

International History

Academic year 2020-2021

Topics in Economic History

HI107 - Printemps - 6 ECTS

Wednesday 14h15 - 16h00

Course Description

This is a course on international economic history, with two objectives. First, it aims to introduce students to key recent debates in economic history. Second, it aims to get them thinking about the relative merits of books and articles as means of scholarly communication. When are books necessary, and when would an article have sufficed? This course aims to provide a broad perspective on the status of the discipline, research trends and opportunities and will cover topics such as the role of networks in history, financial crises, political economy and globalization. Classes will be structured around a collection of recently published books in economic history, occasionally accompanied by two or three articles. In the manner of a book club, students will be responsible for leading the discussion on at least one book in the syllabus.

> PROFESSOR

[Rui Pedro Esteves](#)

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

Frank Afari

[Office hours](#)

Syllabus

Assessment

- Class participation 25%
- Book presentation 25%
- Book review 50%

Each student will be asked to lead the discussion of one of the books scheduled for the semester (first in first served). If you are unsure about which book to choose, I am very happy to provide more information. In advance of the relevant class, you can either:

- share your discussion notes (up to 3 pages) with the class and me
- or you may also prepare a presentation and circulate the slides instead.

Even when not leading the discussion, you are expected to do the readings and contribute to the debate in class.

At the end of the semester you have to hand in an extended review of the book you were responsible for (up to 15 pages). This review should place the book in the context of the existing literature on the broad topic of the book. The earlier you choose your book and start working on the relevant literature the better. I will be happy to provide guidance throughout the semester.

Deadlines:

- As soon as possible: choose your book
- The Saturday before your discussion: share your discussion notes or slides
- **2 June, 12pm**: deadline to submit the book review electronically through the moodle site of the course.

Notes

Students are expected to be aware of the plagiarism guidelines in force at the Graduate Institute, which may be consulted from <https://moodle.graduateinstitute.ch/mod/resource/view.php?id=76077>. Your written work (book review) will be screened through an automatic plagiarism detecting software.

1. Introductory Session (24/02)

- Topic and Methods
- Organization
- Students' background and goals
- Course's goals

2. Where is Economic History Going? (03/03)

Abramitzky, Ran (2015) "Economics and the Modern Economic Historian," *Journal of Economic History* 75(04): 1240-1251.

Antipa, Pamfili and Vincent Bignon (2017) "Où En Est L'Histoire Économique? Entre Narration et Quantification," *Revue de l'OFCE* 153: 19-41.

Gutman, Myron, Emily Klancher and Evan Roberts (2018) "'Big Data' in Economic History", *Journal of Economic History* 78 (1): 268-99.

Shiller, Robert (2017) "Narrative Economics," *American Economic Review* 107(4): 967-1004.

3. Climate over the Very Long Run (10/03)

Campbell, Bruce (2016) *The Great Transition: Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World*, Cambridge: CUP.

4. Institutions 1: Medieval Trade (17/03)

Goldberg, Jessica (2016) *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and their Business World*, Cambridge: CUP.

5. Modelling War and Conquest (24/03)

Hoffman, Philip (2015) *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* Princeton: PUP.

6. Institutions 2: Weak Despotism (31/03)

Grafe, Regina (2012) *Distant Tyranny: Markets, Power, and Backwardness in Spain, 1650-1800*, Princeton: PUP.

7. No class – Easter Break (07/04)

8. No class – Reading week (14/04)

9. Inequality in Surnames (21/04)

Clark, Greg (2014) *The Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility*, Princeton: PUP.

10. Religion as Freedom (28/04)

Johnson, Noel and Mark Koyama (2019) *Persecution and Toleration: The Long Road to Religious Freedom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

11. Children of the Revolution (05/05)

Humphries, Jane (2010) *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge: CUP.

12. Slavery and Capitalism (12/05)

Wright, Gavin (2006) *Slavery and American Economic Development*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press.

13. The Networks of Finance (19/05)

Flandreau, Marc (2016) *Anthropologists in the Stock Exchange: A Financial History of Victorian Science*, Chicago: UCP.

14. Disease and Globalization (26/05)

Harrison, Mark (2012) *Contagion: How Commerce Has Spread Disease*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

15. Course Wrap-up (02/06)