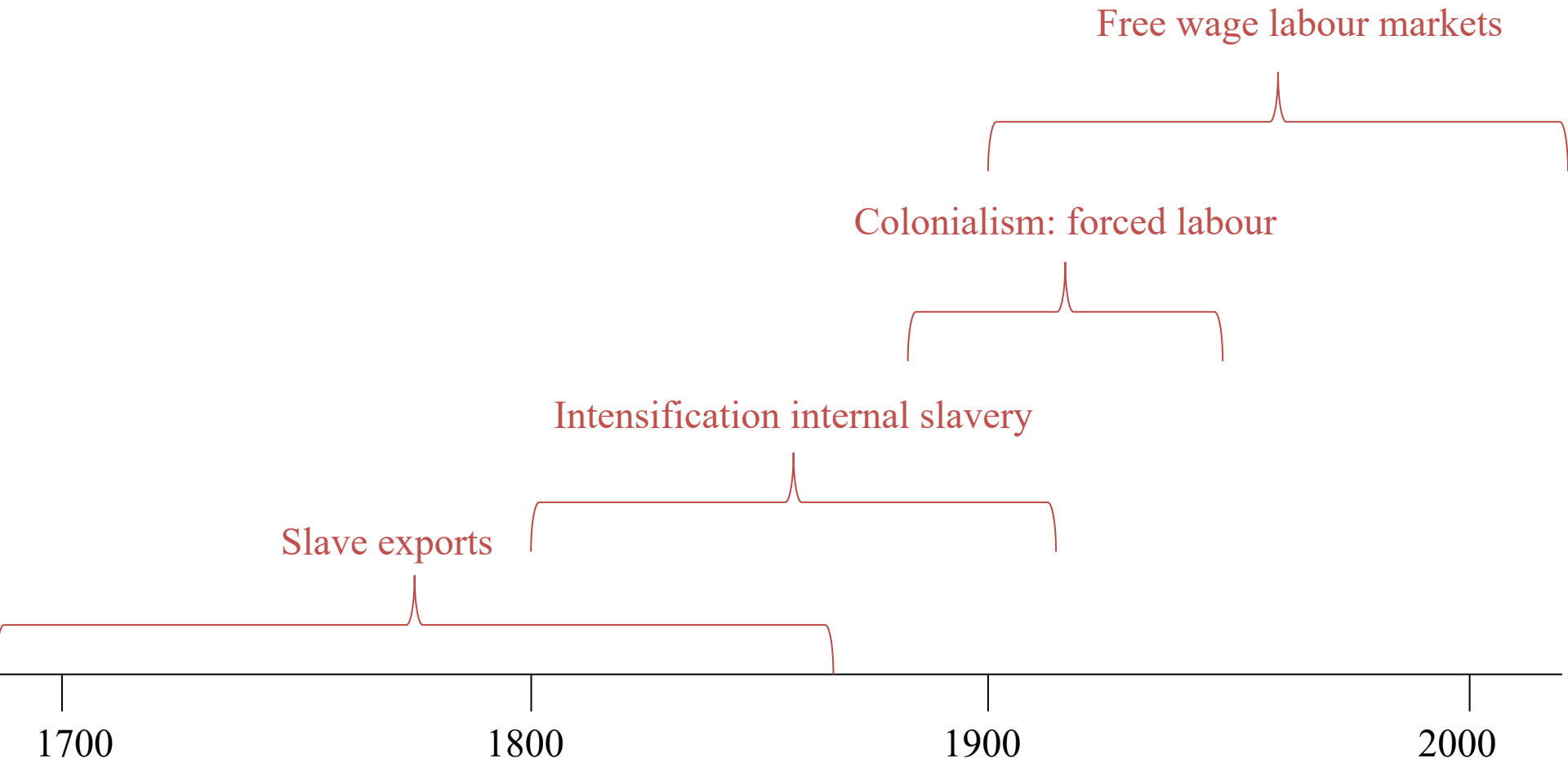
Labour and development in African history

