

# Analytic Narratives

Provisional syllabus  
This draft November 2012

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This course is an advanced graduate course in economics. This course is designed to help students carry out research using the analytical narratives approach—a combination of economic theory, narrative, and empirical evidence that is distinct from standard approaches in applied economics. I interpret the concept of analytical narratives broadly and the aim of the course is to provide graduate students with the tools to conduct their own research. This course is particularly relevant for students interested in pursuing research in economic history, new institutional economics, development economics and political economy.

We will examine topics where this approach has been useful in generating new insights. For example: how can trade take place in the absence of the state or a functioning legal system? How did states emerge? Why can political order breakdown? How do religious or cultural values interact with economic incentives? We will combine insights from theoretical models with empirical and historical case studies. The aim of the course is to try to write papers in the analytical narrative tradition. Those who are still unsure of what an analytical narrative is can refer to:

- Avner Greif, Cliometrics after 40 years, *The American Economic Review* 87, Nr. 2 1997;
- Robert H. Bates et al., editors, *Analytic Narratives* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998;
- R.H. Bates et al., The Analytical Narrative Project 2000.<sup>1</sup>

I intend to teach the “tools” required to follow this course as I go. These include some basic non-cooperative game theory, principal-agent models, signaling models, etc., and some topics that you might run into on a course in applied econometrics (identification, IVs, regression discontinuity analysis etc.).

This is a provisional syllabus. It lists likely topics. However, I am open to suggestions for readings from students. Although many of the examples I study come

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<sup>1</sup>Also see reviews of this volume J. Elster, Rational choice history: A case of excessive ambition 2000 and Peter Boettke, Book Review of Robert Bates, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and Barry Weingast, Analytical Narratives, *Constitutional Political Economy*, 11 (2000): 377-379. Book Review of Robert Bates, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and Barry Weingast, Analytical Narratives,, *Constitutional Political Economy* 11 2000. The difference between the analytical narratives approach and the cliometric approach is captured by comparing D.N. McCloskey, The achievements of the cliometric school, *The Journal of Economic History* 38, Nr. 1 1978 and Greif, *Cliometrics after 40 years*.

from economic history, this is not a history class *per se*. Students no background in history should be able to catch-up relatively quickly. There are numerous general introductions to European economic history.<sup>2</sup>

The list of readings that I refer to is very extensive. However, many of these papers will be familiar to you from other courses either in development, economic history or institutional economics. I only *require* you to read the starred readings in order to come to class and it is these papers that I will focus on. The other readings are there to help you in your research! (i.e, I'm doing you a favor by putting together some of a comprehensive list) One feature of this course is that I try to focus on recent papers in order to help you get to the research frontier.

The reading list includes 14 separate topics. We will cover 10-12 of these depending on scheduling and demand during the semester. The extra topics are there to stimulate your research ideas.

## Readings

Each week there will be several required readings. There will be an essential set of readings (denoted by a \*) which I expect you all to complete *before* each seminar and a set of additional readings. You are encouraged to try to read at least one of the additional readings each week. The main purpose of the additional readings is to provide you with further references that will be discussed in the seminars and will be useful when it comes to writing your papers.

- Students are expected to read and be able to discuss all of the starred readings during class. This combined with a class room presentation of a paper determines 50 % of the grade.
- Each student will produce a 15-20 page paper by the end of the semester. This determines the remaining 50 % of the grade.

## Trade without Law

- Paul R. Milgrom, Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, The Role of Institutions in the Revival of Trade: The Law Merchant, Private Judges, and the Champagne Fairs, *Economics & Politics* 2, Nr. 1 1990\*
- Avner Greif, Contract enforceability and economic institutions in early trade: the Maghribi trader's coalition, *American Economic Review* 83, Nr. 3 1993\*
- Avinash Dixit, Trade Expansion and Contract Enforcement, *Journal of Political Economy* 111, Nr. 6 December 2003\*

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<sup>2</sup>For example Gregory Clark, *Farewell to Alms* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007; Rondo Cameron and Larry Neal, *A Concise Economic History of the World from Paleolithic Times to the Present*, 4th edition New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; Nathan Rosenberg and Jr. L.E. Birdzell, *How the West Grew Rich, the economic transformation of the industrial world* New York, U.S.A: Basic Books, 1986; Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

