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Research Fields

Development Economics, Economic History, Political Economy, Applied Microeconomics

Ph.D. Thesis

Title: Essays in Culture, History and Development
Thesis supervisor: Joshua Lewis (University of Montreal, Canada)
Date of Completion: May 2020 (Expected)

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Montreal, Canada	2014-2020 (Expected)
Msc. in Economics and Statistics, Institut Sous-Régional de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée (ISSEA), Cameroon	2009-2012
Bsc. Degree in Mathematics, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon	2005-2008

Working Papers

The Historical Determinants of Gender Roles in Sub-Saharan Africa (*Job Market Paper*)
Disease, Drought, and Development: Effects of the 1890s Cattle Plague in Sub-Saharan Africa (*with Raphael Godefroy and Joshua Lewis*)

Work in Progress

Demographic Shocks and Restrictions on Women's Sexuality: Evidence from the Indian Ocean Slave Trade
Measuring Gender Wage Discrimination in Canada: A Machine Learning Approach (*with Fatim L. Diabagaté*)

Research Assistance and Professional Activities

Assisted Professor Emanuela Cardia and Andriana Bellou, University of Montreal	2019
Assisted Professor Decio Caviello, HEC Montreal	2016-2017
Senior Economist, Ministry of Finance, Cameroon	2013-2014
Senior Economist, Ministry of Public Contracts, Cameroon	2012-2013
External Consultant, ISSEA-World Bank, Cameroon	2013-2014

Conferences and Seminars

Africa Meeting of the Econometric Society, Rabat, Morocco	2019
53 rd Annual Conference of Canadian Economics Association, Banff, Alberta	2019
59 th Congress – Société Canadienne de Science Economique, Quebec, Canada	2019
58 th Congress – Société Canadienne de Science Economique, Montreal, Canada	2018
13 th CIREQ PhD Students' Conference, Montreal, Canada	2018
Canadian Network for Economic Historians (CNEH), Toronto, Canada	2017
University of Montreal Brown Bag Seminars, Montreal, Canada	2017 and 2018

Discussions

World War II, the Baby Boom and Employment: County Level Evidence (Abel Brodeur and Lamis Kattan), 53rd Annual Conference of Canadian Economics Association, Banff, Alberta 2019

Fellowships, Scholarships, and Awards

University of Montreal Fellowship, CIREQ and Department of Economics 2014-2019
CIREQ Association Graduate Travel Grant 2014-2019
Central African Economic and Monetary Fellowship, Yaoundé Cameroon 2009-2012
Government of Cameroon Scholarship 2005-2008

Teaching Experience

Teaching

ECN 1901-E: Introduction to Economics, University of Montreal Fall 2018
ECN 3650-A: Social and Behavioural Economics, University of Montreal Fall 2017
ECN 1160: Economic Data Analysis, University of Montreal Fall 2016

Teaching Assistant

ECN 6233-A: Microeconometrics, University of Montreal Winter 2018-2019
ECN 1260-A: Introduction to Econometrics, University of Montreal Winter 2019
ECN 2160-A: Econometrics, University of Montreal Winter 2016-2019
ECN 1050-A: Introduction to Macroeconomics, University of Montreal Winter 2016
ECN 1040: Introduction to Microeconomics, University of Montreal Fall 2016

Conference Organizing

CIREQ Ph.D. Students' Conference 2016-2018
(co-organizer with Stephania Stranza and Xian Zhang)

Other Information

Volunteer

Econometric History Association Meetings, Montreal 2018
11th Econometric Society World Congress, Montreal 2015

Affiliations

Canadian Economics Association, Société Canadienne de Science Economique,
American Economic Association, Center for Interuniversity Research and Quantitative Economics (CIREQ)

Languages

English and French

References

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SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The Historical Determinants of Gender Roles in Sub-Saharan Africa (Job Market Paper)

In this paper I examine an anthropological hypothesis, first proposed by Engels (1884), that the origin of differences in gender roles across societies in Sub-Saharan Africa was the historical domestication of cattle. I investigate the relationship between historical cattle presence and women's outcomes in both pre-colonial and contemporary Africa. To address potential endogeneity in historical cattle adoption, I adopt an instrumental variables approach that leverages geo-climatic factors affecting the suitability of ethnic homelands for cattle-raising. The results show that cattle-based societies had more historical gender inequality, as measured by female participation in agriculture, inheritance rules, and other marriage customs. This gender inequality persisted among the descendants of these societies: I find that women from cattle-based societies had lower labour force participation rates, married at younger ages, had higher fertility rates, and were less likely to participate equally in household decision-making. I estimate large effects on women's outcomes even among descendants who lived in areas where cattle were not present, suggesting an important role for cultural persistence. The findings are consistent with the introduction of cattle having created a large gender-imbalance in wealth holdings, which ultimately led to shift towards patriarchal norms that have persisted to present day.

Disease, Drought, and Development: Effects of the 1890s Cattle Plague in Sub-Saharan Africa (with Raphael Godefroy and Joshua Lewis)

The great African cattle plague epidemic of the 1890s is considered to be the worst natural disaster that wiped out more than 90 percent of cattle in Africa. In this paper, we examine the short- and long-run effects of this cattle plague epidemic on African development. To identify variation in exposure, we combine an index of drought severity during early 1890 with an index of cattle suitability areas. We adopt a difference-in-differences approach, relating variation in rinderpest severity to ethnic-group outcomes in the post-rinderpest period from Murdock (1967). The results show that societies exposed to the cattle plague outbreak were significantly less likely to own cattle in the early 20th century. In addition, we find that the outbreak had lasting effects on individual wealth and that an important mechanism may be distressed migration. We believe the results from the analysis will shed light on the ability of agents to respond to negative environmental shocks, and how the presence of coercive institutions may hamper agents' ability to respond.

Demographic Shocks and Restrictions on Women's Sexuality: Evidence from the Indian Ocean Slave Trade

This paper tests an anthropological theory that the Indian Ocean slave trade favoured the adoption of female genital cutting customs in Africa. During the Indian Ocean slave trade, slave buyers had a preference for female slaves, who were employed as domestic servants. This led to a shortage of women and the emergence of abnormal sex ratios in the remaining African population, creating incentives for men to control women's sexuality. Using within-country variation across 140,000 women in 24 Sub-Saharan Africa countries, I find that women from societies exposed to the Indian Ocean slave trade are today more likely to have undergone female genital cutting. In addition, they are more likely to experience domestic violence and are more restricted to their mobility. Instrumental variable strategy using distance from the coast supports a causal interpretation of the results. The cultural inter-generational transmission of norms represents a major part of mechanisms explaining the long-run persistence.