

Call for Papers
to Session 225

on the XVth World Economic History Congress, Stellenbosch, 9-13 July, 2012:

THE ECONOMICS OF CIVIL WAR

The number of civil wars at any point in time rose from the end of World War II until the end of the Cold War, due mainly to an increase in the average length of these wars. Following this period, conflicts strongly associated with the superpower rivalry came to an end (Hironaka, 2005). But today, civil wars (the defining characteristic is that the warring factions are from the same country) still rage in about eight countries, of which almost half are on African soil.

History can tell us a lot about the economic elements that play a role in civil wars - what causes civil wars, can they be prevented, what conditions are necessary to end a civil war? By delving into history, the role of poverty, a lack of education, and political alienation in fuelling civil wars can be revealed.

Apart from these elements, we intend this session also to explore the relationship between resource dependence and conflict: the interplay between a weak state and rebel greed. Another topic is the role the international community plays. Should outsiders get directly involved in the conflict (such as NATO in the Libyan conflict)? Should they only contribute financially to the economic reparations after the end of the war? Or should their involvement only go as far as humanitarian help? Or should outsiders refrain altogether from any involvement?

The session welcomes theoretical papers on civil war, but also systematic, empirical case studies that highlight the ways in which economic factors have influenced the violence and conflict.

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