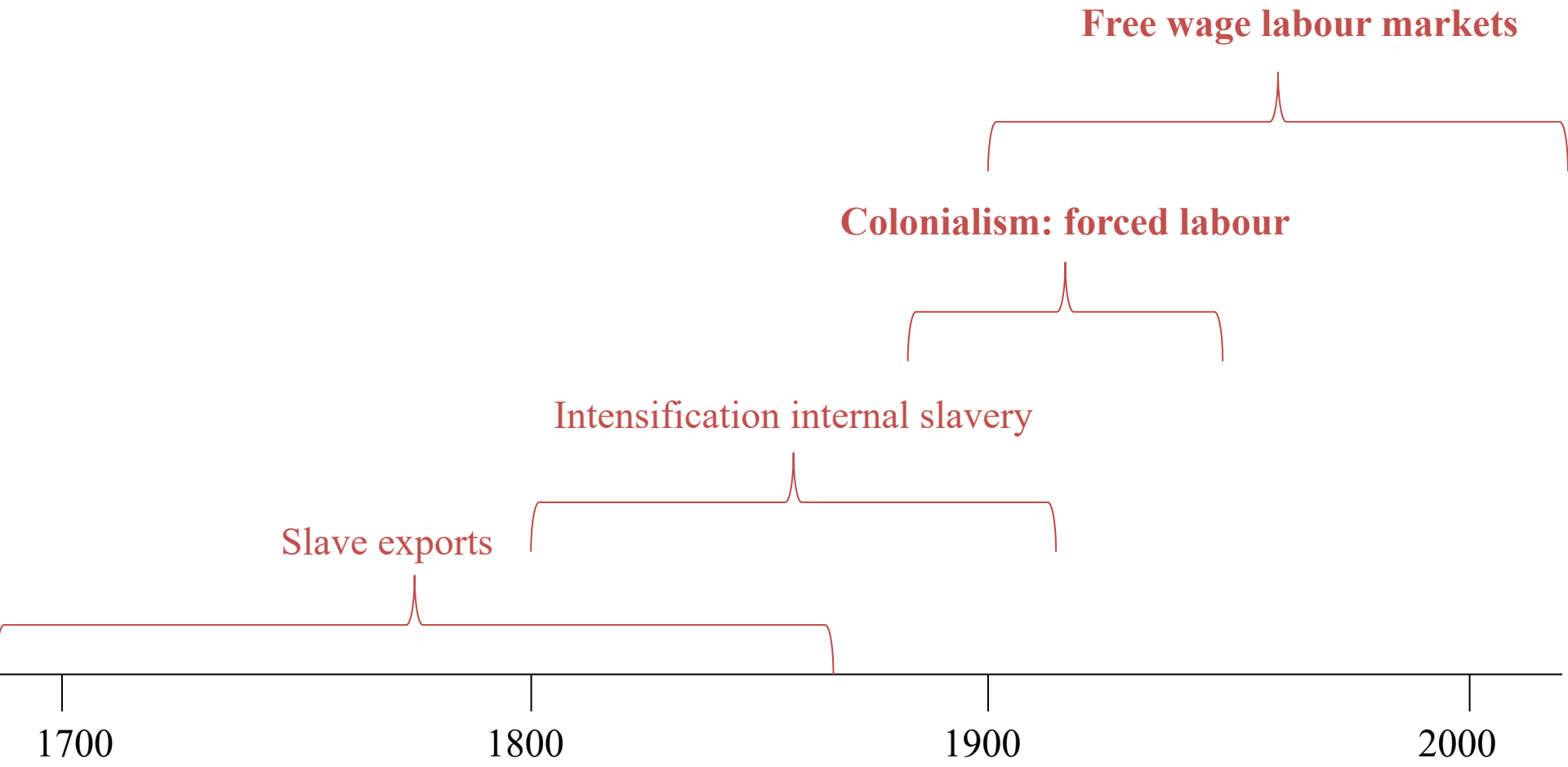


Marlous van Waijenburg
Harvard University
Harvard Business School
Department of African and African American Studies

AFRICAN LABOUR HISTORY



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LABOUR IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

- Labour *scarcity* central theme in African history
  - Low population densities for most of history
  - Challenges to state formation and centralize power
  - Limits to the size of the market
  - Control over human labour (slavery, forced labour)

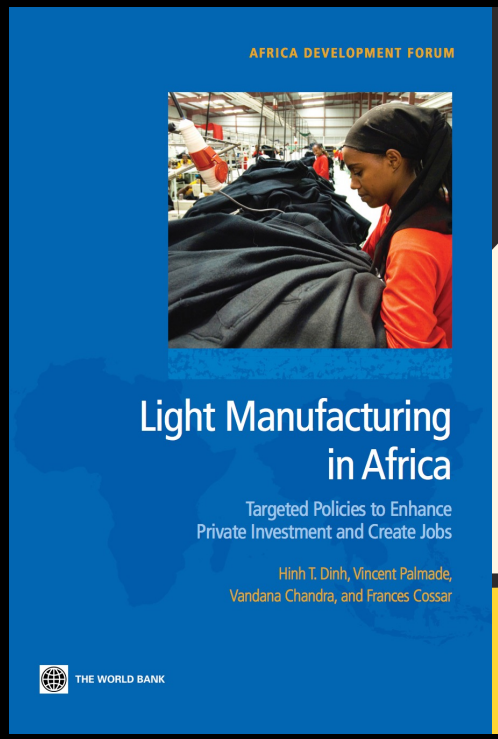
- Labour central component of economic development
  - Skilled labour: absorb and develop new technologies
  - Competitive labour costs and export-led industrialization


Asian
'late-comers'
ASEAN-4
Japan
Asian 'Tigers'
China
Africa?


The Gaza Problem / What to Eat Now / The New Wii
TIME
Africa Rising

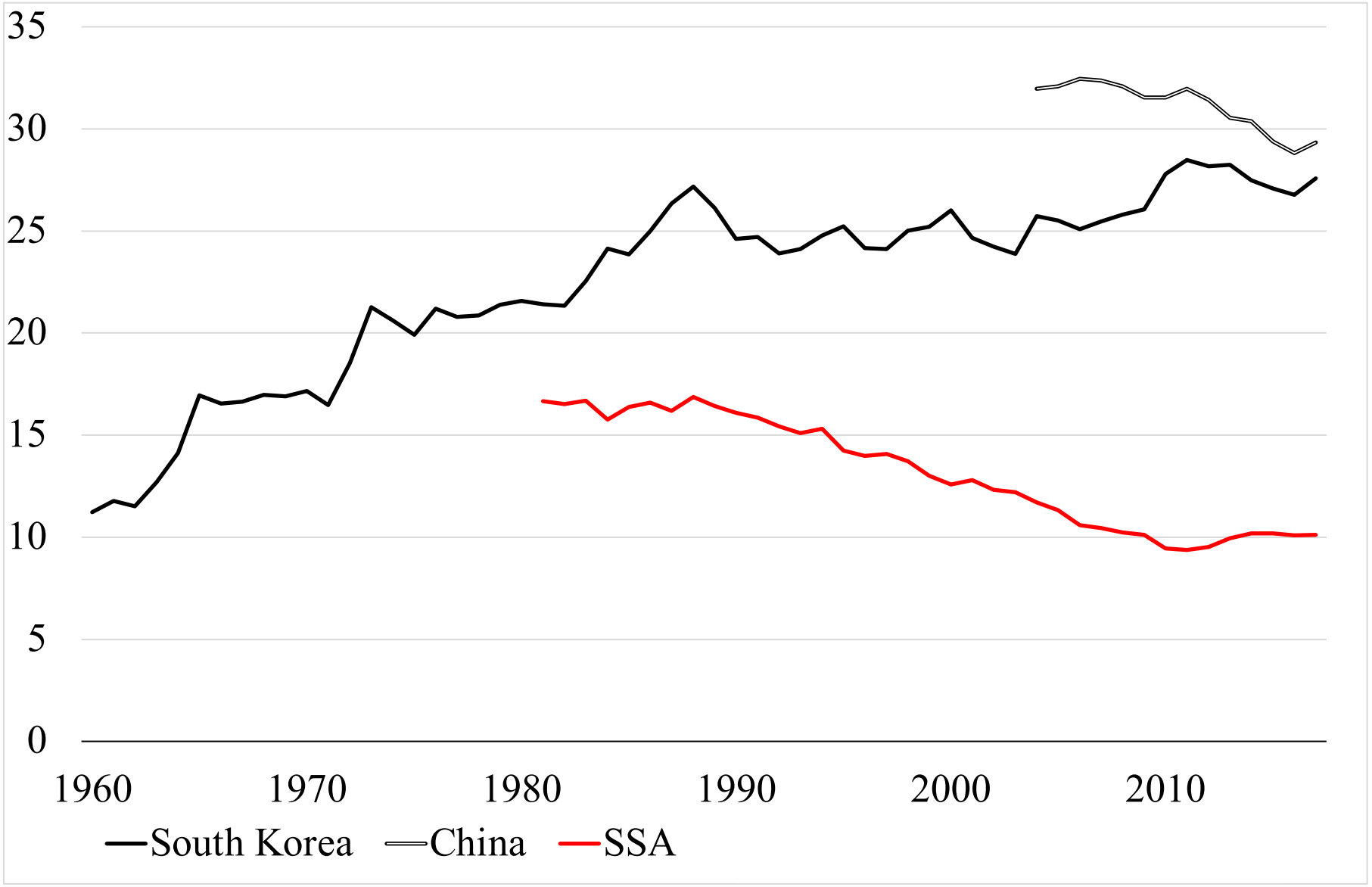

CAN NIKE REBOUND?
HOW CLINTON SURVIVED WILLEY
TIME
Africa Rising
After decades of famine and war, life is finally looking up for many Africans. Here's why.


