Africa

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A vast and diverse continent

- Thinking about African economic history since c. 1400 as a whole is a challenging task.
- Vast (30.3 million km²) and enormously rich area.
- Cradle of anatomically modern humans.
- Genetically, linguistically, and ecologically, Africa is the most diverse continent on the globe.
colonial and pre-colonial features. Section 4 reports our estimates on the local effect of ethnic partitioning on various aspects of civil conflict (number of war incidents, total casualties, and duration). In Section 5 we model spillovers and examine whether civil conflict spreads from the historical homelands of partitioned ethnic groups to adjacent regions. We then explore how the presence of natural resources in partitioned ethnic homelands increases the likelihood of conflict. We also report several sensitivity checks. In section 6 we conclude, discussing some possible avenues for future research.

2.1 Identifying Partitioned Ethnic Groups

We identify partitioned groups projecting national borders in 2000, as portrayed in the Digital Chart of the World (Figure 1) on George Peter Murdock’s Ethnolinguistic Map (1959) that portrays the spatial distribution of ethnicities at the time of European colonization in the mid/late 19th century (Figure 1).

*Ethnic Homelands and National Borders*

- National Boundaries
- Non-Border Groups
- Border Groups
- Partitioned Groups >10%

Figure 1

Murdock’s map scrambles Africa into 843 ethnic polygons. The mapped ethnicities correspond roughly to levels 7−8 of the Ethnologue’s language family tree. Areas are classified as “uninhabited upon colonization” and are therefore not considered in our analysis. We also drop the Guanche, a small group in the Madeira islands that is currently part of Portugal. Out of a total of 834 ethnicities in Murdock’s Ethnolinguistic Map, the homeland of 358 groups falls...
east or west you will see more variety of plant species than if you travel north or south. This meant that the domestic crop repertoire—in other words, the range of different crops for human and animal use—was relatively poor in Africa. So there was a limit to how many new crops farmers could introduce to enhance productivity.

Map 1: Ecological regions of Africa

A dynamic continent

- Also, Africa experiences constant change both internally and externally driven during these centuries, with large economic consequences:
  1. Climatic and environmental change.
  2. Bantu expansion and the rise of the Zulu Empire, Oromo migrations.
  3. Expansion of Islam and Christianity.
  4. Slavery, colonialism, and independence.
  5. Arrival of new crops (maize, cassava, coffee, ...).
  6. Integration into world economy.

- You should forget about “ahistorical” concepts of an “eternal Africa” (either as a positive or negative feature).
Selection of topics

• Among other aspects, need to integrate in a single narrative:

1. Egypt → part of the Ottoman empire (1517-1867), later a semi-British colony and a leader of Arab nationalism.

2. West Africa → slave trade with Europe and the Americas, colonial possession, struggles after independence.

3. East Africa → slave trade with the Arab world, part of the Indian Ocean network of trade, experiments with socialism in the 1960s-1980s.

4. South Africa → European settlement in Cape Town, independent Boer republics, Apartheid regime, economic center of Sub-Saharan Africa.

• Out of sheer necessity, we will focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.
A point about evidence

• Documentary record is more limited than for other regions.

• For example, we do not even know where the capital of the Mali Empire (c. 1230-1670) was.

• Reasons:
  1. Environment.
  2. “Records of documentation.”
  3. Ideological structures.

• This does not mean we should not study Africa.

Additional readings

- General history:

- Economic history:
  2. Africa’s Development in Historical Perspective, by Emmanuel Akyeampong et al.
Africa c. 1400

- Likely, Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the lowest income per capita c. 1400 and today.

- Notice: this low level of income per capita is before slave trade by Europeans starts, but after slave trade by Arabs have been happening at large scale since at least 9th century.

- Similarly, this low level of income per capita is before any major colonial settlements have started.

- Of course, this does not imply that slave trade and colonialism were not detrimental for Africa’s development, just that we are analyzing a complex set of interrelated phenomena.

- In fact, slave trade and colonialism need to be understood within the context of Africa’s situation c. 1400.
Figure 1.4. The evolution of average GDP per capita in Western Offshoots, Western Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa, 1000-2000.
لا يغيب من هذه الأمور أن يحسن三個有关部门 من أمورهم إلى ما يتوافق بينهما.
No large agrarian state

- By 1400, no large, sustained agrarian state has appeared in Sub-Saharan Africa.

