

Embedding Development Back in Political Economy

Eduardo Montero¹ and Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra²

PPHA 41120, ECON 35570, PLSC 46600

Spring 2025, Wednesdays 2:00-4:50 pm, Keller 2054

"[We need] a better understanding of the way cultural domination has operated. If this stimulates a new kind of dealing with the Orient, indeed if it eliminates the 'Orient' and 'Occident' altogether, then we shall have advanced a little in the 'unlearning' of the 'inherent dominative mode.'" **Edward Said (1978), Orientalism**

"Still we have to unlearn, as the price of survival, the inherent dominative mode . . . This is a real barrier in the mind, which at times it seems almost impossible to break down: a refusal to accept the creative capacities of life; a determination to limit and restrict the channels of growth; a habit of thinking, indeed, that the future has now to be determined by some ordinance in our own minds. We project our old images into the future, and take hold of ourselves and others to force energy towards that substantiation." **Raymond Williams (1960), Culture and Society 1780-1950**

The ambitious aim of this course is to unlearn this "*dominative mode*" in development economics. It is about the importance of the context, but, more specifically, about making meaning of the logics inherent in the context.

Course Objectives

Political economy of development is a broad and fascinating subject and the theme that unites it is an argument that traditional approaches to trying to understand economic development, particularly in terms of the "fundamentals" of standard economic models, cannot satisfactorily account for the evidence.

This is an Economics PhD introduction to research questions that have been explored, questions that have not yet been answered, and questions that have not yet been asked, and that are particularly pronounced (but not exclusive to) low-income country settings. It is aimed at PhD students who want to know about the world and can imagine themselves doing research in the "field" or in basements among archives. MACRM students are also welcome. It is designed to support students in starting their own research projects and highlight important and understudied research questions. We hope that it will help students identify new questions, and that it will allow them to approach research in an intellectually humble fashion that recognizes our ignorance and the significance of the actors' points of view.

¹ Harris School of Public Policy: emontero@uchicago.edu.

² Harris School of Public Policy: raul@uchicago.edu.

To achieve that goal, the course will:

1) Give you a sense of the frontier research topics in the political economy of development

To reach that goal, the reading list is long, to give you an opportunity to dive deeper into some of the topics in this area if you want to specialize in a given topic. The lectures are not intended to redo the readings together but to go beyond them. You are *expected* to read all the materials under the sections “Required readings.” Those which are also marked with **’s must be read in full detail; for those marked with *, you are only expected to be able to articulate precisely the argument. You could be asked about required readings in class. Slides will be shared before each lecture.

2) Push you to explore new topics that are (or should be) at the current research frontier

There is a huge amount of knowledge about the world out there that does not come pre-packaged in a causally identified economics publication. With enough creativity, you often will find one such strategy anyways. The inspiration, ideas, and questions in this field often come from very different sources than those you typically encounter in papers in development economics. They often originate from detailed qualitative research by ethnographers or from the work of historians who have studied a subject in a very different way than you might and have different insights and perspectives. They also will come from lived experiences in and from societies in which human interaction challenges presuppositions.

The class, thus, will have a strong fieldwork, archive, and qualitative/historical reading component to cover materials and ideas that tend to challenge the presuppositions in the current *practice* of applying the tools of economics. Expect readings outside of economics, lived experience of the human and social reality outside of papers through applying empathy to various guests, and a continued practice/exercise to develop the habit of creativity.

During lectures

Talking is strongly encouraged. You can interrupt the instructor. You can disagree with the instructor. The objective is to maximize the learning using all resources available in the course, including the knowledge from all of you, and especially the diversity of the backgrounds of all of us. You can raise the voice during the lecture, and you can also submit your question to the Teaching Fellow if you feel more comfortable this way. While we will share with you the knowledge we have built over the years, we are together in a scoping expedition for answers, for questions, and for issues that challenge our presuppositions. We will follow the following principle: *“Maximal freedom of expression, including offending and uncomfortable ideas, without attacks against the dignity of anyone.”*

The views in this class do not represent the views of the University (see the [Kalven](#) principles). The goal of the class is not to tell you how to think, but to entertain the possibility that there is truth in voices typically silenced, and to bring those to the forefront so that they, too participate the conversation. It is up to you then to know what to do with it.

Course Tasks and grading

10%: Readings

Your reading the assigned readings will be through a brief text about what you liked about the paper for each lecture, and which will be invoked during class discussion.

