



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Economic History Department Alumni Newsletter



February 2012

Keep in touch!

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Relating Cultures

**Wednesday 29
February - Saturday 3
March 2012**

LSE's 4th Literary Festival, which
continues the exploration of the
relationship between the academic
cultures of the arts and social sciences.
[http://www2.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents/
spaceForThought/LiteraryFestival2012/
Home.aspx](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents/spaceForThought/LiteraryFestival2012/Home.aspx)



LSE Events 2012

Speakers from all the
world will debate
subjects ranging from
the current economic
crisis, law, social justice, human rights
to the meaning of life. LSE Public
Lectures are open to all. To view the
programme and book tickets go to the
LSE Events website:
www.lse.ac.uk/events

Welcome

From Professor Janet Hunter,
Head of Department



The year 2011, as you know, has not been an easy one for LSE. Late last year the School received the Woolf Report into the

Libyan-related events that culminated in February in the resignation of Director, Howard Davies, and is committed to looking forward and learning from what has happened.

Despite these difficulties, the academic work of LSE has continued. The Department has sustained its intake at all levels, and we are very encouraged that so many applicants with outstanding records remain enthusiastic about studying economic history - and find it enjoyable when they get here! The change this autumn in the undergraduate fee regime poses a major challenge for all UK universities, but we believe that we are relatively well placed to cope with it. We also remain confident that our degrees help to provide our graduates with skills that are transferable to the workplace, and not just intellectual interest. In this connection, alumnus Alex Bick's account of observing Liberia's first democratic elections gives an interesting insight into life after LSE.

There have been some personnel changes over the last year. Sadly, Dr. Roman Studer decided to return to

work in Switzerland. Teaching Fellow Dr. Paul Strong also decided that it was time to move on. Both are a great loss to the Department. On the plus side, we have welcomed Dr. Leigh Gardner, a specialist on African economic history, and Dr. Olivier Accominotti, whose expertise is in financial history. We have three new teaching fellows, Dr. Peter Cirenza, Dr. Niall Kishtainy and Ms Hanaan Marwah. The new additions mean changes in the courses that we offer, and the opportunity to refresh our programmes. On the research front, members of the Department are involved in a number of major research projects as well as individual research, and we have had some success in obtaining external research funding. All this helps to sustain the Department's reputation as a leading international centre for the study of economic history.

We hope that you will continue to offer us your support and involvement over the next year. We hope in particular that those of you who are able will join in our alumni events, not least the Epstein lecture in March, with Professor Ran Abramitzky. And those of you who are too far away to join these events, please do keep in touch, and drop in if you are in London.

Wherever you are, this 2012 newsletter brings with it all our best wishes for the forthcoming year.

New Arrivals

Dr Olivier Accomminotti, Lecturer



Olivier received his doctorate in 2010 from Sciences Po, Paris, and last year was post doctoral fellow at Princeton University. His

research interests are monetary and financial history of the 19th and 20th centuries; international financial instability during the Great Depression; financial crises and contagion.

Dr Leigh Gardner, Lecturer



Leigh Gardner received her doctorate from the University of Oxford. Before joining the LSE, she taught at the University of

Cape Town and worked as a researcher with the British Museum's 'Money in Africa' project. Her research focuses on the fiscal history of the British Empire, focusing on Africa and the colonial foundations of Africa's economic performance. She is currently expanding the scope of this research to examine the changing financial structure of the British Empire as a whole from the 18th-20th centuries.

Dr Niall Kishtainy, Teaching Fellow

Niall Kishtainy recently completed his PhD at Warwick University. His research

is in quantitative institutional analysis and historical growth. Before beginning his graduate studies he worked in international development in Africa and the Middle East, and as a government economist and journalist.



Dr Pete Cirenza, Teaching Fellow

Pete completed his PhD in Economic History at the LSE in May 2011.

His dissertation assessed the degree of assimilation achieved by Irish immigrants in the US in the last decades of the nineteenth century. His current research interests include immigration, as well as financial markets and institutions.

Hanaan Marwah, Teaching Fellow

Hanaan joined the LSE in Michaelmas 2011. She works on African economic history and comparative industrialization. She did her doctoral work in Economic and Social History at Oxford, and wrote her thesis about investment trends during the oil boom in post-colonial Nigeria. Before Oxford, she worked in the finance industry where she analyzed investments in companies in emerging markets. She completed her undergraduate and masters degrees at the University of Pennsylvania. She is originally from Hong Kong.

