

Call for Papers: World Business History Conference session proposal.

Weber revisited: Christianity and Entrepreneurship in the Global Economy

A session proposal for the World Business History Conference, "State of the art in World Business History - a first review", Frankfurt am Main, March 16-17th, 2014

Session description.

Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* has been one of the most influential and controversial interpretations of the causes of economic growth since its publication over a century ago. The thesis compares Catholic and Protestant denominations in early modern Europe, and the role of Calvinist teachings on salvation on increasing capital accumulation and effort. The details of the thesis are much disputed, but the wider hypothesis that religious beliefs in general, and some Christian beliefs specifically, aid the formation of cognitive frameworks that have the indirect benefit of stimulating entrepreneurship remains highly influential (Ashton 1948; Landes 1998; McCloskey 2010; Munro 2010). Empirical support for the thesis can be seen in the disproportionate influences of *inter alia* non-conformists before and during the British Industrial Revolution, Protestant Evangelicals in the US Gilded Age, Jewish entrepreneurs in the US and UK, among many others (Ashton 1948; Jeremy 1990; Godley 2001; Godley and Casson 2010; Baghdiantz et al 2005).

But the last half century has seen two historic transformations. First, after remarkable growth in the world's Christian population, the demographic centre of the global Christianity has shifted from the Global North to the Global South. Within these regions, it is Protestantism (and specifically Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations) that has grown so quickly (Pew Research Center, 2011). At the same time, the integration of much of the so-called Global South into the global economy has had a dramatic effect on economic growth there, powered disproportionately by indigenous entrepreneurship (Bruton, Ahlstrom and Obloj 2008). Among sociologists there is the beginnings of systematic research that seeks to explore the relationship between these two transformations of much of the developing world – a growing proportion of Christians among the population and increasing levels of indigenous entrepreneurship (e.g. Tong 2012 for China).

This proposed session seeks to invite up to five presentations from business historians and other researchers (especially sociologists and others) focusing on the relationship between Christianity and entrepreneurship in emerging economies in historical and comparative context. The session's aim is to encourage the empirical documentation of these recent trends and to compare them with the far better documented cases of Christian entrepreneurs in advanced economies in earlier periods.

Please send paper proposals by September 15th 2013 to session organiser, Professor Andrew Godley, Director, Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship, Henley Business School, University of Reading, a.c.godley@henley.reading.ac.uk

References:

- T.S. Ashton. *The Industrial Revolution (1760–1830)* (1948 OUP).
- Baghdiantz, I., McCabe, G. Harlaftis and I. Minoglou (2005) *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History*, (Berg, Oxford,
- Bruton, G. Ahlstrom D, Obloj, K. 2008. Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies: Where Are We Today and Where Should the Research Go in the Future. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 32 (1) January: 1-14.
- Andrew Godley. *Jewish Immigrant Entrepreneurship in London and New York: Enterprise and Culture* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).
- Andrew Godley and Mark Casson, 'Britain, 1900-2000', in David S. Landes, Joel Mokyr and William J. Baumol eds, *The Invention of Enterprise: Entrepreneurship from Mesopotamia to Modern Times* (Princeton University Press) 2010: 243-272.
- David Jeremy, *Capitalists and Christians* (OUP 1990).
- David Landes, *Wealth and Poverty of Nations: why some are so rich and some so poor*. 1998. New York, Norton.
- Dierdre McCloskey, *Bourgeois Dignity: Why Economics Can't Explain the Modern World*. 2010, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- John Munro (2010), 'Tawney's Century, 1540-1640: The Roots of Modern Capitalist Entrepreneurship', in David Landes, Joel Mokyr and WJ Baumol (eds), *The Invention of Enterprise: Entrepreneurship from Ancient Mesopotamia to Modern Times* (Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ).
- Pew Research Center, Forum on Religion and Public Life *Global Christianity* December 2011. <http://www.pewforum.org/Christian/Global-Christianity-movements-and-denominations.aspx>
- Joy Kooi-Chin Tong. *Overseas Chinese Christian Entrepreneurs in Modern China: A Case Study of the Influence of Christian Ethics on Business Life* Anthem Press, London. 2012.

Appendix

Countries with fastest GDP Growth 1982-2011 (simple mean of GDP annual growth %): Source. Author's calculations from World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?page=1>

China	10.2
Botswana	6.8
Singapore	6.7
South Korea	6.3
India	6.3
Uganda	6.0
Chad	6.0
Malaysia	5.9

10 Countries with the Largest Number of Protestants

<i>Countries</i>	ESTIMATED 2010 PROTESTANT POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION THAT IS PROTESTANT	PERCENTAGE OF WORLD PROTESTANT POPULATION
United States	159,850,000	51.5%	20.0%
Nigeria	59,680,000	37.7	7.5
China	58,040,000	4.3	7.2
Brazil	40,500,000	20.8	5.1
South Africa	36,550,000	72.9	4.6
United Kingdom	33,820,000	54.5	4.2
DR Congo	31,700,000	48.1	4.0
Germany	28,640,000	34.8	3.6
Kenya	24,160,000	59.6	3.0
India	18,860,000	1.5	2.4
Subtotal for the 10 Countries	491,820,000	13.9	61.4
Total for Rest of World	308,820,000	9.2	38.6
World Total	800,640,000	11.6	100.0

Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Figures may not add exactly due to rounding. See Appendix C for details on the range of estimates available for China.

Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life • *Global Christianity*, December 2011, corrected February 2013

Despite Europe's historical links to Protestantism, its share of the global Protestant population (13%) is eclipsed by the share in sub-Saharan Africa (37%), the Americas (33%) and the Asia-Pacific region (17%). Only the Middle East-North Africa has a smaller share of Protestants (less than 1%) than Europe.

Christians by Movement

<i>Movements</i>	ESTIMATED NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WORLD POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF WORLD CHRISTIAN POPULATION
Pentecostal	279,080,000	4.0%	12.8%
Charismatic	304,990,000	4.4	14.0
Pentecostal & Charismatic together	584,080,000	8.5	26.7
Evangelical	285,480,000	4.1	13.1

Source: Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Pentecostals and charismatics are mutually exclusive categories. They overlap, however, with the evangelical category, and the three categories should not be added together. Many Christians do not identify with any of these movements. Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Pentecostal and charismatic figures may not add exactly due to rounding.

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Pentecostals by Region

<i>Regions</i>	PERCENTAGE OF REGION THAT IS PENTECOSTAL	PERCENTAGE OF WORLD PENTECOSTAL POPULATION
Americas	10.9%	36.7%
Sub-Saharan Africa	14.8	43.7
Asia-Pacific	1.1	15.5
Europe	1.5	4.0
Middle East-North Africa	0.1	0.1
World Total	4.0	100.0

Source: Pew Forum analysis of data from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Percentages may not add exactly due to rounding.

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Global Christianity, December 2011

Charismatics by Region

<i>Regions</i>	PERCENTAGE OF REGION THAT IS CHARISMATIC	PERCENTAGE OF WORLD CHARISMATIC POPULATION
Americas	15.8%	48.5%
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.5	17.4
Asia-Pacific	2.2	29.5
Europe	1.8	4.3
Middle East-North Africa	0.2	0.3
World Total	4.4	100.0

Source: Pew Forum analysis of data from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Percentages may not add exactly due to rounding.

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Global Christianity, December 2011