30%: Imaginary abstract and introduction

Students will submit 2-3 page imaginary research papers. The students will have to write out an imaginary abstract and introduction for their paper. The introduction will motivate the question or puzzle of interest, explain why it is a challenging topic to study, expand on the research design for how the imaginary paper addresses the challenge and answers the question, and then places the findings in the relevant literature by highlighting the contribution of the paper. While this might seem odd, it is often a useful first step to an applied micro paper, to help you learn if the topic truly interests you (see [4 Steps to An Applied Micro Paper](#) by Jesse Shapiro). Students might find it helpful to reference the following advice on how to write economics paper introductions ([here](#) and [here](#)). We will give three through the quarter, 10% each.

10%: Course attendance and participation

We reward attendance and (if there is discussion in that class) active participation. The grade here is a function of our perceived contribution of your effort to the quality of the intellectual public good. This is an incentive to solve a collective action problem to maximize the intellectual growth from our meetings. It is also training you to adult academic intellectual life and engagement.

10%: R Spatial Data and Analysis assignment:

You will be asked to complete a short R assignment designed to provide students with a basic familiarity with the spatial tools and analysis capabilities in R. Students will be guided through basic reading and manipulation of spatial data used in development economics research, as well as the creation of maps.

40%: Presentations and Research Proposal

A full research proposal, which every student must present. No writing needed. The research proposal must be related to the political economy of development. While we are somewhat flexible on topic, it should be related to a problem that belongs to the set of problems that are particularly acute in low-income settings. Thus, it is necessary for it to be a historical project or one focused on a low- or middle-income location, but the choice of location is not sufficient: the general interest of the problem for low-income settings/weak formal institutions setting is crucial. Students who have existing research proposals are welcome to develop them **further** in this class, only to the extent that they can articulate their relevance to the class. Discouraged, though.

The research presentation process has three steps:

Step 1: discuss your topic with the instructors before May 15th.

Step 2: write a 1-2 page outline of the proposal by May 15th prior to meeting to lay out the plan. It should articulate the question, why the question is important given the literature, the analysis you plan to conduct, the data sources, as well as a tentative budget (if applicable) and timeline.

Step 3: In class presentation on May 28th. The aim is not to have a well-crafted research paper by the end of the quarter but rather to have a good question or puzzle that interests you, where you can place it in a literature and come up with a research design. Consider our role as a grant committee whose grant timeline covers your whole Phd window. Part of the evaluation will be on originality of the idea and part of it will be on the feasibility of the proposed research study.

Teaching Fellow

Moustafa El-Kashlan (moustafa@uchicago.edu)

Remote participation and recording

This is an in-person class only. Under exceptional circumstances, we may approve transmitting the lecture on zoom for specific students only. By attending course sessions, students acknowledge that they will not: (i) record, share, or disseminate course sessions, videos, transcripts, audio, or chats; (ii) retain such materials after the end of the course; or (iii) use such materials for any purpose other than in connection with participation in the course. They will not share links course sessions with any persons not authorized to be in the course session. Sharing course materials with persons authorized to be in the relevant course is permitted. Course recordings, content, and materials may be covered by copyrights held by the University, the instructor, or third parties. Any unauthorized use of such recordings or course materials may violate such copyrights. Any violation of this policy will be referred to the Area Dean of Students.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence

Use AI as you wish, but to encourage actual learning, we encourage not to use AI for the reading memos; we de-incentivize it, we will ask students in class (cold calling) to explain their memos. While it is in your interest for obvious reasons, we do not recommend using AI for the imaginary papers. The student takes full responsibility for the accuracy of AI-generated content. The student should review and edit any generated content to avoid inaccuracies, biased outputs, or misinterpretations. Overreliance on AI content, without proper attribution, may lead to unintentional plagiarism, as LLM models have been accused of plagiarism. Students must exercise caution to ensure their contributions are appropriately credited. Overreliance on LLM models may limit the students' accumulation of skills and understanding of the material.

Course Schedule and Topics

Part 1: The Problem With Development

Lecture 1 – Humanizing the PhD: the PhD, in Context [Wed, March 26th, Raul & Eduardo]

We begin with a coaching lecture to set the tone of the course and of the remainder of the PhD.

Encouraged readings

******Axel Leijonhufvud, "Life among the Econ," <https://ibiblio.org/philecon/life-econ-crop.pdf>

******Fourcade, Marion, Etienne Ollion, and Yann Algan. 2015. "The Superiority of Economists." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 29 (1): 89-114.