Other news

Professor Stephen Broadberry

became President of the European Historical Economics Society in September 2011, and will be responsible for organising the next conference at LSE, (6-7 September 2013.)

In October **Dr Kent Deng** took over as Director of China in Comparative Perspective (www.lse.ac.uk/ccpn). CCPN is an established platform for debate and networking, with a working paper series, e-journal and team of research volunteers.



In September 2011 **Professor Colin Lewis** made the keynote speech at the Brazilian equivalent of the Economic History

Association. He was also spoken on panels about the Argentine elections, at LSE, Oxford, and elsewhere.

Dr Olivier Accominotti won the 2011 Alexander Gerschenkron Dissertation Prize (awarded by the Economic History Association) and the Gino Luzzatto Dissertation Prize awarded by the European Historical Economics Society. In March he will have a paper published in the *Journal of Economic History*.

Dr Debin Ma has been recently elected Secretary General of the International Economic History Association, starting from summer 2012. In connection with this, the LSE Economic History department will be hosting the

International Economic History Association website (currently <http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/ieha/>) from next summer.



Dr Tim Leunig

has been formally appointed to the Ministerial Group on Data Sharing, a government committee chaired

by David Willetts on what information students should get about universities. In January 2012 he will take over as Editor in Chief of *Explorations in Economic History*.

Dr Patrick Wallis will be a visiting professor at L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), in March 2012.

Publications



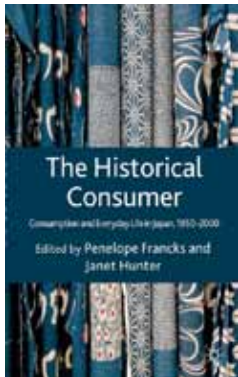
China's Political Economy in Modern Times

Kent Deng

Routledge, 2011

This book contributes to the study of

changes in China's institutions and their impact on the national economy as well as ordinary people's daily material life from 1800 to 2000. The book challenges the conventional view on 'rebellions', 'revolutions' and their alleged motivations and outcomes. Its findings separate commonly circulated myth with reality based on solid evidence and careful evaluation.



The Historical Consumer: Consumption and Everyday Life in Japan, 1850-2000

Penelope Francks and Janet Hunter (eds.)

Palgrave, December 2011

The book seeks to change the picture of Japan as having little consumption history of its own distinct from Western paths of development. It brings together studies by Japanese, British

and American historians that combine economic, social and cultural analysis of the distinctive historical pathways of consumption in Japan. Its chapters explore the history of consumption in contexts ranging from household labour allocation and gender relations to fashion, food and leisure.



Law and Long-Term Economic Change; A Eurasian Perspective

Debin Ma, Jan Luiten van Zanden, editors

Stanford, 2011

Covering the regions of Western Europe, East and South Asia, and the Middle East, the book explores major themes regarding the nature and evolution of different legal regimes. The text makes clear that the development of legal traditions and institutions—as embodiments of cultural values and norms—exerts a strong effect on long-term economic change. and underdevelopment in 19th-20th century Eurasia.

Research Projects

Integration and Growth: Capital and Grain Markets in Central Europe, 14th to 18th Centuries

Max Schulze, Oliver Volckart

This Leverhulme Trust funded project examines the spatial and temporal patterns of capital market integration and how they relate to commodity market integration, state formation and economic growth in late medieval and early modern Central Europe.

Drawing on a new data set on interest paid on urban annuity markets and using modern econometrics, the project exploits the insight that in a perfectly integrated market real interest rates converge to identity. It closes a gap in the historiography on integration whose focus so far has been mainly on grain markets. Still, as capital had a more favourable weight-value ratio than practically any other good, financial markets allow assessing the likely maximum level of integration under given historical circumstances. Their examination is, therefore, particularly promising.

Through analysing financial and goods markets in conjunction, the project makes a novel contribution to the ongoing debate on the role of market integration (via its productivity enhancing effects) in pre-modern economic growth.

Epstein Lecture 2012

This year's lecture will be given by Professor Ran Abramitzky of Stanford University.

Date: March 1st, 2012

Time: 6-8pm

Location: Old Theatre

Followed by a drinks reception, venue to be confirmed.

Email Linda Sampson (l.sampson@lse.ac.uk) or call 020 7955 7084.

PhDs Awarded 2011

Congratulations to Rajiv Maluste, Pete Cirenza, Coskun Tuncer, Raul Fernández, Tatiana González, and Matthew Partridge.

Departmental Football Match, Summer 2011

In June 2011 teachers, Masters and PhD students gathered in Hyde Park for a departmental football match. No-one can remember the exact scores, but a great evening was had by players and spectators alike.