- Michihiro Kandori, Social Norms and Community Enforcement, *Review of Economic Studies* 59, Nr. 1 January 1992
- Avner Greif, Reputation and coalitions in medieval trade: evidence on the Maghribi traders, *Journal of Economic History* 49, Nr. 4 1989
- Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2006
- Avinash Dixit, *Lawlessness and Economics* Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004
- Lisa Bernstein, Opting Out of the Legal System: Extralegal Contractual Relations in the Diamond Industry, *The Journal of Legal Studies* 21, Nr. 1 January 1992
- Peter T. Leeson, Anarchy, Monopoly, and Predation, *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics (JITE)* 163, Nr. 3 September 2007
- Peter T. Leeson, Social Distance and Self-Enforcing Exchange, *Journal of Legal Studies* 37, Nr. 1 01 2008
- B.L. Benson, The spontaneous evolution of commercial law, *Southern Economic Journal* 1989

Can trade take place in the absence of the state? Historical evidence demonstrates that trade relationships can be enforced through a variety of different mechanisms. This literature draws heavily on insights from game theory. Kandori's paper on community enforcement is an important theoretical reference. There are also many case studies that have shed important light on mechanisms that would otherwise have been overlooked by economists. Benson (1989), Milgrom, North, and Weingast (1990) and Dixit (2004) point out examples of private third party enforcement mechanisms. Greif argues that the Maghribi traders employed multilateral punishment for deviators. Leeson's paper emphasizes the idea that social distance is itself partly endogenous.

There are several important questions raised by this literature. Once we have identified a mechanism that *could* have supported trade how do we demonstrate that it actually *did* perform in the way specified by the theory? What kind of evidence do we need to muster? Is narrative evidence sufficient or should it be supported by quantifiable data or econometric analysis. Finally what do mathematical models add to the narrative history offered by Benson? In this class we will go over some of the core game theoretic concepts in detail.

## Origins and Rise of the State

Robert Bates, Avner Greif and Smita Singh, Organizing Violence, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46 2002\*

Joram Mayshar, Omer Moav and Zvika Neeman, Transparency, Appropriability and the Early State, CEPR Discussion Papers 8548 C.E.P.R. Discussion Papers, August 2011\*

Jeanet Sinding Bentzen, Nicolai Kaarsen and Asger Moll Wingender, Irrigation and Autocracy, Discussion Papers 12-06 University of Copenhagen. Department of Economics, July 2012\*

Daron Acemoglu, Why Not a Political Coase Theorem? Social Conflict, Commitment and Politics, *Journal of Comparative Economics* 31, Nr. 4 2003

John V.C. Nye, *Thinking about the State: Property Rights, Trade, and Changing Contractual Arrangements in a World with Coercion*, in: John V.C. Nye and John Drobak, editors, *The Frontiers of the New Institutional Economics* San Diego, California: Academic Press, 1997

Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* New York, U.S.A: Norton, 1981 Chapter 3

Douglass C. North, Government and the Cost of Exchange in History, *The Journal of Economic History* 44, Nr. 02 1984

Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: a conceptual framework for interpreting recorded human history* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009 Chapters 1 and 2

Normative welfare economics treats the state as exogenous. Work in the tradition of public choice and modern political economy make the state endogenous. This week's seminar asks: how did the state emerge? How should the state be analyzed? What role does the state play in enforcing contracts and providing law and order? Under what conditions will the state be predatory and under what conditions will it provide public goods? Under what situations can democracy arise? How does this research link in with the economics of anarchy? How does it relate to work in public choice?

We go on to assess whether or not North, Wallis and Weingast(NWW) provide a richer theory of the state than the authors considered last week. How can the NWW framework be taken up by other economists and economic historians? This literature also raises some wider questions. Is it useful to consider the state as a unitary actor? Or should the state be viewed as a coalition of interests as de Mesquita et al argue?