INSIDE THIS WEEK: TECHNOLOGY QUARTERLY
The Economist
President Newt? Brace yourselves
Britain's coming recession
Why India needs Walmart
France tries to stay AAA
The science of ethical foie gras
Africa rising


AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FORUM
Light Manufacturing in Africa
Targeted Policies to Enhance Private Investment and Create Jobs
Hinh T. Dinh, Vincent Palmade, Vandana Chandra, and Frances Cossar
THE WORLD BANK


MADE IN AFRICA
LEARNING TO COMPETE IN INDUSTRY
CAROL NEWMAN, JOHN PAGE, JOHN RAND, ABEBE SHIMELES, MÅNS SÖDERBOM, FINN TARP

Share of GDP in manufacturing (%)



Sources: World Bank (WDI)

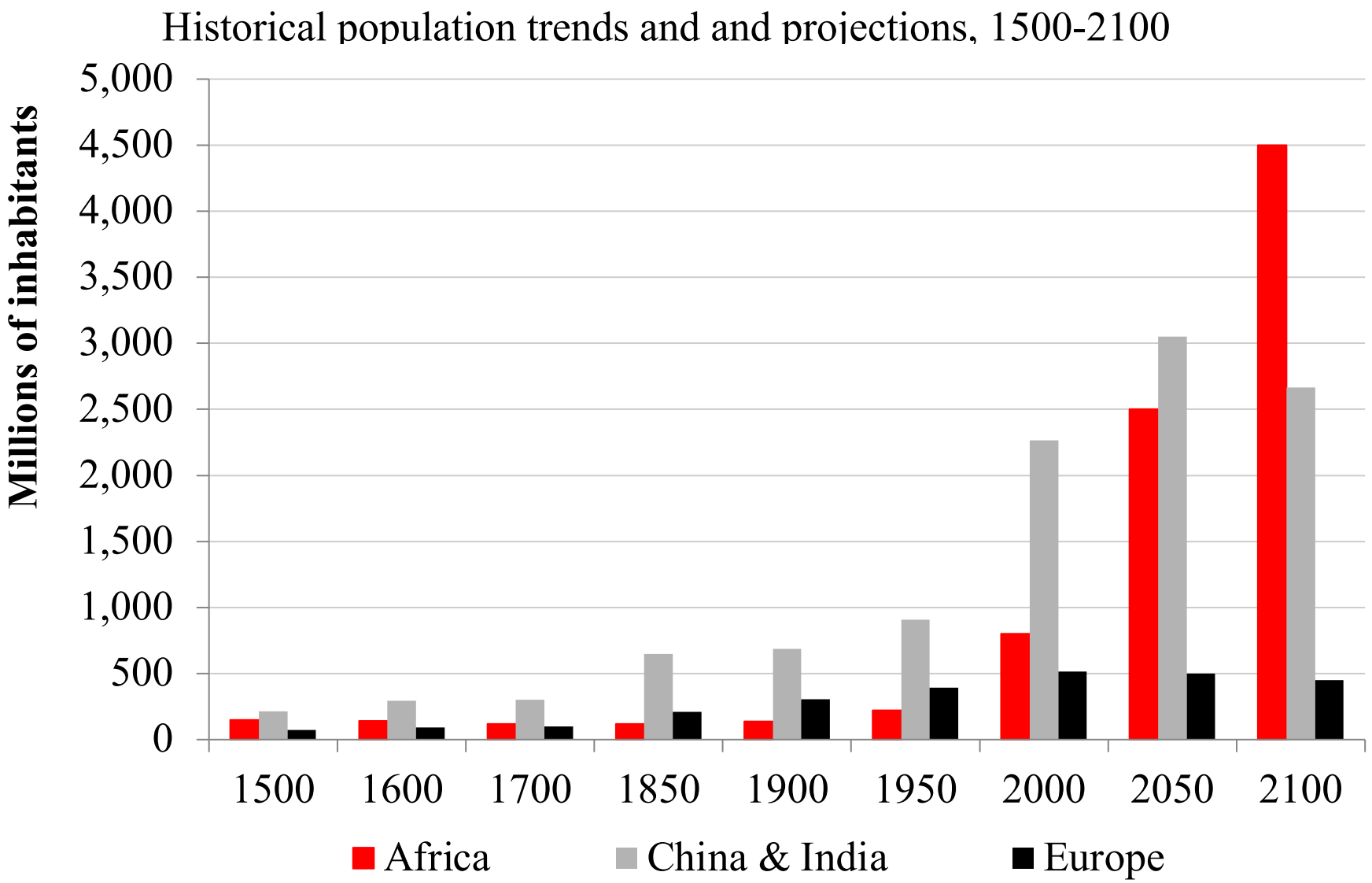
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- Labour force and projected population growth
  - Reversing land-labour ratios
  - Dismantling old barriers to growth (+ demographic dividend)

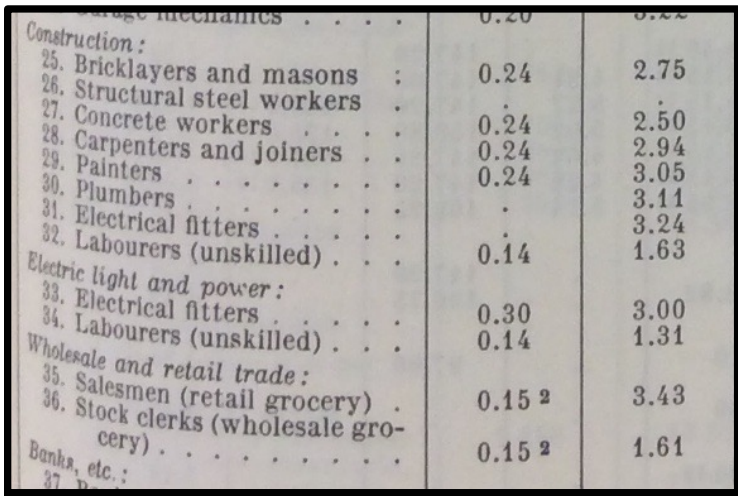
AFRICA'S 'POPULATION BOOM'



