response to Hopkins," *Economic History of Developing Regions*, Volume 25, Issue 2, 2010, pp. 177-212 (package)

Nunn, Nathan. 2008. "The Long Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 123, No. 1, February 2008, pp. 139-176. and Nunn, Nathan and Watchekon, Leonard. 2012. "The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa", *American Economic Review*, forthcoming (package).

Whatley, Warren, "Guns for Slaves: the 18th century British slave trade in Africa", mimeo, and Whatley, Warren and Gillezeau, Rob. 2011. "The Impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade on Ethnic Stratification in Africa." *American Economic Review*, May, pp. 571–76 (package).

Isaiah Chaves, Stanley Engerman, and James A. Robinson, 2013. "Reinventing the Wheel: The Economic Benefits of Wheeled Transportation in Early British Colonial West Africa." NBER working papers, 19673.

Nicola Gennaioli and Ilija Rainer, "The Modern Impact of Precolonial Centralization in Africa," *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Sep., 2007), pp. 185-234 and "Precolonial Centralization and Institutional Quality in Africa," In *Institutions and Norms in Economic Development*, Kai Konrad and Mark Gradstein eds., MIT Press (package).