## **Governance, Autocracy, and Anarchy**

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *The Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005\* Selected Chapters.
- Avinash Dixit, On Modes of Economic Governance, *Econometrica* 71, Nr. 2 March 2003\*
- Roger B. Myerson, The Autocrat's Credibility Problem and Foundations of the Constitutional State, *American Political Science Review* 102 2008
- Mancur Olson, Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development, *American Political Science Review* 87 1993
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003

- Avinash Dixit, *Lawlessness and Economics* Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004
- Peter T. Leeson, The Laws of Lawlessness, *Journal of Legal Studies* 2009
- Peter Leeson, Efficient anarchy, *Public Choice* 130, Nr. 1 January 2007

How do dictatorships function? What problems do dictators face? How can there be governance in the absence of a ‘state’ traditionally understood? How are property rights enforced? Are other public goods provided by ‘governance’ institutions? Is there competition or a tendency towards monopolization? What are the limits of scalability? The aim for this class is to explore the question of how to conduct research on governance institutions. What kinds of questions should we explore? Where can we find data/case-studies? What empirical benchmarks should we use?

## State Capacity

- Timothy Besley and Torsten Persson, The Origins of State Capacity: Property Rights, Taxation, and Politics, *American Economic Review* 99, Nr. 4 September 2009\*
- Daron Acemoglu, A Simple Model of Inefficient Institutions, *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 108 2006\*
- Patrick K. O’Brien, The nature and historical evolution of an exceptional fiscal state and its possible significance for the precocious commercialization and industrialization of the British economy from Cromwell to Nelson, *The Economic History Review* 2011\*
- John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power* Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1988
- Hilton L. Root, The Redistributive Role of Government: Economic Regulation in Old Régime France and England, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, Nr. 02 1991
- Barry R. Weingast, The Economic Role of Political Institutions: Market-Preserving Federalism and Economic Development, *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 11, Nr. 1 April 1995
- Yoram Barzel and Edgar Kiser, Taxation and Voting Rights in Medieval England and France, *Rationality and Society* 14 2002
- Joel Mokyr and John V. C. Nye, Distribution Coalitions, the Industrial Revolution, and the Origins of Economic Growth in Britain, *Southern Economic Journal* 74, Nr. 1 July 2007
- Noel D. Johnson and Mark Koyama, Taxes, Lawyers, and the Decline of Witchcraft June 2011

The work of North and Weingast suggests that the state needed to be constrained in order for economic growth to get started. Recent work in economic history and political economy has modified this argument. How do Besley and Persson explain the origin of state capacity? What role does war play in their account? What is the relationship between legal and fiscal capacity.

## Violence, Conflict, and Civil War

- Charles Tilly, *Wormaking and Statemaking as Organized Crime*, in: Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, editors, *Bringing the State Back In* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985\*
- Edward Miguel, Shanker Satyanath and Ernest Sergenti, Economic Shocks and Civil Conflict: An Instrumental Variables Approach, *Journal of Political Economy* 112, Nr. 4 2004\*
- Nicola Gennaioli and Hans-Joachim Voth, State Capacity and Military Conflict November 2011\*
- Stergios Skaperdas, Contest Success Functions, *Economic Theory* 7, Nr. 2 February 1996
- Frederic C. Lane, Economic Consequences of Organized Violence, *The Journal of Economic History* 18, Nr. 4 1958
- Richard Bean, War and the Birth of the Nation State, *The Journal of Economic History* 33 1973
- Michael McBride, Gary Milante and Stergios Skaperdas, Peace and War With Endogenous State Capacity, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, Nr. 3 June 2011, <URL: \>
- Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel, Civil War, *Journal of Economic Literature* 48, Nr. 1 March 2010
- Mark Dincecco and Mauricio Prado, Warfare, fiscal capacity, and performance, *Journal of Economic Growth* 17, Nr. 3 September 2012
- Robert H. Bates et al., editors, *Analytic Narratives* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998 Chapter 2

The implicit threat of coercion or violence underpins government institutions. How has war and violence shaped the development of the state through history? In terms of analytical framework we study contest success functions which are widely used in the literature on conflict and civil war. Finally, what causes revolutions and civil wars?