Sources: UN Population Division, Maddison 2013, Frankema and Jerven 2014

LONG-RUN WAGE SERIES AND LABOUR HISTORY

- AAOWD (link)
  - 50 African and Asian countries
  - c. 1880-2010
  - Unskilled and 'skilled' labor:
    - *Carpenters*
    - *Electricians*
    - *Mechanics*
    - *Clerks*
    - *Bank tellers*



Construction:		
25. Bricklayers and masons	0.24	2.75
26. Structural steel workers	.	.
27. Concrete workers	0.24	2.50
28. Carpenters and joiners	0.24	2.94
29. Painters	0.24	3.05
30. Plumbers	.	3.11
31. Electrical fitters	.	3.24
32. Labourers (unskilled)	0.14	1.63
Electric light and power:		
33. Electrical fitters	0.30	3.00
34. Labourers (unskilled)	0.14	1.31
Wholesale and retail trade:		
35. Salesmen (retail grocery)	0.15 [2]	3.43
36. Stock clerks (wholesale grocery)	0.15 [2]	1.61
Banks, etc.:		

7	Pointeurs à 7,00 par jour	. . .
2	Gardiens de nuit à 4,50	. . .
4	Chefs d'équipe à 5,00	. . . .
37	Manœuvres pour les grues à 4,50	.
15	Manœuvres pour la douane à 4,50	.
11	Chefs de boats à 3,60	. . . .
120	Canotiers à 3,80	. . . . .
1	Mécanicien chaloupe à 7,15	. . .
1	Chauffeur — à 7,15	. . .
2	Forgerons à 6,00	. . . . .
2	Forgerons à 4,50	. . . . .
1	Ajusteur à 240 par mois	. . .
4	Chauffeurs à 4,50 par jour	. . .
4	Charpentiers à 8,00	. . . .
7	Piqueurs à 4,50	. . . . .
1	Patron de chaloupe à 10,00	. . .
1	Brigadier de chaloupe à 8,00	. . .

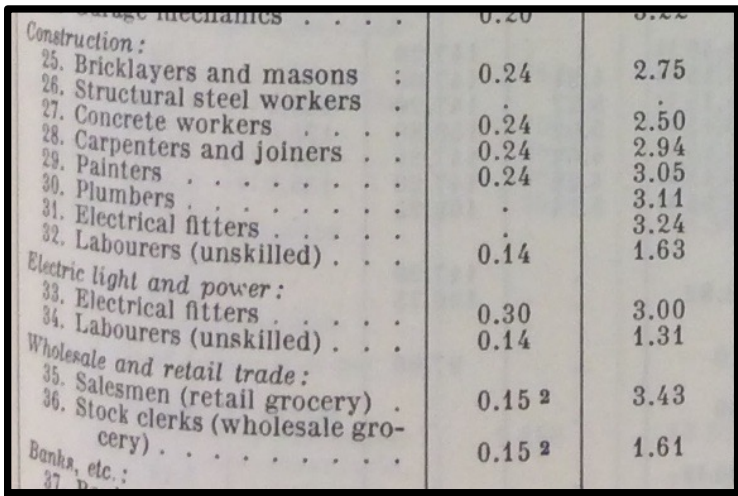




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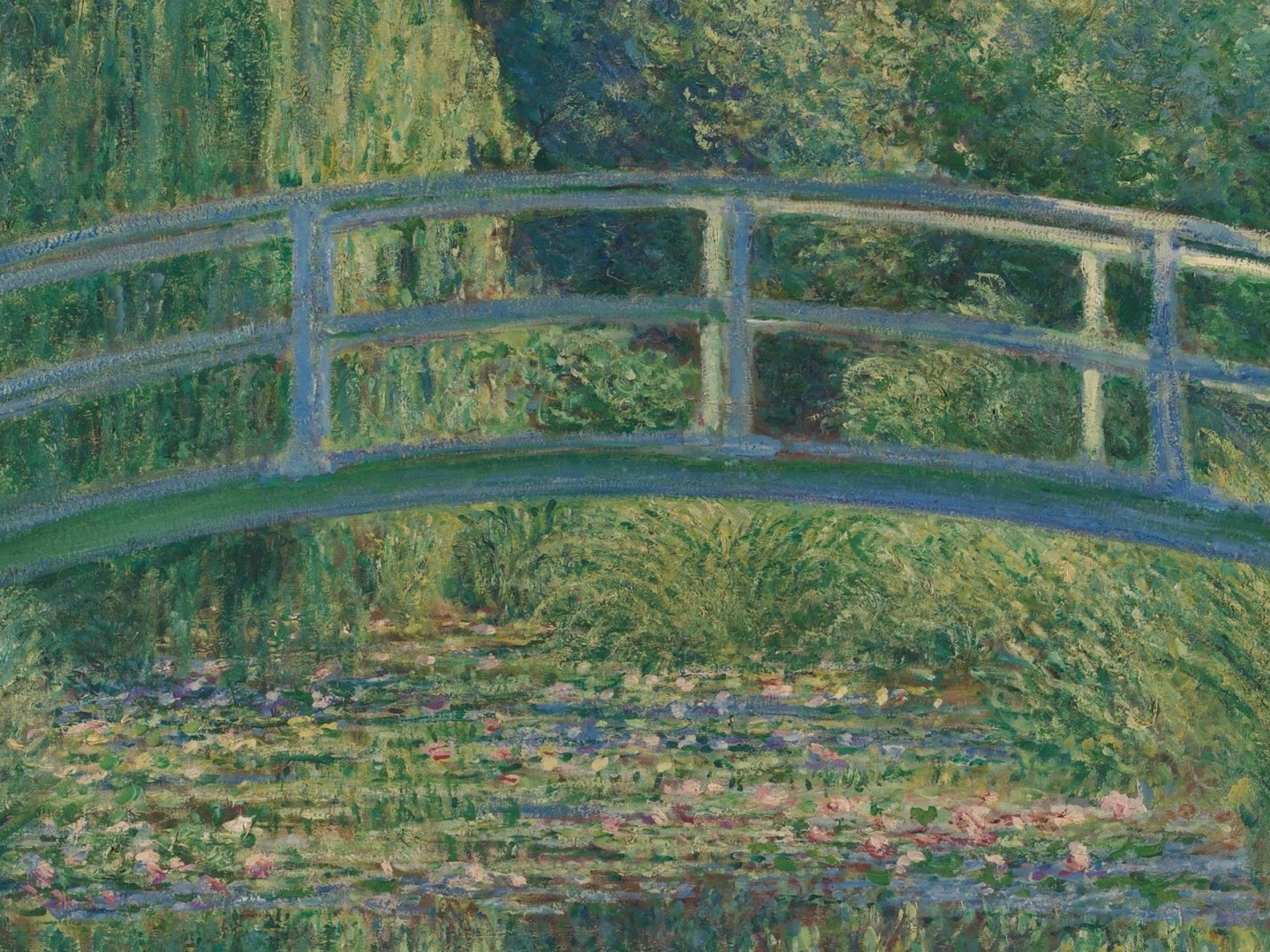
- Data limitations
  - Imperfect sources
  - Gaps, urban-centered
  - Tip of the iceberg…



