

Academic curriculum vitae

Personal information

D'Onofrio, Federico

ORCID: 0000-0003-3519-3132

Research interests

Rural history, history of quantification, history of economic thought, economic history

Education

01/07/2008 – 30/06/2012 Ph.D., Thesis' title: *Knowing to Transform: three ways for agricultural economists to observe Italy 1900-1940*; Faculty of Law, Economics and Business, Utrecht Universiteit, The Netherlands.

Date of defence: 28.02.2013

Supervisors: Prof. Mary Morgan, Prof. Janneke Plantinga, co-supervisor: Prof. Harro Maas

01/09/2007 – 30.06.2008 M.Sc. in Economics, CORIPE, Piemonte, Italy, 9.2007-6.2008, with scholarship of CORIPE.

01/10/2001 – 15/07/2008 Diploma (20/20), Scuola Normale Superiore Pisa; from 2001 to 2006 studies were fully funded by a competitive scholarship of the Scuola Normale Superiore.

01/10/2004 – 30/05/2007 Laurea magistrale in Philosophy (110/110 cum laude), Università di Pisa.

Current and future positions

09/2021 – open **ended** PI **ERC Starting Grant** "DataRev", Assistant professor in agricultural history (fast tenure-track), Institute for social and economic history, University of Vienna

Previous positions

01/09/2019-30/08/2021 Marie Skłodowska Curie Action Fellow at the Department of Management, University of Venice, Italy.

01/10/2018-30/08/2020 Fellow of the Department of Economic History at the London School of Economics and Social Sciences.

01/10/2016-30/09/2018 Senior SNF Researcher at University of Lausanne in project IZLRZ1-163856/1 directed by François Allisson on the Swiss-Russian economist Nikolaj Sieber.

25/4-30/9/2016 Post-doctoral researcher at the Paris School of Economics, project on « Systemic Risk in the 1930s" (SYSRI-30) led by Prof. Angelo Riva, financed by the French Nation Research Agency ANR.

01/09/2014-30/04/2015 post-doctoral Fellow at the Center for the History of Political Economy of Duke University.

01/09/2013-30/08.2014 Yale University Department of Political Science, post-doctoral Fellow on project entitled 'Peasant farms and agricultural policies: the history of a paradigm of response'

01/07/2008-28/02/2011 Trainee Research Assistant University of Amsterdam and

01/03/2011-30/08/2012 at Utrecht University for NWO project on Observation in economics VIDI-grant 276-53-004

Grants, fellowships and awards

2021 – 2026 ERC Starting Grant "Leading the first data revolution in European agriculture: farm accountancy data and their impact 1870-1945" (1.5 million euros).

2018 – 2019 Marie Skłodowska Curie Individual Fellowship, Department of Management/ University of Venice/ Italy "Farm Accountancy Data as a Source for the History of European Agriculture" (171.000 euros).

2013 – 2014 Rubicon Grant of the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research, with the title: 'Peasant farms and agricultural policies: the history of a paradigm of response', project number 446-12-017, The Netherlands (71.000 euros).

Teaching activities

2021	Course convenor – Guided reading: The global economy: history of an idea, University of Vienna, Faculty of History
2018 – 2019	Course convenor – EC311 History of economics: how theories change, London School of Economics – Department of Economic History/ UK
2019	Course convenor – EH429 History of economics: performativity in economics, London School of Economics – Department of Economic History/ UK
2018	Teaching assistant – EH401 Economic History, London School of Economics – Department of Economic History/ UK.
2011 - 2012	Teaching assistant – History of Economic Thought, University of Utrecht/ The Netherlands

Organisation of scientific meetings

8/12/2018: co-organiser of workshop *Hidden Agencies: Economists and authoritarian governments*, University of Manchester. 12 participants

22/9/2017: co-organiser of international workshop *N.I. Sieber (1844-88), Swiss citizen: the first Russian Marxist?* Université de Lausanne. 8 participants.

28/02/2013: co-organiser of *Governing Agriculture: people, institutions, statistics*, Utrecht University, Workshop. 8 participants.

8-9/07/2011: co-organiser of *Agricultural Economics in the first half of the 20th century the Italian case in international perspective*, Utrecht University, Workshop. 8 participants.