******Zubin Jelveh, Bruce Kogut, and Suresh Naidu, 2022, "Political Language in Economics"

Lecture 2 – Pathologies in Development Research and Practice [Wed, March 26th, Raul]

Enthused by the promise of progress inherent in the "Western" liberal political institutions model, and concerned by corruption in "developing countries," the West tried to transform political institutions outside to look more like theirs, sometimes with ludicrous consequences.

Encouraged readings

*****Mansuri, Ghazala; Rao, Vijayendra. 2004. Community-Based and Driven Development: A Critical Review. Policy Research Working Paper; No.3209. World Bank, Washington, D.C..

******Humphreys, Macartan, Raúl Sanchez de la Sierra and Peter van der Windt (2020) "Exporting Democratic Practices:" *Journal of Development Economics*, Volume 140, 279-301.

******Gauthier Marchais, 2020 "Leaving the white house," (Translated from French: "Le Deni Blanc: Penser la Question Raciale du Point de Vue d'un Blanc") (Chapter 1)

Optional readings (for specialization)

Keim Curtis A, Somerville, Caroline. 2009. Mistaking Africa : Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind. 2nd ed. Boulder CO: Westview Press. (Ch. 2,5)

Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. 2013. "Economics versus Politics: Pitfalls of Policy Advice." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 27 (2): 173-92.

Lecture 3 & 4: Social and Institutional Economics (SIE) Kick Off Seminar & Conference – Sule Alan [Wed, April 2nd] and Mini-Conference [Thu, April 3rd]

We are excited to launch SIE events to bring together a growing and enthusiastic community of scholars at the University of Chicago across units, interested in the economic analysis of human interactions, with a particular emphasis on their embeddedness in social, cultural, and institutional contexts. We are particularly excited at getting students involved and presenting. We will have a make-up class meeting during finals week for student presentations.

Required activity:

Students are expected to attend the SIE seminar and mini-conference, and provide a reflection about the events (as with other readings). For context, the seminar series is highly inspired by the themes of this course: the series draws inspiration from Karl Polanyi's notion of 'substantive' economic analysis. We seek to explore research that examines how individual and group behaviors are shaped by institutions, culture, and social meaning—and, in turn, how these social dimensions emerge and evolve. This perspective complements formal approaches grounded in self-interested rationality and equilibrium. Our goal is to create a forum that pushes the boundaries of economic inquiry by engaging with insights from sociology, history, anthropology, and philosophy, alongside political science and psychology. We are particularly motivated by the need to enrich the current body of knowledge by amplifying voices, experiences, and societal logics from beyond **WEIRD** societies.

Lecture 5 – Context Matters for Development [Wed, April 9th, Eduardo]

In contrast with the canonical approach exemplified in lecture 2, we review some studies that empirically demonstrate the relevance of the context for the workings of development policy.

Required readings

****Ashraf, Nava, Natalie Bau, Nathan Nunn, and Alessandra Voena. 2020. "Bride Price and Female Education," Journal of Political Economy, 128 (2): 591–641**

****Lowes, Sara and Eduardo Montero. 2020. "The Legacy of Colonial Medicine Campaigns in Central Africa," American Economic Review, 111(4): 1284-1314**

Optional readings (for specialization)

Bau, Natalie. 2021. "Can Policy Change Culture? Government Pension Plans and Traditional Kinship Practices," American Economic Review 111(6): 1880-1917

Moscona, Jacob and Awa Ambra Seck. 2023. "Age Set vs. Kin: Culture and Financial Ties in East Africa," Working Paper.

Godoy, Ricardo, Dean Karlan and Jonathan Zinman. 2021. "Randomization for causality, ethnography for mechanisms: Illiquid savings for liquor in an autarkic society" (No. w29566). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Ferguson, James (1985) "The Bovine Mystique: Power, Property and Livestock in Rural Lesotho," *Man*, 20(4): 647-674

Lecture 6 – Studying Context: Social Science as Narratives [Wed, April 9th, Raul]

Having discussed the relevance of the context in the failure of some approaches to development, in this lecture, we take stock of how to conduct intellectually humble research, for its own virtue, but also for maximizing the set of interesting and relevant questions that a particular context can offer, instead of imposing questions and interpreting answers. We do so through various stories from a militia Eastern Congo as metaphor for social science as narratives, and its vulnerability to preconceived ideas and to political (and racialized) biases.