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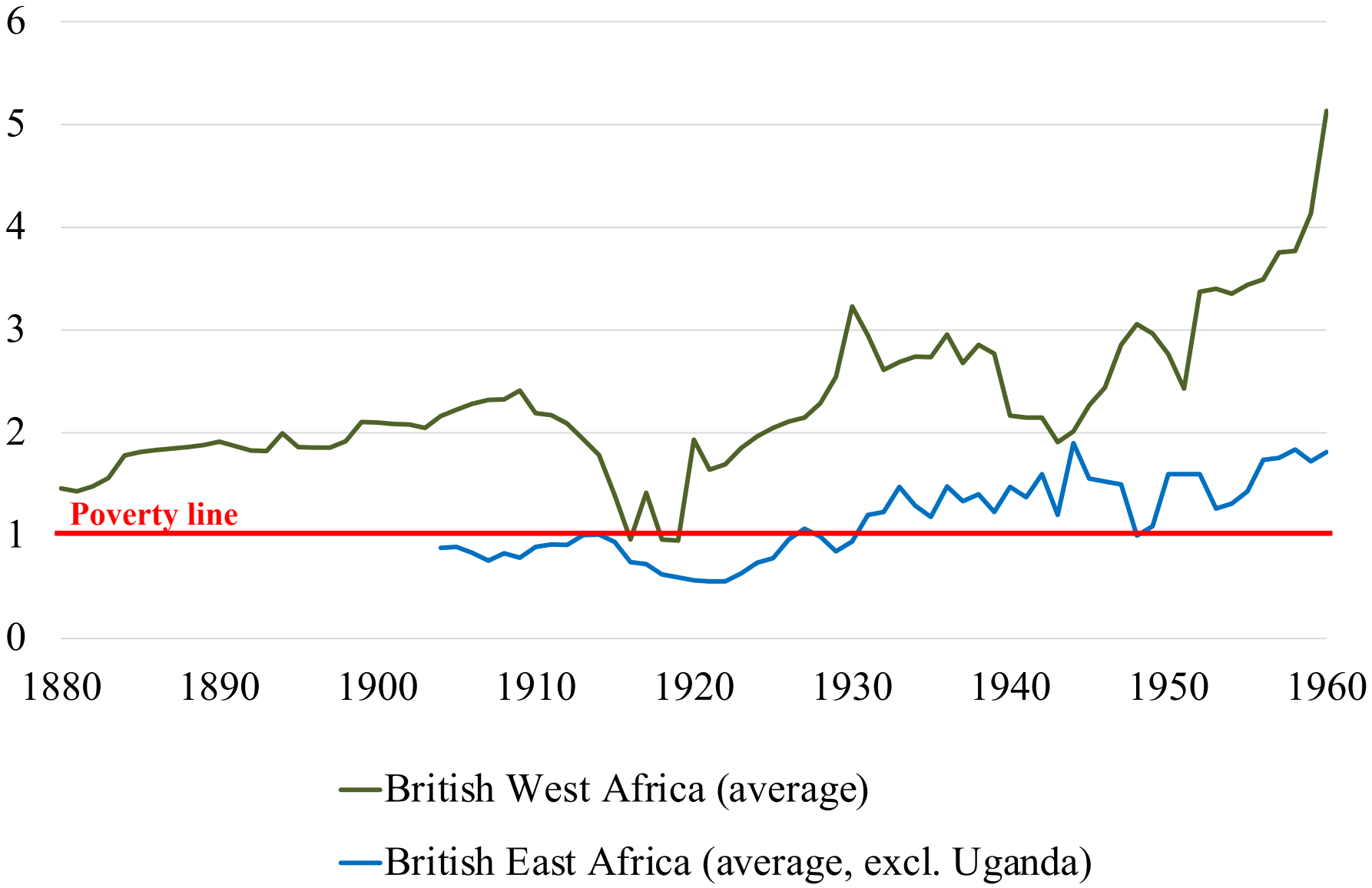