- Partial exception: Ethiopian plateau. Domesticated teff, finger millet, sesame, mustard, ensete, and coffee and husbandry.

- Large agrarian states are required to generate enough population and surplus to sustain technological growth.

- Of course, this is not to say that Africans were worse off. Jared Diamond and James C. Scott have expressed serious doubts about the advantages of states and “civilization.”

- Instead, more decentralized agricultural systems based on yams, palm oil, toro, beans, bananas, and plantains. Some sorghum and millet around Lake Chad and in the Bantu expansion.

- Decentralized agriculture was base for smaller and more equalitarian polities.
Table 5. Yakö income, 1930s

Panel A: Food production and consumption

The family consists of one man, two women, and 3–4 children (4.75 adult equivalents)

The family cultivates 1.4 acres of yams intercropped with pumpkins and okra. Palm oil and palm wine are harvested from wild stands.

Food consumption per adult equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Kg/year</th>
<th>Kcal/day</th>
<th>grams protein/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yams</td>
<td>489.2</td>
<td>1582</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cowpeas</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meat</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pumpkins</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>okra</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm oil</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm wine</td>
<td>174.7</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultivating the yam patch takes 307 days. The palm products require 93 days. The meat is purchased.

Panel B: Palm products produced for sale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>palm oil</td>
<td>12 tins @ 36 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm kernels</td>
<td>747 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm wine</td>
<td>93 half-gallon bottles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Palm products sold require 155 days of work.
Why no large agrarian states?

- Traditional explanations based on noncommercial values are hard to defend.
  - Plenty of evidence of markets in Africa well before Europeans arrived.
  - Africans showed considerable ability to adapt to new crops, technologies, and trade when they got in contact with them.

- Two classes of explanations:
  1. Explanations based on endowments.
  2. Explanations based on timing.

- Explanations are not contradictory.

- Both explanations lead to low population density.
Explanations based on endowments

1. Jared Diamond’s hypothesis about vertical vs. horizontal axes. Particularly salient after the Sahara dries up about 5,400 years ago. Also, Congo rainforests.

2. Disease environment: horse, cattle, and sheep died of sleeping sickness carry by tsetse fly, malaria, together with a challenging climate.

3. Soil is often low fertility because of old bedrocks and exposed to erosion.

4. Long distances with respect to the sea and few easily navigable rivers: high transportation costs. Iron and cotton production in the Kingdom of Kano (999-1349).
east or west you will see more variety of plant species than if you travel north or south. This meant that the domestic crop repertoire—"in other words, the range of different crops for human and animal use—was relatively poor in Africa. So there was a limit to how many new crops farmers could introduce to enhance productivity.

Map 1: Ecological regions of Africa

Tsetsefliege (Glossina morsitans). 3/1.
(Art. Tsetsefliege.)
Explanations based on timing

- Africa just slightly behind in transition toward large agricultural states.
- Similar point in the Americas.
- Early transition to large agricultural states (Mali, Bantu kingdoms,...).
- Luck or endowments?
• Ethiopia’s highlands have a very different environment.

• Kingdoms of D’mt (c. 980-400 BCE) and Aksum (c. 80 BCE-c. 940).

• Later on, the Solomonic dynasty (900-1974).

• Adoption of the plough.

• Trade of agricultural products, ivory, skins, crystal glass, copper, and brass.

• Particularly well regarded coinage: Aksumite currency become standard in the Red Sea area.
Ethiopia’s own path

- Much more complex political and cultural structures:
  1. Rock-hewn monolithic churches in Lalibela.
  2. Zera Yacob (1599-1692) and Walda Hewat.

- Much more successful at resisting outside conquest (from the northern Muslim lands) and colonization (from Europeans).

- First Italo-Ethiopian War (1895-1896) and Battle of Adwa (1896).

- Foundations of an African Civilisation: Aksum and the northern Horn, 1000 BC-AD 1300 by David W. Phillipson.
Some institutional consequences

- Low population density: abundance of land.

- Land-extensive agricultural methods (e.g., hoe-based ration in arable lands).

- Hard to tax land (base of Eurasian fiscal systems).

- Hard to compel labor. Resort to slavery raids, but hard to sustain beyond one generation. Nonetheless, slavey within Africa was not “benign.”
An economic model of slavery

- The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom: A Hypothesis by Evsey Domar.

