Fall term 2015  
“Comparative Economic Development: 
A political economy perspective”

Dr. Kai Gehring  
Office hour: please arrange per e-mail  
Email: mail@kai-gehring.net

Time of Lecture: We 10:15-12:00, ab 23.09. (BIN-1-D.25)

Date of exam: Wednesday 16.12.2015

Mode of examination:
20% active participation,  
55% written assignments  
- 20% (max) for handing in ten summaries (0/1/2 points each)  
- 20% Expose – Outline of own project  
- 15% GIS assignment (mid of semester)  
25% presentation end of semester

Note:  
Teaching will be in English. Each week, students will have to select one of the provided papers and draft a two page summary. Starting from the second lecture, students will be asked on a random basis to summarize and explain their chosen paper to their fellow students in the lecture. There will be an assignment using ArcGIS to acquire the necessary skills to use geographical data, which are very common in this field of research. At the last lecture of the semester, students present the research outline for their BA thesis.

This Syllabus is preliminary and subject to change.¹

¹ This course is broadly based on the course Comparative Economic Development by Nathan Nunn and James Robinson at Harvard University. Thanks for the inspiration and ideas.
Content

The seminar examines the historical origins of differences in the economic and social development of societies. Participants discuss recent research in the field and present their own work in progress. The aim is to introduce students to the historical background and facts, as well as to state of the art econometric techniques and methods used to analyze historical data empirically. An introduction and assignment using geographical data with ArcGIS is planned.

After completing the course, students will be able to compare and to comment complex research papers, and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches.

Structure

The number before the paper refers to the number students choose in the OLAT system. This syllabus and the paper list will be adjusted and completed during the semester.

23.09.2015 1 Introduction and Econometric methods


30.09.2015 2 Institutions in Europe and Atlantic Trade

07.10.2015  3  The Rise of Europe: Innovation, Technology and Knowledge


14.10.2015  4  Impact of Conflict, Culture, Trust, and Income


21.10.2015  5  Drivers of Change I - Democracy, Education.


28.10.2015 6 Drivers of Change II: Geography, Climate, Military

Hruschka, Daniel J. and Joseph Henrich. 2013. “Institutions, Parasites and the Persistence of In-Group Preferences,” PLOS ONE, 8 (5).

04.11.2015 7 Role of the state

18.11.2015 8  Africa I: Slave Trade


25.11.2015 9  Africa II: Colonial Rule in Africa: Ethnicities and National Borders


Other readings:

11.11.2015 10  Social Institutions and Religion


Others on social and cultural factors:


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**02.12.2015 11 India**


Additional literature:


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**09.12.2015 12 Presentations**

**16.12.2015 13 Presentations**
Additional literature

Latin America:


Africa:


Middle East:

Data sources:

Maps

http://www.aag.org/cs/projects_and_programs/historical_gis_clearinghouse/hgis_projects_programs

http://www.icr.ethz.ch/data

Africa
http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/

General
http://www.gistory.de/category/links/historisches/online-hgis-systeme/
http://www.aag.org/cs/projects_and_programs/historical_gis_clearinghouse/hgis_projects_programs

World
http://worldmap.harvard.edu/

US
https://www.nhgis.org/

China
http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~chgis/

Roman empire:
http://darmc.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do
Surveys:

Microdata

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS): Developing countries, often geocoded

Afrobarometer: Africa, 6 rounds, partly geocoded

Collections of data, ordered by source, time, topic:

University of Michigan ICPSR: Amazing collection sorted by country, topic, both current and historical!
http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/index.html

University of Groningen: All kinds of data, also many historical!
http://www.rug.nl/research/ggdc/

Overview of many great data sources worldwide, also historical
http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/link.php#world

GESIS:

iPEHD – the ifo Prussian Economic History Database (Digitized data with many variables on Prussia 1816-1901)
http://www.cesifo-group.de/ifoHome/facts/iPEHD-Ifo-Prussian-Economic-History-Database.html

Europe: Official data
http://cessda.net/eng/Data-Catalogue

Africa, sorted by type of data:
http://africa.gov.harvard.edu/links/politlnk.htm

Institutional comparisons within Europe:
http://www.cesifo-group.de/ifoHome/facts/DICE.html

World Value Surveys

Country level variables:
World Development Indicators| Data - The World Bank (country-year level, very wide availability).

City and country-time level (available on request, I have this data).