## Culture, Persistence, and Economic Institutions

- Nico Voigtländer and Hans-Joachim Voth, Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany, *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127, Nr. 3 2012\*
- Alberto Alesina, Paola Giuliano and Nathan Nunn, Fertility and the Plough, NBER Working Papers 16718 National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc, January 2011\*
- Guido Tabellini, The Scope of Cooperation: Values and Incentives, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, Nr. 3 August 2008\*
- Matthias Doepke and Fabrizio Zilibotti, Occupational Choice and the Spirit of Capitalism, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, Nr. 2 05 2008\*
- Alberto Alesina and Nicola Fuchs-Schndeln, Goodbye Lenin (or Not?): The Effect of Communism on People, *American Economic Review* 97, Nr. 4 September 2007
- Avner Greif, Cultural Beliefs and the Organization of Society: A Historical and Theoretical Reflection on Collectivist and Individualist Societies, *Journal of Political Economy* 102, Nr. 5 October 1994
- Paolo Buonanno et al., On the historical and geographic origins of the Sicilian mafia, MPRA Paper 37009 University Library of Munich, Germany, May 2011
- Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapienza and Luigi Zingales, Cultural Biases in Economic Exchange?, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, Nr. 3 August 2009
- Gary Richardson and Michael McBride, Religion, Longevity, and Cooperation: The Case of the Craft Guild., *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 71, Nr. 2 2009
- Nils-Petter Lagerlöf, Pacifying monogamy, *Journal of Economic Growth* 15, Nr. 3 September 2010

Culture has entered the discourse of mainstream economics. How do cultural beliefs and religious shape economic outcomes? How do economic outcomes shape cultural beliefs? Why do cultural values persist over time? How do researchers in this field identify the causal effect of culture?

## Religious Organizations

- Laurence R Iannaccone, Sacrifice and Stigma: Reducing Free-Riding in Cults, Communes, and Other Collectives, *Journal of Political Economy* 100, Nr. 2 April 1992\*
- Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, From Farmers to Merchants, Conversions and Diaspora: Human Capital and Jewish History, *Journal of the European Economic Association* 5, Nr. 5 2007\*

- Stelios Michalopoulos, Alireza Naghavi and Giovanni Prarolo, Trade and Geography in the Origins and Spread of Islam, NBER Working Papers 18438 National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc, October 2012\*
- Jean-Paul Carvalho and Mark Koyama, Development and Religious Polarization: The Emergence of Reform and Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, Economics Series Working Papers 560 University of Oxford, Department of Economics, 2011\*
- Sascha O. Becker and Ludger Woessmann, Was Weber Wrong? A Human Capital Theory of Protestant Economic History, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, Nr. 2 May 2009\*
- Laurence R. Iannaccone, Introduction to the Economics of Religion, *Journal of Economic Literature* 36, Nr. 3 September 1998
- Michael McBride, Church Club Mormon: Free-Riders, Monitoring, and Exclusion in the LDS, *Rationality and Society* 19 2007
- Jonathan Gruber and Daniel M. Hungerman, The Church versus the Mall: What Happens When Religion Faces Increased Secular Competition?, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, Nr. 2 05 2008
- Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, Jewish Occupational Selection: Education, Restrictions, or Minorities, *Journal of Economic History* 65 2005
- Gilat Levy and Ronney Razin, Religious Beliefs, Participation and Cooperation, *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics* Forthcoming
- Ran Abramitzky, The Limits of Equality: Insights from the Israeli Kibbutz, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, Nr. 3 August 2008

What is the economics of religion? How does the economics of religion explain the success of strict religions? Why does strictness change over time? Why do religious groups splinter? What explains the emergence of new religions? How do religious choices affect economic outcomes?