- Domar postulated that, to have a wealthy upper class of aristocrats, warriors, and bureaucrats that rules over a large slave population, we need three requirements:

  1. Sufficient productivity in the sector where slaves are employed to support an upper class with their output. Domar highlighted a low labor/land ratio.

  2. Sufficient differential in military effectiveness to make becoming a lord or an unproductive specialist in coercive violence worth the risk.

  3. An effective “recapture technology” to keep your slaves/serfs/debt peons from successfully running away. For example, in Russia, the lords used the Cossacks as a mobile police to enforce serfdom. Europeans preferred other systems, such as language competence or skin color.
Exception: West Africa

- Trans-Saharan trade becomes feasible around 300, with the adoption of camels by Berber tribes.
- Big impulse after the Arab conquest of North Africa and the expansion of Islam in the Sahel (common language, legal institutions, cultural affinity).
- West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai built around the taxation of trans-Saharan trade (a route for the expansion of Islam, which brings its own set of institutional arrangements) and gold production.
- Case of Mansa Musa (1312-1337), ruler of the Mali Empire, and his visit to Cairo in 1324 in route toward his pilgrimage to Mecca.
Trade and cultural exchanges

- Economic life,
  1. Exports: ivory, diamonds, animal hides, leatherwork, kola, ostrich feathers, spices, and slaves.
  2. Imports: glass vessels and beads, glazed ceramics, copper, books, foodstuffs, salt.
- Sankore Madrasah in Timbuktu, Mali: manuscripts in Arabic, Songhay, and Tamasheq.
Arrival of the Europeans

- Europeans insert themselves in and transform the pre-existing trade routes in Africa.

- Factories for local exchange and slave trade: Portuguese, Dutch, and English.

- Europeans cannot penetrate in the interior. Partial exception in Cape Colony.

- Kingdoms of Dahomey and the Ashanti specialize in slave raiding in exchange for textiles, alcohol, sugar, firearms, and other manufactures.

- Slave trade largely ends in 1807: British Empire abolishes trade and, the next year, sets up the West Africa Squadron. Smuggling lasts until 1870s.

- Long-run consequences.
The fifteenth century had seen the beginning of direct trade with Europe. Portuguese navigators had explored the coasts, partly in order to bypass the Saharan middlemen in the trade of West African gold to Europe, and partly en route to India. They acquired a string of coastal bases, and inaugurated the Atlantic slave trade when they acquired a string of coastal bases, and inaugurated the Atlantic slave trade when they

Mauritania, and Guinea-Bissau. By the early sixteenth century, West Central Africa (including present-day Congo and Angola) had begun to export significant numbers of slaves; it would ultimately provide about 44 percent of all the slaves shipped out of Africa. But beginning in the 1670s, with the emergence of British dominance of the trade, the Bight of Benin (western Nigeria and southeast Niger, then known as the Slave Coast) and the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana, Burkina Faso, eastern Ivory Coast, and southern Niger) became the major slave-exporting regions. During the mid-eighteenth century the Bight of Biafra (an area that included western Cameroon and eastern Nigeria) and Sierra Leone also grew to be major sources of slaves.

Africans from particular regions also tended to concentrate in particular parts of the New World. Thus slaveholders in the Carolinas and Georgia purchased many slaves from West Central Africa and many from Senegambia and Sierra Leone, who were sought for their rice-cultivation skills. Virginians imported large numbers of Igbos and other peoples from the Bight of...
Aldus vertoont hem het Castell de Mynaaen de Noordt
west zyde, vyt de Rivier aen te szeen. alsoo in de gedaekte schets. B. Brouwer, aen.
The Atlantic Slave System

ATLAS OF THE
TRANS ATLANTIC
SLAVE TRADE

DAVID ELTIS • DAVID RICHARDSON

Foreword by David Brion Davis • Afterword by David W. Blight
note that a self-ennobled seigneur who owned a sugar mill and often dealt with slaves indirectly, through deferential slave-owning sugar farmers, or lavradores de cana, could give the appearance of reconciling traditional Christian principles with the inherent brutality of slavery. Moreover, in all parts of the hemisphere, slaveholders eventually benefited, at least ideologically, from a growing consensus that defined slave labor as a “backward” and anachronistic institution necessitated by the need to Christianize and civilize a “savage people” from Africa. This last answer to “the problem of slavery,” emphasizing the economically archaic, retrograde, premodern, but essentially humane character of racial “servitude,” prevailed in much of America long after the emancipation of slaves and even after the Second World War.

