Household budgets in South Africa

Johan Fourie

Amsterdam
12 February
Probate inventories

- Probate inventories (MOOC 8)
  - Lists of assets at death
  - MOOC 8
  - Fourie (2013)
    - Remarkable wealth
    - High levels of inequality
  - Swanepoel (forthcoming)
- Credit network

- Auction rolls (MOOC 10)
  - Mitchell, McCants, Fourie
Tax censuses

- Tax censuses (opgaafrolle)
  - Incredibly rich records of inputs and outputs
    - INPUTS: Household size, European labourers, slaves, Khoisan, wagons, carts, wheat, rye, barley sown, vines
    - OUTPUTS: wheat, barley, rye reaped, wine, brandy, cattle, horses, sheep, pigs
  - Census every year – roughly same format 1663-1828
  - Cape of Good Hope Panel project
    - Funded by South African National Research Foundation, Swedish Handelsbanken, Swedish Wallenberg Foundation
  - 2015-2019
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**Tax Censuses**

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## Tax Censuses

Tax censuses

- **Opportunities**
  - Labour, mobility and inequality
  - Intergenerational mobility (matched to genealogies)
  - Intergenerational wealth and credit networks (matched to probates)
  - Migration, disease, exogenous shocks

- **Challenges**
  - Mostly European descendants
  - Ends before industrial take-off (mineral revolution)
Missionary records

- 1849 Mission census
  - Fourie, Ross, Viljoen (2013) investigate literacy and numeracy
  - Fourie and Swanepoel (2015) investigate persistence of human capital accumulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of each male resident, head of family</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>How long has he been resident at the mission?</th>
<th>Can he or she read or write?</th>
<th>Is he married or not?</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Number above 12 years old</th>
<th>Number under 12</th>
<th>Do his wife and grown up daughters go out to service &amp; where are they?</th>
<th>Has he a garden?</th>
<th>Has he sheep ploughing and at least</th>
<th>What crop did he get this year and what was the value thereof?</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Geese</th>
<th>Pigeo</th>
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Cape archives

- Estate accounts
- Liquidation records: 1700-1910
  - 50 obs per page, 200 pages per book, 13 books
The missing

- Early colonial censuses
- Voters rolls
  - Information on occupations: mobility, inequality
- Church records
  - Baptism, marriage and death
- Estate accounts
  - Posel (2006)
  - More than 40000 records for Joburg and 8000 for Pretoria
The missing

- Challenges
  - Microdata often missing
    - Never recorded
    - Often destroyed
  - Where information is available: sample selection
  - Household formation unique
    - Migrant labour, remittances, polygamy
  - Payment often in-kind
  - Post-1994 better surveys, but:
    - Because state provides free-of-charge, asset indices often most reliable
    - For example, poverty falls rapidly if access to services (and not income) is used