PAY-OFFS

1. African *variety* and similarities

VARYING REAL WAGE OUTCOMES ACROSS AFRICA



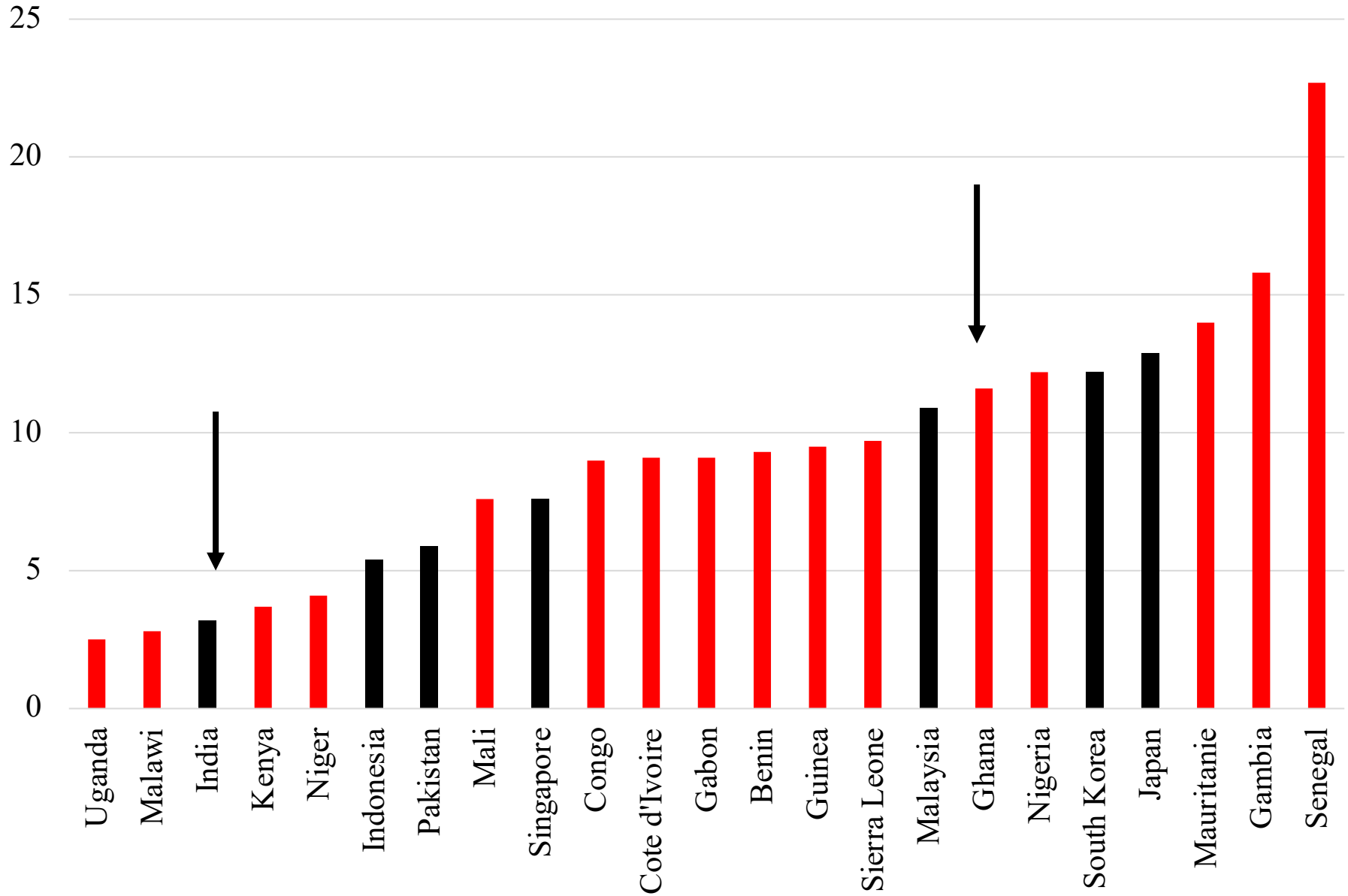
Sources: Frankema and van Waijenburg 2012

PAY-OFFS

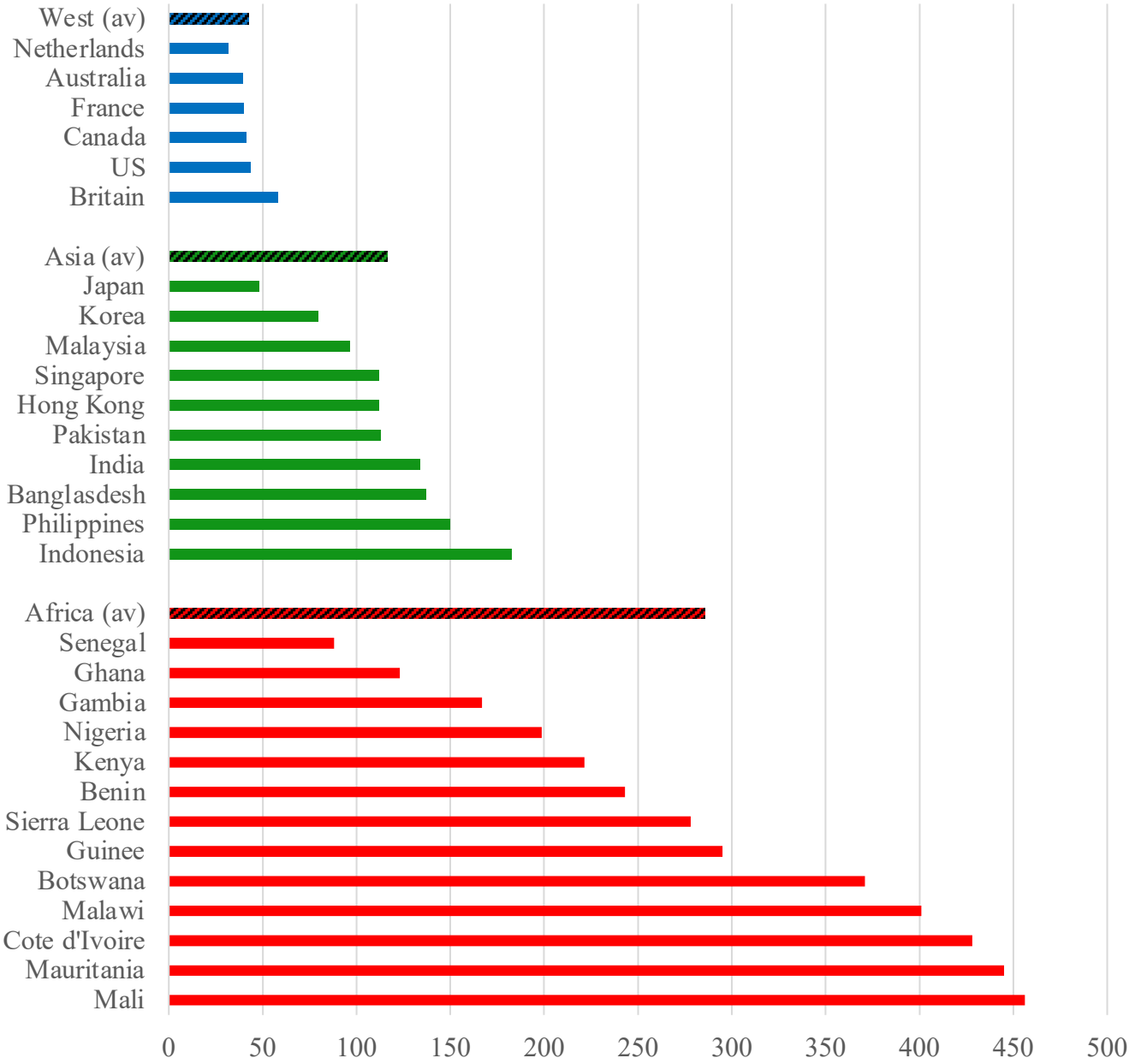
1. African *variety* and similarities
   - Great variation in nominal and real wage levels and trends
   - Higher real wages and faster increases in places where colonial states intervened less in land and labor markets