Required readings

- **Nagel, Thomas. "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" *The Philosophical Review* 83, no. 4 (1974)
- **McGovern, Michael (2011) "Popular Development Economics--An Anthropologist among the Mandarins," *Perspectives on Politics*, 9(2): 345-355.
- **Robinson, James A. (2019) "[How different social scientists think](#)"
- **Said Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism* First ed. New York: Pantheon Books (Introduction)

Part 2: Development in Historical Context

Lecture 7 – Why The Past Matters for (Under) Development [Wed, April 16th, Eduardo]

Variations in social organization and wealth inequality have historical roots. History matters.

Required readings

- **Graeber, D. and Wengrow, D. 2021. *The dawn of everything: A new history of humanity*. Penguin UK. Chapter 1.
- **Alesina A, Giuliano P, Nunn N. "On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. 2013; 128 (2): 469-530.
- *Alsan, Marcella. 2015. "The Effect of the TseTse Fly on African Development," *American Economic Review*, 105(1), 382–410.
- *Nunn, Nathan and Leonard Wantchekon. 2011. "The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa," *American Economic Review*, 101(7): 3221–3252

Optional readings (for specialization)

Nunn, N. and Puga, D., 2012. Ruggedness: The blessing of bad geography in Africa. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 94(1), pp.20-36.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 2001. *When victims become killers*, Princeton: Princeton U. Press.

Engerman, Stanley L. and Kenneth L. Sokoloff. 1997. "Factor Endowments, Institutions, and Differential Paths of Growth among New World Economies," In *How Latin America Fell Behind*, Stephen Haber (ed.), Stanford University Press, pp. 260–304.

Dell, Melissa. 2010. "The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining Mita," *Econometrica*, 78(6)

Michalopoulos, Stelios and Elias Pappaioannou. 2016. "The Long-Run Effects of the Scramble for Africa," *American Economic Review*, 106 (7), 1802–1848.

Lowes, Sara and Eduardo Montero. 2021. "Concessions, Violence, and Indirect Rule: Evidence from the Congo Free State," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 136(4): 2047–2091

Alsan, Marcella and Marianne Wanamaker. 2018. "Tuskegee and the Health of Black Men," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133 (1), 407–455.

Alsan, Marcella, Owen Garrick, and Grant Graziani. 2020. "Does Diversity Matter for Health? Experimental Evidence from Oakland," *American Economic Review*.

Graeber, David. 2007. "[There Never was a West: Or, Democracy Emerges from the Spaces in Between](#)" in *Possibilities: Essays on Hierarchy, Rebellion, and Desire*

Lecture 8 – Unsilencing the Past: Imperialism and Slave Societies [Wed, April 16th, Raul]

Required readings

**Williams, Eric (1964). *Capitalism and Slavery*. London: André Deutsch (Chapter 1)

*Curtin, P. (1998). *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*. Cambridge U. Press (Ch. 3)

*Fredrickson, George M. *Racism: A Short History*: Princeton University Press 2016. (Ch1)

**Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past*. Boston, Mass. :Beacon Press, 1995. (Ch 1)

Optional readings (for specialization)

Logan, Trevon D. 2022. "American Enslavement and the Recovery of Black Economic History." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 36 (2): 81-98.

Jordan Winthrop, 1968. *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro 1550-1812*

Vansina, Jan M. *Paths in the Rainforests: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990 (Chapter 7)

Sweet, James H. "The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (1997): 143–66.

María Elena Martínez, 2002, "The Spanish Concept of *Limpieza de Sangre* and the Emergence of the 'Race/Caste' System in the Viceroyalty of New Spain" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago)

Martínez. (2004). The Black Blood of New Spain: Limpieza de Sangre, Racial Violence, and Gendered Power in Early Colonial Mexico. *The William and Mary Quarterly.*, 61(3), 479–520

Northrup David. 2011. *The Atlantic Slave Trade*. 3rd ed. Boston MA: Wadsworth (Ch. 1-3)

Acemoglu, D., & Wolitzky, A. (2011). The Economics of Labor Coercion. *Econometrica*, 79(2)

Edward B. Rugemer. "The Development of Mastery and Race in the Comprehensive Slave Codes of the Greater Caribbean during the 17th Century." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2013): 429–58.