Languages

Italian: native; English, French: C2; German: B2/C1; Russian: C1; Dutch A2.

Services to the profession

I have acted as referee for the following journals: *Storia Economica*, *Agricultural History Review*, *Agricultural History*, *Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, *Il pensiero economico italiano*, *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*.

I am co-founder and administrator of the HelvHet mailing list and of the VenHist mailing list

Networks and collaborations

I am associated researcher at the Institut d'Histoire Economique Paul Bairoch at Université de Genève, member of the *Narrative Science* network, and collaborator of the French ANR project TOFLIT18

Invited presentations (participation funded by the organisers)

- Agarwal, P., D'Onofrio, F., *Nation-building and the land question: the case of postcolonial India (1940s-1960s)*, " 'Land to the Tiller?' Hopes and Ruins of Agrarian Reform in Africa, Asia and the Middle East", Leibniz Zentrum Moderner Orient, 12-13 November 2020.
- D'Onofrio, F., Tyler, H., *From Red October to the Green Revolution: Wolf Ladejinsky as the salesman of the agrarian reform in Asia*, "Roads to knowledge--travel in the history of economics", University of Lausanne, Lausanne 11-14 June 2020.
- D'Onofrio, F., *An early data revolution: farm accountancy data in Europe 1870-1940*, "Data at the doorstep: Sites and Side Effects of Interrogation (c. 1800–1950)", University of Vienna, Vienna 23-25 January 2020.
- D'Onofrio, F., *Sieber and statistics*, "Early Marxism in Europe: Nikolay Ivanovich Sieber (1870s–1880s)", a conference organised with the support of ESSCA - School of Management and of the Swiss National Science Foundation, ESSCA Paris, 22 May 2019.
- D'Onofrio, F., Giunta delle Annone e Giunta d'Agricoltura: due diversi approcci al problema dell'informazione economica nella Napoli settecentesca, "La polizia dei grani. Mercati, regole e crisi

- di sussistenza nelle economie di Antico Regime” Workshop organised at the University of Foggia, 23-24 November 2018.
- f. D’Onofrio, F., *The tip of the iceberg: Social sciences and the revolution in Czarist Russia and the emigration*, “The social sciences and the authoritarian state” Workshop organised at the University of Quebec Montréal, CIRST, Montréal, 28 September 2018.
 - g. D’Onofrio, F., *Enquiries in the Kingdom of Italy: how facts entered the public sphere*, “Economics and Public Reason”, Université de Lausanne, Lausanne, 3-5 May 2018.
 - h. D’Onofrio, F., *Representations of Military Tactics in Art of War manuals of Early Modern Europe*, “Reasoning and Representation with Diagrams: History and Philosophy of Science and Technology in East and West” conference organized by the National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, 24-25 November 2016.
 - i. D’Onofrio, F., *The most “polite” nation on Earth: China’s mandarins in Naples*, “Naples Enlightenment: Economic Thought and Practice” seminar organized by the Leontieff Center of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences of Saint Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, 3-4 June 2016.

List of publications

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3519-3132>

Publications in peer reviewed journals

- 1) D'Onofrio, F. (2021), "Pubblica felicità, storia e Provvidenza: l'Economia Civile di Genovesi nel contesto dell'Assolutismo Illuminato", *Il pensiero economico italiano*, 29-1, pp. 27-45.
- 2) Allisson, F., **D'Onofrio, F. (corresponding author)**, Raskov, D., Shirokorad L. (2020), "[Marxism before Marxism: Nikolaj Sieber and the birth of Russian social-democracy](#)", *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 27-4, pp. 298-323.
- 3) D'Onofrio, F. and Serra, G. (2020), "Hidden agencies: Economists and authoritarian regimes in the 20th century", *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, 38(B), pp. 3-16.
- 4) D'Onofrio, F. and Serra, G. (2019), "Arthur Lewis and the Classical Foundations of 'Development': Economic History and Institutional Change", *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, 37A, pp. 157-164.
- 5) D'Onofrio, F. (2018) "La nazione meglio polita: buon governo e costituzione economica della Cina alla scuola di Genovesi" *Società e Storia*, 161, pp. 471-497.
- 6) D'Onofrio, F., (2017) "[Agricultural numbers: the statistics of the International Institute of Agriculture in the Interwar period](#)," in *Agricultural History Review*, 65-2, pp. 277-296.
- 7) D'Onofrio, F., (2017) "Micro-foundations of Italian agrarianism: Italian agricultural economists and fascism," in *Agricultural History*, 92-3, pp 369-396.
- 8) D'Onofrio, F., (2015), "[On the concept of 'Felicitas Publica' in Eighteenth Century Political Economy](#)", in *Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 37-3, pp. 449-471.
- 9) D'Onofrio, F., (2012), "[Making variety simple: agricultural economists in Southern Italy, 1907-1909](#)" in *History of Political Economy*, 44, pp. 93-113.