4

Indeed, many historians initially attacked the economic historians’ discovery that Southern slavery, despite its ghastly evils, was more
Africa during the peak of the Atlantic slave trade, 1680–1800

For west and west-central Africa especially, this period was dominated by an escalation of the Atlantic slave trade to unprecedented levels, responding to the expansion of the Atlantic plantation system. The effects on peaceful production and trade were dire. Not only did the Atlantic market encourage private and state enterprise into slave-raiding and slave-trade-stimulated warfare, but wars and raids made the pursuit of peaceful forms of production dangerous: at least parts of the ‘Gold Coast’ even became net importers of gold (Rodney 1969). On the other hand, those enslaved were overwhelmingly ‘foreigners’, or people excluded from society for heinous crimes, as far as those who sold them were concerned – contrary to the myth that Africans tended to enslave kin and fellow citizens (the exceptions were mainly in central Africa, as a last resort: see Miller 1988).

Admittedly, the Atlantic trade as a whole still brought certain advantages. Besides the new crops, the currencies that the West African merchants adopted were technically more efficient than their earlier commodity currencies, as was reflected in the expansion of a dual cowrie-and-gold-dust zone in West Africa (Lovejoy 1974). This can be seen as an institutional reform that reduced the cost of doing business; though the developmental benefits of this were limited as long as the business including slaving.

It is impossible to estimate with any precision the demographic impact of the Atlantic slave trade (still less that of the other external slave trades, which are much less documented). For the Atlantic slave trade, at least, we have a pretty good knowledge of the numerator (close to 13 million captives embarked: see Table 10.1), but only a rough idea of the denominator (the population of Africa: see Thornton 1977, Henige 1986). What is clear is that population densities were low relative to Eurasia (Austin 2008a: 590–1), and that, as noted, labour rather than land was the crucial supply constraint on production. We can, however, observe that the external slave trades, including the Atlantic, presumably enhanced inequality. Slave-holding within Africa increased as a joint product of the supply of exports, and there was also a high entry threshold of slave-raiding and trading as a business. All these developments made aggressive states profitable, and aggravated shortages of labour, and of effective demand (Hopkins 1973). Overall, in this time of mortal danger for stateless societies, there was probably a net increase in political centralization.

Table 10.1 Estimated slave departures from Sub-Saharan Africa in the different external slave trades, c. 1500–c. 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>1501–1600</th>
<th>1601–1700</th>
<th>1701–1800</th>
<th>1801–1900</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saharan</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>3,150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Sea</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>492,000</td>
<td>892,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East African</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>442,000</td>
<td>1,042,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>338,000</td>
<td>1,876,000</td>
<td>6,495,000</td>
<td>4,027,000</td>
<td>12,736,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,088,000</td>
<td>2,776,000</td>
<td>7,795,000</td>
<td>6,161,000</td>
<td>17,820,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
African Kings and Black Slaves
Sovereignty and Dispossession in the Early Modern Atlantic

Herman L. Bennett
By the 18th century, African exports diversified.

Central role of palm oil: lubricant, soap, and candles.

Also groundnuts, cocoa, coffee, rubber, and minerals.

How transformative was the transition to the new economy?


Colonial rule was intended to be cheap: the local administrations faced a combination of constraints on their fiscal capacity and therefore on their freedom of manoeuvre. They encountered broadly the same obstacles to political centralization as their African predecessors had faced, especially the difficulty of extracting revenue from domestic agriculture (Frankema and van Waijenburg 2014). In addition, they had problems arising from the nature of the colonial enterprise: the imperial requirement that colonial administrations balance their budgets, and the need...
AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF WEST AFRICA
Second Edition
Commodity-exporting economies

• Big feature: commodity-exporting economies are subject to large price (e.g., terms-of-trade) shocks.

• Particularly important when exports are highly concentrated.

• Remediation strategies:
  1. Sovereign funds.
  2. Cartels.

• Evidence regarding long-run trends of prices (a popular theory in the 1950s and 1960s) is harder to interpret.
17. Price of palm oil relative to price of cotton cloth
Africa's economy was export-oriented, the Africans pushed back the rainforest in response to high prices in global markets, and income was ploughed back into businesses. All this enterprise and progress, however, failed to spark off modern economic growth. Why not?