Benabou, Roland: "The Economics of Motivated Beliefs," *Revue d'Economie Politique* (2015), 125(5), 665-685

MUSSELWHITE, PAUL, PETER C. MANCALL, and JAMES HORN, eds. *Virginia 1619: Slavery and Freedom in the Making of English America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Lecture 9 – The Imperial Origins of the Doctrine of “Development” [Wed, April 23rd, Raul]

Required readings

**Fanon, Franz (1952) *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press. (Chapter 1)

*Hochschild Adam. 1998. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (Chapter 10)

*Deb Debal. 2009. *Beyond Developmentality: Constructing Inclusive Freedom and Sustainability*. London: Earthscan. (Chapter 1)

Optional readings (for specialization)

Young, Crawford. *Politics in Congo*. Princeton University Press, 2015. (Chapter 4)

Lecture 10 – Can Imperialism Explain the Rise of the West? [Wed, April 23rd, Raul]

Required readings

**Williams, Eric (1964). *Capitalism and Slavery*. London: André Deutsch (Chapter 3)

**Kenneth Pomeranz, "The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy." Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000. (Chapter 6)

*Derenoncourt E. The Historical Origins of Global Inequality. In: Boushey H, DeLong JB, Steinbaum M *After Piketty: The agenda for economics and inequality*. Harvard University Press ; 2017. Pp. 491-511.

Optional readings (fo specialization)

Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.

Derenoncourt E., *Atlantic slavery's impact on European and British economic development*.

Heblich, Stephan, Redding, Stephen, and Voth, Joachim (2022). Slavery and the British Industrial Revolution, Working Paper

Piketty, *A brief history of Equality*, 2022, Belknap Press of Harvard University (Chapter 4)

Part 3: Development in Global Context

Much of development focuses on changes internal to a country (e.g., what policies can countries implement?), but, in reality, external influences may be even more important for influencing economic development.

Lecture 11 – Open Political Economy of Development [Wed, April 16th, Joint]

Required readings

****Dube, Arindrajit, Ethan Kaplan, and Suresh Naidu.** "Coups, Corporations and Classified Information." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 126, no. 3 (2011): 1375-409.

***Berger, Daniel, William Easterly, Nathan Nunn, and Shanker Satyanath.** 2013. "Commercial Imperialism?" *American Economic Review*, 103 (2): 863-96.

****Nunn, Nathan** (2019) "Rethinking economic development," *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 52(4), 1349-1373.

***Harrison, Anne and Jason Scorse ..** 2010. "Multinationals and Anti-sweatshop Activism". *American Economic Review*, 100(1), pp.247-273.

Optional readings (for specialization)

Césaire Aimé 1955 Discours sur le colonialisme: discours sur la négritude. Presence Africaine.

Piketty, *A brief history of Equality*, 2022, Belknap Press Harvard University (Chapters 8, 9)

Susan Williams, "White Malice: The CIA and the Covert Recolonization of Africa" Ch. 1

Dragusanu, R., Montero, E. and Nunn, N., 2022. The effects of Fair Trade certification: evidence from coffee producers in Costa Rica. Journal of the European Economic Association, 20(4), pp.1743-1790.

Alfaro-Ureña, A., Faber, B., Gaubert, C., Manelici, I. and Vasquez, J.P., 2022. Responsible sourcing? Theory and evidence from Costa Rica (No. w30683). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Part 4: Development in Social Context

Having recontextualized the meaning of development and by implication the purpose of development research, we now take a step back and explore a rich set of ideas about how power inside societies crystalized into structures and meaning, which shape economic decision

making, and how to think about it. We first dig into a set of frameworks to understand culture, drawing from the work of evolutionary psychology and cultural evolution, discuss the notion of culture vs. institutions, and then dive into applications of these notions in four areas of life: religion, property rights, the state, and conflict.

Lecture 12 – Culture and Societies [Wed, April 30th, Eduardo]

Required readings

****Henrich, Joseph. 2020. WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Chapters 1 & 2**

****Giuliano, Paola and Nathan Nunn. 2021. “Understanding Cultural Persistence and Change,” Review of Economic Studies, 88(4): 1541–1581**

***Bau, Natalie, Sara Lowes and Eduardo Montero. 2025. “Culture and Development Policy,” in preparation for the Handbook of Culture and Economic Behaviour.**

***Henrich, Joseph. 2015. The Secret of Our Success: How Culture is Driving Human Evolution, Domesticating our Species, and Making us Smarter, Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 & 3.**

Optional readings (for specialization)

Laland, Kevin. 2017. Darwin's Unfinished Symphony: *How Culture Made the Human Mind*. Princeton University Press.