Observing the Liberian Elections

Alumnus Alex Bick's account of leading the observation mission during Liberia's recent elections



About Alex

Alex studied politics at the University of Chicago. In 2002 he came to LSE,

initially to study economics, but then switched to the Economic History Department due to his interest in, as he puts it, 'the flesh and bones of real economies.' His dissertation was on Dutch doctor and social critic Bernard Mandeville.

At LSE he also worked in Parliament as a researcher for an all-party group promoting debt-relief for poor countries and established an Africa-focused student group that held a series of public lectures on, among other things, the unfolding crisis in Cote d'Ivoire.

Now a PhD student at Princeton, his thesis explores the ramifications of a single meeting of the board of directors of the Dutch West India Company in the mid-1640s.

He has also co-founded an independent imprint, the Crumpled Press, which produces limited edition, hand-sewn books.

When we heard that former MSc student Alex Bick was leading The Carter Center's observation mission at the recent elections in Liberia, we invited him to write a piece describing his experience. Alex kindly sent us the following account of his work with The Carter Center and what the elections meant to the Liberians.

About The Carter Center

"My election work has all been with The Carter Center, a non-profit established by former US President Jimmy Carter in 1982. Carter remained involved in politics beyond holding public office. In fact, at 87 years old, he recently went to Egypt to observe the historic elections there.

"I started as an intern in 2000 and stayed for two years, working on negotiations between Sudan and Uganda, elections in Venezuela, and efforts to engage Liberian president Charles Taylor in peace talks with the opposition.

"Liberia was special for me, since I lived there as a child for almost a year, before the civil war began. It was important to me to try to help the country recover and rebuild.

The process of observation

“Election observation is an established method of building public confidence in the democratic process, identifying and publicizing fraud, and offering recommendations for the conduct of future elections.

“Elections are an incredibly complicated process; we often take that for granted in the West, but for societies coming out of war, or dictatorship, establishing the administrative and legal framework for elections, and earning public trust, are serious challenges.

“Observers travel throughout the country speaking with politicians, voters, diplomats, representatives of civil society, and others to report on all aspects of the electoral process: from registration and constituency demarcation to campaigning, voting,

counting, and tallying. Observers then assess the quality of the process against both national and international legal standards, as reflected in international agreements to which the country is a signatory.

“As director, my job was to oversee the work of our technical experts in security, logistics, elections, and law and to get observers trained and deployed throughout the country. We had eight long-term observers who were in Liberia for three months and two delegations of 50+ short-term observers who were in Liberia for the week of both rounds of the elections. In addition, I was responsible for co-ordinating with the National Elections Commission, the government, political parties, donors, and partners. It was stressful, busy, but ultimately enormously satisfying.



Alex with General Yakubu Gowon, former Head of State of Nigeria and head of The Carter Center's observation mission

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"In turns our mission criticized the government for misuse of state resources during the campaign; the opposition for claiming fraud when it became clear they would not win; and the police for killing unarmed protestors during an opposition rally before the second round of the elections. I believe that our public statements played an important role in promoting and preserving the integrity of the vote, so that ordinary people could have a voice in their government. Of course, democracy is more than this; but it cannot be less.

The political background

"Just as anywhere else, Liberians voted for a great many different things, among them the candidate that would ensure peace, improve health care and education, and rebuild the country's infrastructure. This was the second post-war election and the first to be run on Liberia's 1986 Constitution.

"Incumbent President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize just days before the election, staked her campaign on her record of bringing stability, improving roads and electricity, and restoring Liberia's international reputation.

"Her main opponent was Winston Tubman, nephew of Liberia's long-serving president, William V.S. Tubman. With international football star George Weah, he led the Congress for Democratic Change, a relatively new party drawing its support from the southeast and the capital, Monrovia. Also in the race was Prince Johnson,

a former warlord and senator from Nimba County.

"Sirleaf won the most votes in the first round and won the run-off easily after Tubman and his party chose to boycott. More than 70% of registered voters cast their ballots in the first round of the elections.

"Liberia still faces many challenges. Chief among these will be to unify the country and heal the wounds of the civil war. Liberia remains a class society, ruled by an Americo-Liberian elite that is descended from free blacks who emigrated to Africa in the early 19th century. This historical legacy - of plantation slavery in the USA - continues to haunt Liberia.

"At the same time, the election was a critical step forward. It showed that Liberians are not interested in going back to war and installed a government that is committed to economic and social development. With peace, abundant resources, and strong international support, the future looks bright. "