There are immediate explanations and underlying causes. The immediate explanation is contained in Figures 17 and 18. They show that the real prices of palm oil and cocoa have trended downwards since the early 20th century. Both prices fell during the First World War and reached extremely low values during the 1930s and the Second World War. The price of palm oil (relative to cloth) never recovered its pre-First World War value, and today is lower than it was in the 1930s. Cocoa-producing countries have fared better – but not cocoa growers. World market prices trended erratically upwards after the Second World War and hit peaks higher than those of the palm oil and kernels.

![Graph showing earnings per day from palm oil](image_url)

19. Earnings per day from palm oil
High tide of European imperialism

• Most of Africa is conquered by the European powers in the second half of 19th century.

• Mix of different forces:
  1. Technological change.
  2. Strategic considerations.
  3. Internal politics.

• Consolidated in the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885.
Types of colonies

1. Settler colonies: South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Kenya (also Algeria in Northern Africa).


3. Concession company colonies: King Leopold II’s Congo, Portuguese colonies, other colonies in Central and Equatorial Africa.
“An enthralling story... A work of history that reads like a novel.”

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

KING LEOPOLD’S GHOST
A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa

ADAM HOCHSCHILD

WITH A FOREWORD BY BARBARA KINGSOLVER
Consequences

• High colonial time was incredibly short (around 70 years: a lifetime).

• However, large consequences.

• Extremely high human cost.

• Tremendous (although often overlooked) impact of World War I on Africa.

• Disappointing economic growth.
Evolution of World GDP per capita (Maddison) since colonization
Introduction

African Development before, during, and after Colonization

Divergence, since Colonization

Evolution World GDP p.c. (Maddison) since colonization

Source: Maddison
Relative GDP per capita (Maddison) since colonization

Source: Maddison
Let us return to the traditional description of Sub-Saharan Africa, as poor and economically static. According to a classic study, in 1800 in what is now mainland Tanzania, ‘men measured out their lives in famines’ (Iliffe 1979: 13). Land abundance was no guarantee of subsistence where population was scattered, soils infertile and animal assistance lacking in arable production. But very widespread access to land certainly helped, in Sub-Saharan Africa generally (Iliffe 1987).

In West Africa, despite the Atlantic slave trade, evidence on heights for the first half of the nineteenth century suggests that people there were, on average, as tall as those in southern Europe (Figure 10.5, Austin et al. 2012).

For the colonial period as a whole Africans grew taller. In certain countries this applied even from the early part of the period, according to detailed studies both in the relatively prosperous ‘peasant’ (or small African capitalist) economy of Ghana, and more surprisingly, also in the settler colony of Kenya (Figure 10.6, Moradi 2009, Moradi et al. 2013). A larger sample of countries, however, indicates for males that average heights in Africa slightly declined during the early years of colonial rule in most of Africa (being 0.57 cm less in 1930 than in 1900), before rising quite strongly in the late colonial era: 2.43 cm more in 1960 than 1930 (Baten and Blum 2012; see also Interlinking Chapter I8 by Baten and Inwood in this volume on the average decline from precolonial times and the substantial...
Figure 10.5 is an example of this pattern. The reported decline in heights for the early colonial period in mainland Tanzania is consistent with strong evidence that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw a devastating combination of animal and human epidemics, as an unintended side-effect of the local German invasion, and of the Italian invasion of Somalia (Koponen 1996). The latter brought Indian cattle to Africa, introducing the rinderpest virus. This devastated herds in eastern and southern Africa in the 1890s, damaging or destroying livelihoods and in some cases leading to famines.

Turning to infant mortality, differences between the political forms of European domination made for contrasts between countries that would not be predicted on economic potential alone. Given the much greater mineral wealth and investment in South Africa, compared to anywhere in tropical Africa, it is remarkable that the infant mortality rate among the black population actually rose, from 254 in 1910–20 to 302 in 1920–30. In Ghana, the rate moved in the opposite direction, from 295 to 110 (Bowden et al. 2008: 161).