Boyd, Robert and Peter J. Richerson. 2005. The Origin and Evolution of Cultures. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 5.

Henrich, Joseph, Robert Boyd, Sam Bowles, Colin Camerer, Herbert Gintis, Richard McElreath and Ernst Fehr. 2001. “In Search of Homo Economicus: Experiments in 15 Small-Scale Societies,” American Economic Review, 91(2), 73–79.

Nisbett, Richard. 2003. The Geography of Thought. New York: The Free Press.

Grosjean, Pauline. 2014. “A History of Violence: The Culture of Honor as a Determinant of Homicide in the US South,” Journal of the European Economic Association, 12(5), 1285–1316.

Nunn, Nathan. 2022. “On the Dynamics of Human Behavior: The Past, Present, and Future of Culture, Conflict, and Cooperation,” American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings, 112: 15–37.

Henrich, Joseph. 2004. “Cultural Group Selection, Coevolutionary Processes and Large-scale Cooperation,” Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 53(1): 3–35

Francois, P. and Zabochnik, J. 2005. "Trust, Social Capital, and Economic Development," Journal of the European Economic Association, 3: 51-94

Fischer, David Hackett. 1989. Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America. New York: Oxford University Press.

Henrich, Joseph. 2021. "Game Theory in Cultural Evolution," Working Paper.

Aghion, P., Algan, Y., Cahuc, P. and A. Shleifer, "Regulation and Distrust", Quarterly Journal of Economics, 1015-1049

Lecture 13 & 14: SIE Seminar Day – Paola Guiliano & Noam Yuchtman [Wed, May 7th]

We are lucky to have two of the leading economists in this space present at UChicago for the SIE seminar. Students are expected to attend the talks and submit their reflections so that we can discuss cutting-edge work together.

Lecture 15 – Religion and Political Economy [Wed, May 14th, Eduardo]

Required readings

******Cantoni, Davide, Jeremiah Dittmar, and Noam Yuchtman. 2018. "Religious competition and reallocation: The political economy of secularization in the protestant reformation," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 133 (4): 2037-2096.

*Seabright, Paul. 2024. "The Divine Economy: How Religions Compete for Wealth, Power, and People" Intro Excerpt: <https://www.milkenreview.org/articles/book-excerpt-the-divine-economy?IssueID=55> + Chapter 1

*Montero, Eduardo, Dean Yang and Triana Yentzen. 2025. "The Price of Faith: Economic Costs and Religious Adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa" Working Paper

*Buccione, G., 2023. "Religious Messaging and Adaptation to Water Scarcity: Evidence from Jordan"

* Dube, O., Blumenstock, J.E. and Callen, M., 2024. "Measuring Religion from Behavior: Violence, Economic Shocks and Religious Adherence in Afghanistan" Working Paper

*Chaney, Eric. 2013. "Revolt on the Nile: Economic shocks, religion, and political power," Econometrica, 81 (5): 2033-2053.

*Meyerson, Erik. 2014. "Islamic Rule and the Empowerment of the Poor and Pious," Econometrica, 82 (1): 229-269.

Optional readings (for specialization)

Lansing, J.S., 2009. *Priests and programmers: technologies of power in the engineered landscape of Bali*. Princeton University Press.

Michalopoulos, Stelios, Alireza Naghavi, and Giovanni Prarolo. 2018. "Trade and Geography in the Spread of Islam," *Economic Journal*, 128 (616): 3210-3241.

Bazzi, Samuel, Gabriel Koehler-Derrick, and Benjamin Marx. 2020. "The Institutional Foundations of Religious Politics: Evidence from Indonesia," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 135 (2): 845-911.

Nunn, Nathan, and Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra, "*Magical Warfare Technologies and the Persistence of False Beliefs*," *American Economic Review*, 107 (2017), 582–587.

Aimable Amani Lameke, Lewis Dunia Butinda, Nathan Nunn, Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra and Max Winkler (2022) "Indigenous Religions and Economic Behavior: Beer Sellers in DRC"

Recent survey articles: Iyer (2016 JEL, "The new economics of religion"), Kuran (2018 JEL, "Islam and economic performance: Historical and contemporary links"), Becker et al (2021 Handbook of Historical Economics, "Religion in economic history: A survey"), Becker et al (2023 working paper "Religion and Growth")

Iannaccone, L.R., 1992. "Sacrifice and stigma: Reducing free-riding in cults, communes, and other collectives," *Journal of political economy*, 100(2): 271-291.