2. Global comparisons

DAY WAGES FOR UNSKILLED LABOR, 1910 (PENCE)



CARPENTER PREMIUMS AROUND 1900



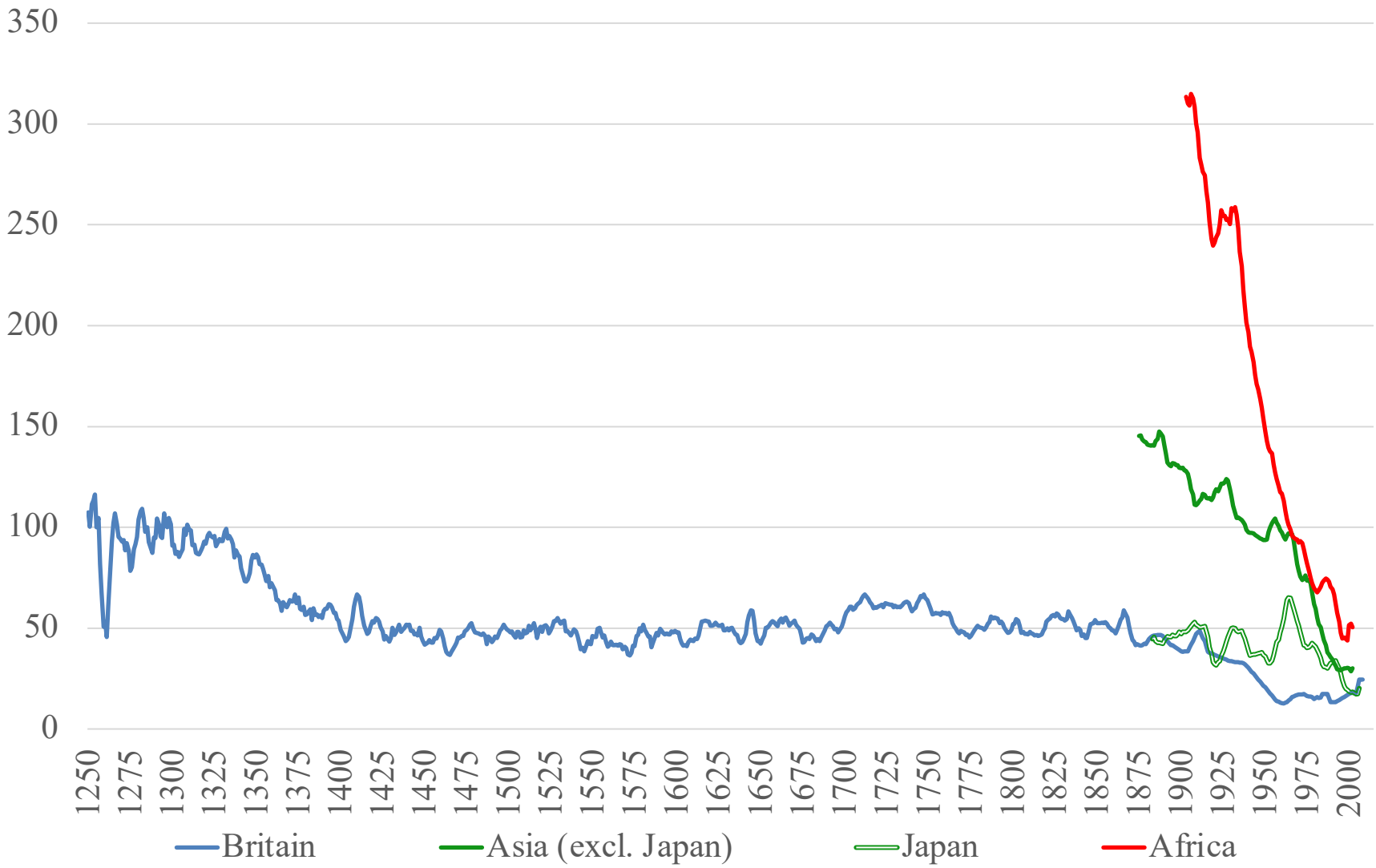
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   - African *skilled* labor even more expensive

3. Long-run trends and transitions

CARPENTER PREMIUMS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE



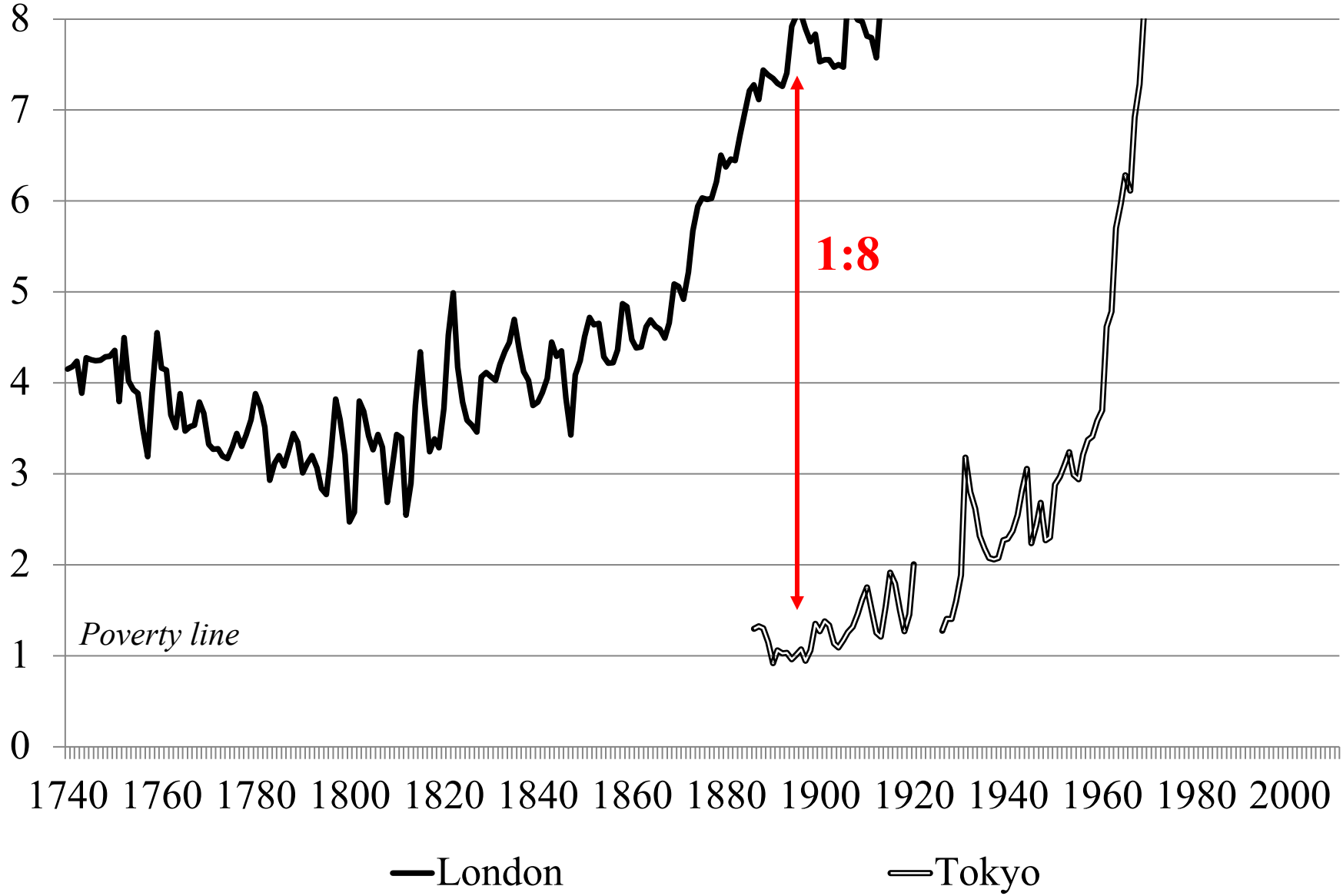
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   - African unskilled labor relatively expensive
   - African *skilled* labor even more expensive