In the 1980s and early 1990s it was commonly suggested that, with the notable exception of Botswana, real incomes per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa were generally not significantly (if at all) higher than at the time of independence. Yet there had certainly been major advances since independence in education and health, including of women (Sender 1999). Between c. 1995 and the time of writing, despite violent conflicts in several countries, the overall economic trends have been positive: in incomes, education and public health.
Why?, I

• Legacy of bad institutions:

  1. Policies of “divide-and-rule” (tribes, religious communities) and creation of “chiefs.”

  2. Extractive institutions.

  3. Artificial frontiers (Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou).
Current National Boundaries and Ethnic Homelands

At independence borders were respected creating boundaries of African states.
The Scramble for Africa
Consequences

Partitioning of Ethnic Areas - Binary Classification

Ethnic Homelands and National Borders
National Boundaries
Non-Partitioned Groups
Partitioned Groups
Armed Conflict Locations from 1997-2010

Type of Event
- Battle-Government regains territory
- Battle-No change of territory
- Battle-Rebels gain territory
- Battle-Rebels overtake territory
- Headquarters or base established
- Non-violent activity by a conflict actor
- Riots/Protests
- Violence against civilians

National Boundaries
Ethnic Partitioning and Conflict Type. Descriptive Evidence

- non-split ethnic homelands (N=200)
- partitioned ethnic homelands (N=213)

The graph compares the frequency of different types of incidents and conflicts in non-split and partitioned ethnic homelands. The data sources are ACLED [1997-2013] and UCDP GED [1989-2010].
• Next-to-no investment in education.

• Little investment in infrastructures.

• Perverse political-economic incentives.
The case of South Africa (and Rhodesia), I

- Cape Colony.
- The Great Trek, the Boers Republics, and the (Second) Boer War 1899-1902.
- Union of South Africa in 1910.
- Victory of National Party in 1948: Apartheid and re-distribution of power within English-speakers and Afrikaners.
- Republic of South Africa in 1960 and unilateral withdrawal from the British Commonwealth.
STEM
NASIONALE
PARTY

VIR VOLK EN
VADERLAND
The case of South Africa (and Rhodesia), II

• Largest economy in Africa.

• High level of income per capita goes back to the times of the Cape Colony: wine, services, trade.

• Mineral revolution:
  1. Diamonds at the town of Kimberley in 1867.

• First: alliance of “Maize and gold.”

• Later, government-led industrialization in favor of Afrikaners.
output, the structure of the population and urbanisation to get a first, very tentative idea about changes in GDP. After 1795, the new regime(s) continued to collect detailed information on the output of the agricultural sector (for, as usual, tax purposes), and on the size and structure of the population. For a number of years (1804-1822, 1826, 1829, 1831, 1840, 1843, 1847 and 1850), we could collect this information and estimate the output of the largest sector of the economy in the same way as we did for the eighteenth century. The rest of the economy was estimated on the basis of the population of Cape Town, and on the share of industry and services as sources of employment in the rest of the colony.10 While the estimates for the nineteenth century are still preliminary, they do offer the opportunity to link our eighteenth-century measures with those of the modern South Africa. Fig. 8 provides a first snapshot of more than 300 years of per capita economic growth in the Cape Colony and South Africa in 1990 dollars.

Fig. 8 reveals a steady decline in the per capita income until roughly the discovery of diamonds in the 1860s. Thereafter, rapid expansion occurs in the Cape Colony until Union in 1910. The South African GDP per capita is slightly below the level of Cape Colony GDP per capita in 1910, which is to be expected given the longer period of capital formation in the Cape. South African GDP per capita, on the back of large increases in the value of gold, increased rapidly after the 1930s until the period of international isolation in the 1970s. After a new democratic dispensation in 1994, per capita growth resumed.

Fig. 9 plots the GDP per capita of South Africa with that of England/UK (taken from Maddison, 2003). While initial GDP per capita levels seem to equate or even surpass that of England/UK, the South African economy experienced a sharp decline in the 1940s and 1950s, followed by rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, South African GDP per capita has stagnated, despite significant increases in the value of gold.

10 Sources: NA SA, opgaafrolle I/5, no. 442, Neumark (1956), and from the mid-1830s onwards the Bluebooks of the Cape Colony.

Figure 8. GDP per capita of Cape Colony (1701-1910) and SA (1910-2009), in 1990 dollars.
of the English, the relative decline in the Cape Colony’s GDP per capita for the century from 1770 to 1870 resulted in a large divergence between the two series. After the discovery of minerals in South Africa’s interior, GDP per capita levels seemed to narrow the gap until the 1970s, when Apartheid policies and international sanctions derailed South Africa’s convergence trajectory.