Dube, O., Blumenstock, J. and Callen, M., 2022. "Measuring Religion from Behavior: Climate Shocks and Religious Adherence in Afghanistan"

Squicciarini, Mara P. 2020. "Devotion and development: religiosity, education, and economic progress in nineteenth-century France," *American Economic Review*, 110 (11): 3454-91.

Abdelgadir, Aala and Fouka, Vasiliki. 2020. "Political Secularism and Muslim Integration in the West: The Effects of the French Headscarf Ban," *American Political Science Review*, 114 (3):

Lecture 16 - The Real State: Extortion and Public Goods [Wed, May 14th, Joint]

Required readings

Nonstates?

**Sánchez de la Sierra, Raúl (2020) "On the Origins of the State: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo," *Journal of Political Economy*, 128,1, 32-74.

**Montero Eduardo, Zach Y. Brown, Carlos Schmidt-Padilla, and Maria Micaela Sviatschi "Market Structure and Extortion: Evidence from 50,000 Extortion Payments", *Review of Economic Studies*

States?

**Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra, Kristof Titeca, Stan Xie, Aimable Amani Lameke, Albert Jolino Malukisa (2022) "*The Real State: Inside Congo's Traffic Police Agency*"

Optional readings (for specialization)

Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra, Stan Xie, Kristof Titeca, Aimable Amani Lameke, Albert Jolino Malukisa (2022) *"The Moral Economy of State Officials (and Its Significance for Corruption)"*

Mkandawire, Thandika (2015) "Neopatrimonialism and the political economy of economic performance in Africa: critical reflections," *World Politics*, 67 (03), 563-612.

Verweijen, Judeith (2013) "Military business and the business of the military in the Kivus." *Review of African Political Economy*, 40, no. 135: 67-82.

Eriksson Baaz, M., & Verweijen, J. (2013). The volatility of a half-cooked bouillabaisse : Rebel-military integration and conflict dynamics in the eastern DRC. *African Affairs*, 112(449), 563-582.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War making and state making as organized crime," in *Bringing The State Back In*, eds P.B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, & T. Skocpol. Cambridge:

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 567-576.

Part 5: The Future of Development – A Wasted Century? Bringing Meaning Back In

In this last part, we explore in one joint lecture the richest approach in our view to contextualizing economic transactions in their corresponding human environment. This requires talking about meaning, about separate spheres of human interaction, about the logic that sustains the separation between the spheres and, ultimately, about how economic transactions are "embedded" in these things, which are otherwise invisible to the approach to development with which we started the course.

Lecture 17 - Moral Conflict [Wed, May 21st, Raul]

Required readings

**Fearon, James D. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (1995)

*Marchais, Gauthier, Raúl Sánchez de la Sierra and Qihang Wu (2020) *"The Pro-Social Determinants of Violent Collective Action: Evidence from Participation in Militias in Congo"*

**Dunia Butinda, Lewis, (2022) "From Child of Walikale to Combatant: A Return Trip"

*Richards, Paul (1996) *Fighting for the Rainforest*, Oxford: James Currey. Chapters 1 and 2.

Optional readings (for specialization)

Dunia Butinda, Lewis, Sanchez de la Sierra, Raul and Yu, Hilary (2023): "Who joins the monopoly of violence? Inside the NDC-R"

Lecture 18 - Spheres and Social Embeddedness [Wed, May 21st, Joint]

Required readings

**Polanyi, Karl. 1957. "The Economy as Instituted Process." in *The Sociology of Economic Life*, edited by Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

*Granovetter, Mark. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (1985): 481–510.

**Ferguson, James (1985) "The Bovine Mystique: Power, Property and Livestock in Rural Lesotho," *Man*, 20, 4, pages 647-674.

Optional readings (for specialization)

Polanyi Karl. 1944. *The Great Transformation*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart.

Mauss Marcel and W. D Halls. (1925) 1990. *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge.

Bohannan, Paul (1958) "Extra-processual Events in Tiv Political Institutions," *American Anthropologist*, 60, 1-12.

Lecture 17 & 18 – Student Presentations [Wed, May 28th, all]