

# Programme Day 2 · Friday 20 April

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9.30-11.00      Gendering Colonisation

Nuala Zahedieh

Free Women and the Creation of a Slave Society in Jamaica, 1655-1730

Between 1655 and 1730, the English captors of Jamaica created a brutally exploitative slave society in their island which was markedly different from the society they left at home. 4,520 free people defined their liberty in terms of their right to absolute ownership of the bodies of 74, 525 enslaved workers. Classic narratives of English overseas expansion and the propagation of slavery explained this development as a ‘boy’s story’. Despite the rise of feminist history and increasing interest in women’s lives, especially those of enslaved Africans, women remain marginal in broad accounts of the rise of the Atlantic slave plantation complex. However, a close examination of a census of Jamaica in 1730 suggests that free women of European, and African, descent played a central role in creating and sustaining the island’s slave society and evidence from government records, wills, inventories, plantation papers, personal correspondence, and printed sources shows that, in Jamaica, free women were able to use their liberty to secure greater social and economic freedoms than their counterparts in Britain but only by supporting a system which damaged the lives and well-being of hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans.

Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk

Class, Gender, Childhood and Race: Social Norms and Policies Regarding Work and Education in the Dutch Empire, 1870-1940

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the Dutch state was reluctant to play an active role in ensuring the well-being of its citizens. However, growing social problems resulting from industrialization, as well as increased opposition to exploitation in Java after 1860, prompted more intensive state involvement in the well-being of its subjects, both in the metropole and the colony. In this period, a particular political culture emerged in the Netherlands, in which Christian notions of “good guardianship” and the “civilization” of the population legitimized a degree of state intervention in welfare issues in the Netherlands as well as Java. Changing roles of women and children in this process of “moral uplifting” were pivotal. This contribution compares contemporary debates and ideologies pertaining to the work of women and children from a colonial perspective. It investigates the initiatives taken (or omitted) by the state to

implement social provisions in the Netherlands as well as in the Dutch East Indies, with a particular focus on labour legislation and general education between 1870 and 1940. In this period, measures for labour protection and investments in general education drastically increased in the metropole, but lagged seriously in the colony. Whereas the sociopolitical context led to concerns underpinned by similar ideologies, in the course of the late colonial period rhetoric diverged more and more in order to legitimize these differences. Until the end of the colonial period the rhetorical construction of differences between “Western”, “European”, or “Dutch” and the “tropical”, “indigenous”, or “Javanese” remained dominant in legitimating both the absence of public provisions in the colony and the simultaneous increase in social measures and legislation in the metropole.

11.00-11.30      Morning Coffee

11.30-1.00      Death & Disease

Vellore Arthi

Estimating the Recession-Mortality Relationship When Migration Matters

Existing work on the impact of business cycles on health yield conflicting results. Studies using aggregate data tend to find strong evidence of pro-cyclicality, while those examining individual-level data find either no effect or counter-cyclicality. We ask whether migration offers an explanation for this, as the aggregate-data approach places strong assumptions about the accuracy of intercensal population estimates. To examine this, we identify a recession that offers plausibly exogenous shock to economic conditions as well as the potential to construct individual mortality data. Our setting is the recession in the cotton textile-producing regions of Britain brought on by the American Civil War. Drawing on comprehensive and publicly available death records and census records we are able to identify where individuals lived at the onset of the recession, regardless of where they died. Results indicate that the mortality rate in these regions increased during the recession. Turning to aggregate data and employing the standard approach suggests that mortality fell during recessions, which is consistent with much of the existing literature. These conflicting results indicate that migration can meaningfully bias estimates of the recession-mortality relationship when using aggregate data.

Eric Schneider

Disease and Child Growth in Industrialising Japan: Assessing the Instantaneous Changes in Growth and Changes in the Growth Pattern, 1911-39

This paper assesses how the disease environment in interwar Japan influenced children's growth and health. The data is drawn from government records from 1929 to 1939 which report the average heights of boys and girls in school at each age (6-21) for each of Japan's 47 prefectures. We test the influence of disease in two ways. First, we test the influence of the disease environment at birth, proxied by the infant mortality rate, on the cohort growth pattern of children using the SITAR model to parameterise the growth pattern. In addition, we use a bilateral-specific fixed effects model to understand how disease instantaneously influenced growth controlling for prefecture-birth cohort effects. Our results suggest that health conditions in early life did not have a strong influence on the growth pattern of children in Japan. However, we do find a significant and economically meaningful instantaneous effect of the infant mortality rate on child height at ages 6-11 for both boys and girls. This suggests that child morbidity was very important to the increase in stature during interwar Japan, but it also suggests that the emphasis placed on preventing child stunting in the first thousand days in the modern development literature may be misplaced. The secular increase in height in interwar Japan was more strongly influenced by cumulative responses to the health environment across child development rather than being simply the outcome of improving cohort health.

1.00-2.00 Sandwich Lunch in Hall

2.00-3.30 Children & Work

Fran Beltran-Tapia

Differential Dimensions in Boys' and Girls' Education in 19th-century Spain

Gender differences in educational attainments in 19th-century Spain were dramatic. This paper explores the factors that differentially affected the accumulation of human capital of boys and girls in 19th-century Spain. In order to do so, it exploits regional variation in schooling enrolment and literacy rates, as well as number of schools and teachers. Likewise, relying on a large dataset of individuals living in Madrid in 1880 and 1905, the paper attempts to understand what drove educational investments in urban areas, especially the relationship between socio-economic status and literacy.

Sara Horrell

### Children's Work and Wages, 1270-1860

This paper builds on Jane's career-long interest in women's work, children's work and welfare, and family living standards. It extends the research that Jane has done with Jacob Weisdorf documenting the long-run development of women's and men's wages and turns the lens onto children's involvement in paid work. We have collected over 3800 observations of children's work and pay from 1270 to 1870 and analyse these to both provide a coherent account of children's work over the long run and to contribute to some of the continuing debates in economic history. Specifically the data provide evidence on whether the evolution of English wages fits a Malthusian interpretation and they also contribute to debates about the effects of industrialisation in both its protoindustrial and factory phases.

3.30-4.00      Afternoon Tea

4.00-5.30      Keynote

Jane Humphries

On Research, the Discipline & Everything

Discussion

Closing remarks

5.30-7.00      Drinks Reception at Exeter College

Hosted by the Rector of Exeter College, Professor Sir Rick Trainor and Marguerite Dupree