3. Long-run trends and transitions
   - Premiums for skilled labor have fallen dramatically
   - But, labor in general still relatively expensive

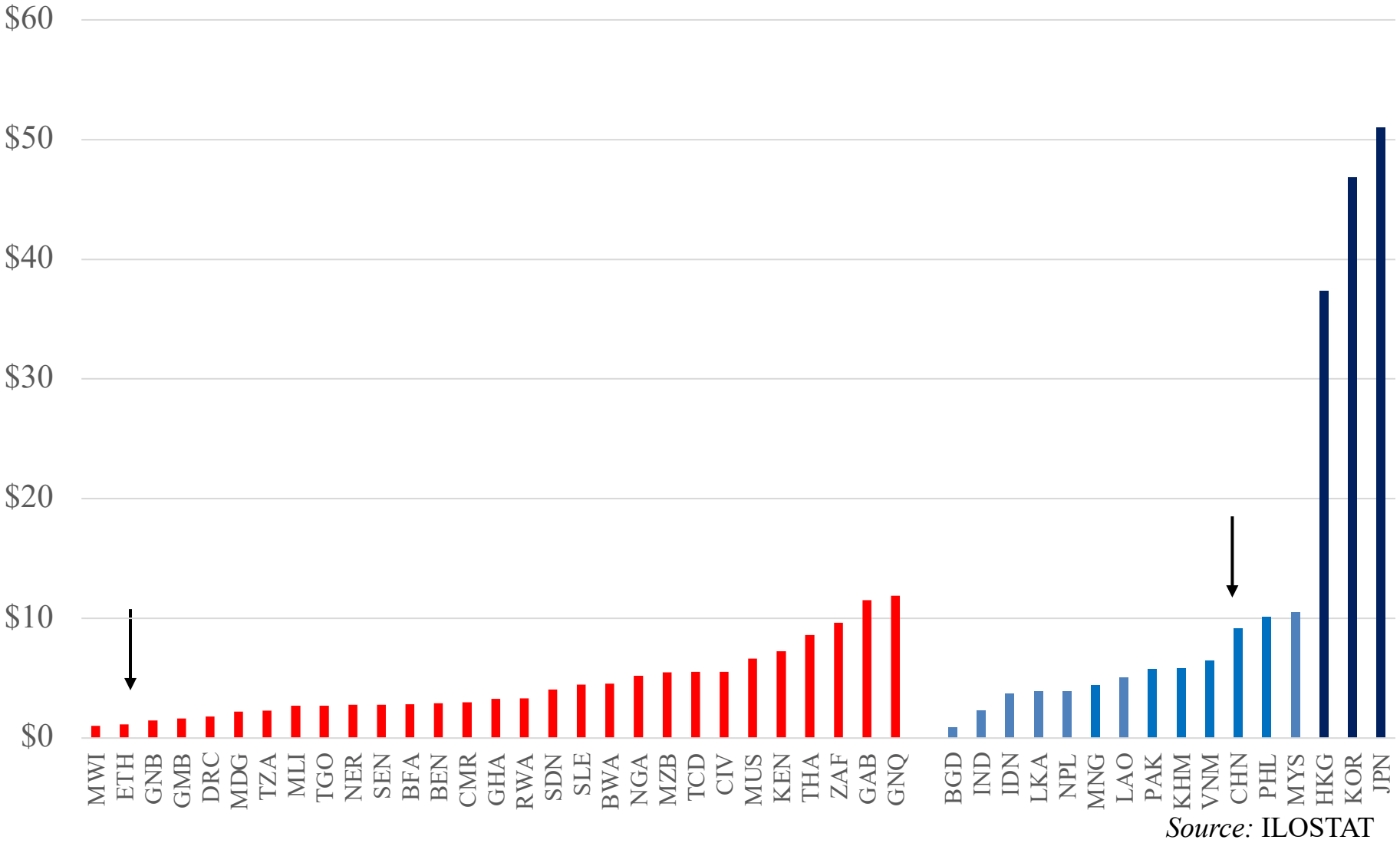
A PROFOUND WAGE COST GAP



Sources: London series from Allen 2009, Tokyo series Frankema and van Waijenburg 2018

A COMPETITIVE EDGE?

Official minimum wages in African and Asian countries, c. 2015



Source: ILOSTAT



BASED ON THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH

Frankema, Ewout, and Marlous van Waijenburg. "Africa Rising? A Historical Perspective." African Affairs117, no. 469 (October 2018): 543–568

Frankema, Ewout, and Marlous van Waijenburg. "The Great Convergence: Skill Accumulation and Mass Education in Africa and Asia, 1870-2010." Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) Discussion Paper, No. 14150, November 2019.