

Diversity in development: the case of divergent coffee-producing paths in the Lake Kivu area (1918-1940)

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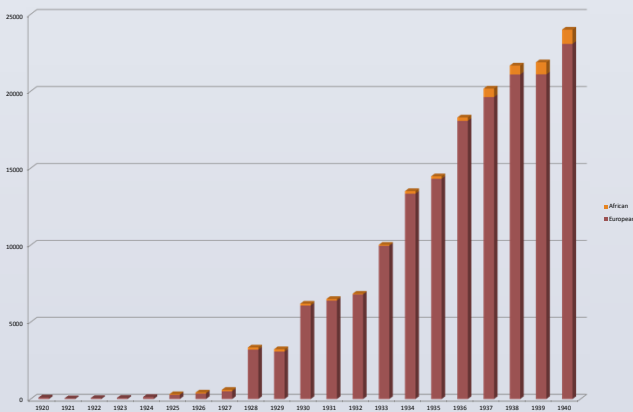
a/ Context and research questions

- Early 20th century -> introduction *Arabica* coffee by missions
- Pre WWI:
 - Kivu (Eastern Congo): no private cultivation until end WWI
 - Rwanda: timid German attempts -> cultivation limited to vicinity administrative-military posts
- Post WWI:
 - Kivu: boom European plantation economy from mid 1920s onwards
 - RU: focus on juridical/administrative debates 1920s => RU Belgian mandate => coffee campaigns 1930s => development African smallholder production system
- **Central question:** Why this difference? What factors influenced the development of two divergent production methods?

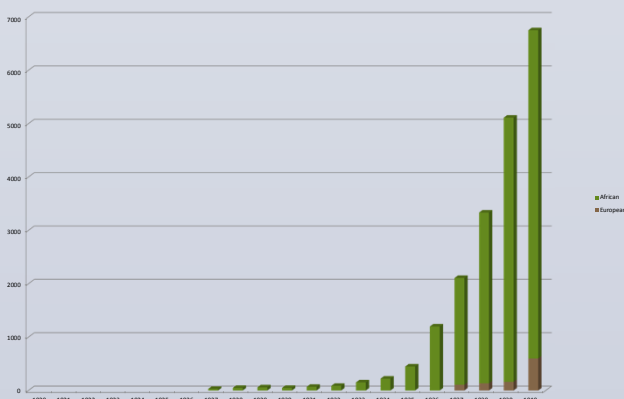
c/ Data collection

Lake Kivu as mirror!

European versus African production (A+R) Belgian Congo



European versus African production (A+R) Ruanda-Urundi



b/ Methodology

- From global to local perspective -> development of coffee producing systems in other parts of the world -> points of comparison with case-study
- Archival research and published sources
- Comparisons between Kivu and Western Rwanda (focus on areas bordering Lake Kivu)



d/ Possible explanations

- 1) Availability of land? -> population density higher in RU => smallholder structure
- 2) Mandate-colony? -> limited action radius for Belgian government in RU => LoN (UN) as guard + RU had right to complain
- 3) Cost effectiveness? -> plantations expensive -> global crisis -> financial interventions in Kivu => 1930s smallholders in RU
- 4) Precolonial differences in land- & labor relations? -> RU more centralized => land- & labor more rigid than in Kivu (suitable for indirect rule)
- 5) Copying successful examples? -> cotton cultivators in Uganda + *Robusta* farmers in Tanzania -> chain of command - indirect rule
- 6) German legacy? -> timid attempts before WWI + criticism in press
- 7) Racial? -> Hamitic myth -> in RU Tutsi seen as superior to Hutu / myth also used to classify RU as superior to Congolese
- 8) Famine 1928-29? -> trigger to initiate/intensify cash crop cultivation in RU

e/ Provisional conclusions

- Interrelated and complex process
- Land availability as prime mover: ample evidence in sources
- Contributes to debate on role colonial State in economic development => here: colonizer has to adapt to local economical/geographical conditions
- Also contributes to 'diversity-debate' -> often cost efficiency seen as primordial to install smallholder production scheme => here: evidence of versatile intertwined process