## Institutions

- Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2006 pp. 153-186\*
- Melissa Dell, The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining Mita, *Econometrica* 78, Nr. 6 November 2010\*
- Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou, Divide and Rule or the Rule of the Divided? Evidence from Africa, NBER Working Papers 17184 National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc, June 2011\*
- Mark Koyama, Evading the 'Taint of Usury': The usury prohibition as a barrier to entry, *Explorations in Economic History* 47, Nr. 4 2010

- Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1973
- Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* New York, U.S.A.: Norton, 1981
- Gregory Clark, *Farewell to Alms* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007 Chapter 7
- Mauricio Drelichman, License to till: The privileges of the Spanish Mesta as a case of second-best institutions, *Explorations in Economic History* 46, Nr. 2 April 2009
- Jared Rubin, Printing and Protestants: Reforming the Economics of the Reformation, *Review of Economics and Statistics* Forthcoming
- Oded Galor, Omer Moav and Dietrich Vollrath, Inequality in Landownership, the Emergence of Human-Capital Promoting Institutions, and the Great Divergence, *Review of Economic Studies* 76, Nr. 1 01 2009
- Clyde G. Reed and Cliff T. Bekar, Religious prohibitions against usury, *Explorations in Economic History* 40, Nr. 4 October 2003
- Sheilagh Ogilvie, 'Whatever Is, Is Right'? Economic Institutions in Pre-Industrial Europe (Tawney Lecture 2006), *Economic History Review* 60, Nr. 4 2007
- Matthias Doepke and Michèle Tertilt, Women's Liberation: What's in It for Men?, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124, Nr. 4 November 2009
- Dani Rodrik, Second-Best Institutions, *American Economic Review* 98, Nr. 2 May 2008

Do institutions evolve towards efficiency as North and Thomas (1973) and Clark (2007) suggest? This efficient institutions hypothesis has been influential in rationalizing many existing or historical institutions (e.g. Reed and Bekar, 2003). Or can inefficient institutions persist over time as Ogilvie (2007) argues. What does Drelichman mean by 'seemingly inefficient institutions'? We will also look at some models with multiple equilibria and see how this effects efficiency/welfare analysis.

## Serfdom

- Evsey D. Domar, The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom: A Hypothesis, *The Journal of Economic History* 30, Nr. 1 1970\*
- Robert Brenner, Agarian class structure and economic development in pre-industrial Europe, *Past & Present* 70, Nr. 1 1976\*
- Alexander Wolitzky and Daron Acemoglu, The Economics of Labor Coercion, *Econometrica* 79, Nr. 2 2011\*

- James A. Robinson and Ragnar Torvik, Institutional Comparative Statics 2011\*
- Douglass C North and Robert P. Thomas, The rise and fall of the manorial system: A theoretical model, *The Journal of Economic History* 31, Nr. 4 1971
- E.L.R. Ladurie, A reply to Professor Brenner, *Past & Present* 1978
- Jonathan Conning, The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom and the Roads to Agrarian Capitalism: Domar's Hypothesis Revisited, Hunter college department of economics working papers Hunter College: Department of Economics, 2004
- Sheilagh Ogilvie, Communities and the 'Second Serfdom' in Early Modern Bohemia, *Past & present* 187, Nr. 1 2005
- Nils-Petter Lagerlof, Slavery and Other Property Rights, *Review of Economic Studies* 76, Nr. 1 01 2009

How did factor markets, particularly labour markets, develop in pre-industrial times? Why did slavery and serfdom develop in some areas whereas free labour markets developed in other areas? Why have labour markets historically often been characterized by coercion?

We consider a couple of open debates in economic history: the rise of serfdom in western Europe in the middle ages and the second serfdom in Eastern Europe in the early modern period.

The paper by Domar is a classic analytical narrative—combining economic theory with a historical case study. Brenner's article is a famous Marxian response to it. Conning's recent paper is an attempt to theoretically model Domar's story. Acemoglu and Wolitzky provide a general model of labor coercion. How does this literature relate to the literature on slavery in American economic history?