8. CONCLUSION

The Dutch Cape Colony offers a wealth of quantitative sources that allow the estimation and comparison of eighteenth-century incomes per capita. The results reported here show that the average Cape inhabitant (including slaves and those Khoe who participated in the settler economy) reached a high level of GDP per capita comparable with the most affluent societies of the time: Holland and England. The reason for this was twofold: a strong demand for Cape products by the passing European ships in Table Bay, and a large slave society that increased productivity and caused a low dependency ratio. Comparative figures into the nineteenth century, however, show that the Cape was unable to maintain its high levels of per capita income; in fact, for the century following the Industrial Revolution in England, the Cape economy declined in per capita terms. The reasons for this decline in per capita levels remain less well understood. The use of slave labour with little incentive or ability for technological innovation and spillover, and with direct consequences for the distribution of income and the evolution of economic institutions, may begin to explain the lower growth trajectory and the eventual divergence from other affluent eighteenth-century societies.

Figure 9. Comparing Cape Colony/South African GDP per capita with that of England/UK

Sources: This study, and Maddison (2003) and his website at http://www.ggdc.net/MADDISON/oriindex.htm.
Dan O’Meara

Volkskapitalisme
Class, capital and ideology in the development of Afrikaner nationalism 1934–1948
Africa after independence, 1

• Ghana becomes independent in 1957 under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah. Most nations follow in 1960 (“Year of Africa”).

• Promising start in the 1960s.

• Economic experiments such as Ujamaa in Tanzania (Julius Nyerere):

  1. One-party system: Tanganyika African National Union (today, Chama Cha Mapinduzi).

  2. Creation of a national identity: use of Swahili (note: Tanzania at independence was the most linguistically diverse country in East Africa; only around 10% of population are native speakers of Swahili).

  3. The villagization of production.


“A gorgeous, pitiless account of love, violence and betrayal.” — Time

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF AMERICANAH

HALF OF A YELLOW SUN
A NOVEL
• Big debt problems in the 1970s and 1980s.

• End of minority rule in South Africa (1990-1994) (and, before, Rhodesia, which becomes Zimbabwe).

• Reform and commodity boom (oil and minerals) in the 1990s and 2000s.

• Current role of China.

• Problems with numbers.
years from 1995 to the time of writing have seen aggregate growth at 4–5 per cent a year, including at least 2 per cent a year per capita.

Figure 10.3 GDP per capita in Angola, Botswana and South Africa, 1950–2010s
Notes: Y-Axis in Geary-Khamis dollars (1990). The years refer to the beginning of each decade.
Source: www.clio-infra.eu
A striking feature of post-colonial economic history is that, except for Botswana (the single year 2010 apart), no country in Sub-Saharan Africa has grown well throughout the whole period to date (Jerven 2014: 75–102). Many have had a major period of fairly fast growth, sustained for a decade or more, and a similarly extended period of stagnation or actual decline (Berthélemy and Söderling 2001). A classic comparison is Ghana and Ivory Coast, two neighbours with very similar environmental and demographic characteristics, both of whom have boomed and slumped, but at opposite times (Figure 10.4; Eberhardt and Teal 2010). Pessimists might suggest that the alternation of boom and bust conceals a very low ‘natural’ rate of economic growth, but the ups and downs have both lasted too long for that to be plausible. A more likely explanation is a combination of policy ‘mistakes’ (often reflecting both vested interests and, albeit in exaggerated form, the conventional developmental wisdom of the time concerned) and political instability, the latter tending to be partly the result of the former, but to then be reinforced by it.

The first decade or so of economic liberalization has been described as ‘lost’ in terms of economic growth and declining expenditure on health and education. As signalled above, two of the most spectacular under-performers of the era of state-led development policy, Ghana and Uganda, recovered rapidly (Figure 10.4); but the general picture was dismal. The major issue is how far this was the result of the new policy paradigm, and how far it was attributable to the fact that the introduction of Structural Adjustment policies roughly coincided with a severe downturn in world commodity prices. Proponents of economic liberalization argue that the post-1995 boom would not have been nearly as large, nor sustained through the Western financial crisis that began in 2008, were it not for Structural Adjustment in the 1980s (Ndulu et al. 2008).
POOR NUMBERS
HOW WE ARE MISLED BY AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT
MORTEN JERVEN