

Call for Papers to Session S20041

XVIIth World Economic History Congress, Kyoto, Japan, 3-7 August 2015

Session Title

Catching up now and then – do historical perspectives on developing – country dynamics still make sense?

Call for Papers

Deadline of the Call : 1st of February 2015

Guidelines of the Call:

Persons interested should send a title and abstract of no more than 200 words by Feb. 1, 2015. Accepted authors will be notified by February 15.

Final titles and extended abstracts (500 words) or full papers will be required by April 15, 2015 for inclusion in the Congress program.

Final paper will be required by June 15, 2015

Remarks:

In recent decades, a number of developing countries have grown at a significantly higher rate than the world average, while others are falling further behind. Shifts have taken place in the world income hierarchy. The aim of the session is to discuss what Economic History has to offer towards an understanding of current-day catching-up dynamics.

Over the last half a century, Economic History has made important contributions to the literature on the dynamics of catching up (for instance, Gerschenkron 1962, Akamatsu 1962, Ohkawa and Rosovsky 1973, Abramovitz 1986). Gerschenkron sketched an analytical framework that considers the diversity in mechanisms and processes at work on the road towards modern economic growth. According to Gerschenkron, the process was conditioned by country specific circumstances stemming from the relative backwardness itself; there are no absolute prerequisites, instead there is variation rather than imitation with regard to catching-up dynamics. An alternative hypothesis of catching up was coined by Akamatsu in terms of the theory of the “flying geese”. In this theory, spillovers, emulation and the division of labor predicted the sequential development pattern of many Asian countries that were following, and caught up with, the “lead goose” Japan. In other words, regional integration and dynamics conditioned the catching up process in Asia.

Much of the literature and debate has naturally focused on a few, often successful, Asian cases. However, given the diverse experiences in the developing world over the last decades, we want to broaden the scope to include not only Asia but also other regions. Consequently, the session wants to encourage discussions on the following broad questions: When, and under what circumstances, does backwardness become an advantage and when does it continue to be a disadvantage? Is the importance of “social capability” forwarded by Ohkawa/Rosovsky and Abramovitz still the crucial

mechanism? Can Gerschenkronian or Akamatsunian approaches deepen our understanding of the ongoing development or do we need other approaches? Does catching up follow a certain pathway or are there many possible routes to development? Are there any lessons to be drawn from former catching-up cases or are there other dynamics at play? With this in mind, do historical perspectives still make sense?

We invite submissions that discuss catching-up dynamics – both successes and failures – in the light of economic-historical frameworks that have implications for our understanding of the prospects for developing economies of today.

We welcome proposals from academics at all stages of their careers and with interests in all parts of the world with relevance to the session topic.

Contact Persons

Martin Andersson, Department of Economic History, Lund University, Sweden

E-mail:

Martin.andersson#ekh.lu.se

Or

Tobias Axelsson, Department of Economic History, Lund University, Sweden

E-mail :

Tobias.axelsson#ekh.lu.se

**Please change ' # 'to ' @ ' when you e-mail.*