## Commitment and the Growth of Capital Markets

- Douglass C. North and Barry Weingast, Constitutions and Commitment: the evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth century England, *Journal of Economic History* 49 1989\*
- Mauricio Drelichman and Hans-Joachim Voth, Risk Sharing with the Monarch: Contingent Debt and Excusable Defaults in the Age of Phillip II, 1556-1598, *Working Paper* 2011\*
- David Stasavage, When Distance Mattered: Geographic Scale and the Development of European Representative Assemblies, *American Political Science Review* 104, Nr. 4 2010\*
- Hilton Root, Tying the King's Hands: Credible Commitments and Royal Fiscal Policy During the Old Regime, *Rationality and Society* 1, Nr. 2 1989
- Gregory Clark, The Political Foundations of Modern Economic Growth, 1540–1800, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 26 1996

- Nathan Sussman and Yishay Yafeh, Institutional Reforms, Financial Development and Sovereign Debt: Britain 1690–1790, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, Nr. 04 December 2006
- James A. Robinson, Debt Repudiation and Risk Premia: The North-Weingast Thesis Revisited 1998
- David Stasavage, Credible Commitment in Early Modern Europe: North and Weingast Revisited, *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 18, Nr. 1 2002
- Gary W Cox, War, Moral Hazard, and Ministerial Responsibility: England After the Glorious Revolution, *The Journal of Economic History* 71, Nr. 01 March 2011

Did the Glorious Revolution led to a reconfiguration of British capital markets? In a highly influential paper North and Weingast argue that institutional improvements led to the state being able to borrow on better terms and to an improvement in private capital markets. Evaluate this argument. The additional readings consist of some criticisms of North’s reading of the historical evidence. The unpublished paper by James Robinson is a partial defense.

## Property Rights

- Naomi R. Lamoreaux, The Mystery of Property Rights: A U.S. Perspective, *The Journal of Economic History* 71, Nr. 02 2011\*
- Daniel Bogart and Gary Richardson, Property Rights and Parliament in Industrializing Britain, *Journal of Law & Economics* Forthcoming\*
- Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, The Development of Irrigation in Provence, 1700-1860: The French Revolution and Economic Growth, *The Journal of Economic History* 50, Nr. 3 1990
- Dan Bogart and Gary Richardson, Making property productive: reorganizing rights to real and equitable estates in Britain, 1660–1830, *European Review of Economic History* 13, Nr. 01 April 2009
- Daniel Bogart and Gary Richardson, Property Rights and Parliament in Industrializing Britain, NBER Working Papers 15697 National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc, January 2010
- Joel Mokyr and John V. C. Nye, Distribution Coalitions, the Industrial Revolution, and the Origins of Economics Growth in Britain, *Southern Economic Journal* 74, Nr. 1 July 2007

Stable and codified property rights are widely seen as an important pre-requisite for economic growth. The conventional historical narrative holds that property rights were unstable in absolutist regime such as France and well-protected in parliamentary

regimes like England. Is this conventional wisdom true? Recent work suggests that parliament was a forum in which property rights could be renegotiated and that this allowed England to avoid hold-up problems that beset France. What institutions enabled Coasian bargains to take place in England that did not take place elsewhere in Europe?

## Organizational Form

- Peter T. Leeson, An-arrgh-chy: The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization, *Journal of Political Economy* 115, Nr. 6 December 2007b\*
- Ann M Carlos, Principal-Agent Problems in Early Trading Companies: A Tale of Two Firms, *American Economic Review* 82, Nr. 2 May 1992
- Douglas W. Allen, The British Navy Rules: Monitoring and Incompatible Incentives in the Age of Fighting Sail, *Explorations in Economic History* 39, Nr. 2 April 2002
- Douglas W. Allen, Purchase, Patronage, and Professions: Incentives and the Evolution of Public Office in Pre-Modern Britain, *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 161, Nr. 1 2005
- Rachel Kranton and Anand V. Swamy, Contracts, Hold-Up, and Exports: Textiles and Opium in Colonial India, *American Economic Review* 98, Nr. 3 June 2008

Since Coase economists have recognized that much economic activity takes place within hierarchical organizations rather than through spot contracts. This week we ask: How was economic activity organized in the past? Through what institutions or mechanisms were agency problems overcome? What institutional or organization innovations enabled more sophisticated corporate forms to develop? What can the theory of the firm learn from historical examples?

## Economics of Criminal Organizations

- Gary S. Becker, Crime and punishment: An economic approach, *The Journal of Political Economy* 76, Nr. 2 1968\*
- I. Ehrlich, Crime, punishment, and the market for offenses, *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 10, Nr. 1 1996\*
- Mark Koyama, Prosecution Associations in Industrial Revolution England: Private Providers of Public Goods?, *Journal of Legal Studies* January 2012\*
- David Skarbek, Putting the “Con” in Constitutions: The Economics of Prison Gangs, *The Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization* 26, Nr. 2 2010\*
- Andrew Mell, Are Gangstas Peacocks? The Handicap Principle and Illicit Markets, Economics Series Working Papers 558 University of Oxford, Department of Economics, 2011, <http://ideas.repec.org/p/oxf/wpaper/558.html>\*

- Maurice Kugler, Thierry Verdier and Yves Zenou, Organized crime, corruption and punishment, *Journal of Public Economics* 89, Nr. 9-10 September 2005
- David Friedman, Why Not Hang Them All: The Virtues of Inefficient Punishment, *Journal of Political Economy* 107, Nr. S6 December 1999
- David Friedman, Making Sense of English Law Enforcement in the Eighteenth century, *The University of Chicago Law School Roundtable* 475 1995
- David Skarbek, Governance and Prison Gangs, *American Political Science Review* 105, Nr. 4 2012
- Peter T. Leeson, An-arrgh-chy: The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization, *Journal of Political Economy* 115, Nr. 6 December 2007b
- Steven D. Levitt and Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, An Economic Analysis Of A Drug-Selling Gang's Finances, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115, Nr. 3 August 2000

We explore the rational actor model of criminal behavior introduced by Gary Becker. We use this framework to analysis what factors can cause crime to increase and decrease. We examine how criminal organizations function and study several papers that develop particular case-studies.

## Guilds

- Avner Greif, Paul Milgrom and Barry R Weingast, Coordination, Commitment, and Enforcement: The Case of the Merchant Guild, *Journal of Political Economy* 102, Nr. 4 August 1994\*
- Sheilagh Ogilvie, Guilds, efficiency, and social capital: evidence from German proto-industry, *Economic History Review* 57, Nr. 2 05 2004\*
- Gary Richardson, The Prudent Village: Risk Pooling Institutions in Medieval English Agriculture, *The Journal of Economic History* 65, Nr. 2 2005
- Gary Richardson, Brand Names Before the Industrial Revolution, Working Paper 13930 National Bureau of Economic Research, April 2008, (URL: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w13930>)
- S. R. Epstein, Craft Guilds, Apprenticeship, and Technological Change in Preindustrial Europe, *The Journal of Economic History* 58, Nr. 3 1998
- Jeremy Edwards and Sheilagh Ogilvie, What Lessons for Economic Development Can We Draw from the Champagne Fairs? 2011
- Sheilagh Ogilvie, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000-1800* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011 Selected chapters.

Most commercial activities in pre-industrial Europe was controlled by merchant or trade guilds. Traditional historians viewed institutions like guilds as repressing economic development. More recently some economists have reinterpreted guilds as 'efficient institutions'. Ogilvie critiques this argument in the context of guilds in early modern Germany. How should we interpret guilds? Guilds were not a unitary institution. They performed different functions at different times and in different places. What evidence do we require to discriminate between the different accounts offered by economic historians?

## References

- Abramitzky, Ran: The Limits of Equality: Insights from the Israeli Kibbutz, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, Nr. 3 August 2008, 1111–1159
- Acemoglu, Daron: Why Not a Political Coase Theorem? Social Conflict, Commitment and Politics, *Journal of Comparative Economics* 31, Nr. 4 2003, 620–652
- Acemoglu, Daron: A Simple Model of Inefficient Institutions, *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 108 2006, 515–546
- Acemoglu, Daron and Robinson, James A.: *The Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005
- Alesina, Alberto and Fuchs-Schndeln, Nicola: Goodbye Lenin (or Not?): The Effect of Communism on People, *American Economic Review* 97, Nr. 4 September 2007, 1507–1528
- Alesina, Alberto, Giuliano, Paola and Nunn, Nathan: Fertility and the Plough, NBER Working Papers 16718 National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc, January 2011
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