Monographs

D'Onofrio, F., (2016), *Observing Agriculture in Early Twentieth-Century Italy: Agricultural Economists and Statistics*, London and New York, Routledge.

Contributions to books

- 1) D'Onofrio, F., (2019) "Numeri falsi e numeri errati: le basi informative della politica granaria a Napoli nella seconda metà del secolo XVIII", in *La polizia de' grani: Mercati, regole e crisi di sussistenza nelle economie di Antico Regime*, A. Clemente, S. Russo (eds.), Roma: Gangemi, pp. 161-180.
- 2) D'Onofrio, F., (2013), « Les statistiques agricoles de l'Italie libérale et les porteurs d'intérêts (1907-1929) », in Danièle Fraboulet, Clotilde Druelle-Korn, Pierre Vernus (dir.), *Les organisations patronales et la sphère publique. Europe XIXe et XXe siècles*, Rennes, PUR, pp. 143-152.
- 3) D'Onofrio, F., (2007). "Giordano Bruno e la favola di Deucalione", in O. Catanorchi, D. Pirillo (eds.), *Sogni, favole, storie. Seminario su Giordano Bruno*, Pisa, Edizioni della Scuola Normale.

Working papers

- 1) D'Onofrio, F. and Mignemi, N. "Verum ex Numeris: the International Institute of Agriculture as centre of calculation of European agrarianism" (submitted to the *American Historical Review*)
- 2) D'Onofrio, F. and Tyler H., "From Red October to the Green Revolution: Wolf Ladejinsky as the salesman of the agrarian reform in Asia" for *History of Political Economy* supplement issue May 2022 (accepted for publication).
- 3) Charles, L., Daudin, G., D'Onofrio, F., *French Grain Trade and the International Market (1720 to 1820)*.

Research statement

Summary

After the defence of my dissertation in 2013, I have held five post-doc, research-only positions, to develop projects on my own or as part of research teams. My publication record reflects the variety of topics I addressed: through different methods and approaches, I use economists' work as a lens to interrogate the epistemic basis of coalition formation and economic policies in different historical contexts and periods. In September 2019, I started a new project, funded by a prestigious Marie Skłodowska Curie fellowship of the European Commission that will enable me to work on the economic and social history of the interwar period in a transnational perspective. My track record proves my ability to attract funding from research agencies and intend to continue exploring opportunities for external funding at the Faculté des Lettres, while ensuring that my research activity contributes to improve my teaching. .

Experience

My research so far followed three main directions held together by the interest for the political significance of economic ideas and practices:

1. By drawing on literature in the history of quantification, I addressed the topic of statistics and agricultural policy in early 20th century. To this topic I dedicated the monograph *Observing Agriculture in Early Twentieth-Century Italy: Agricultural Economists and Statistics* (Routledge 2016) and into several articles, among others 'Microfoundations of Italian Agrarianism: Italian Agricultural Economists and Fascism' (*Agricultural History*, 92, 2017, pp. 369-396). In my book, I explored the connections between the data and policy for Italian agricultural economists in the early decades of the 20th century. In their approach to agriculture, monographs in the tradition of Frederic Le Play, which relied heavily on accounting, had a crucial role alongside quantitative surveys of agricultural production (D'Onofrio, F., (2012), "Making variety simple: agricultural economists in Southern Italy, 1907-1909" in *History of Political Economy*, 44, pp. 93-113). An important reason was the emphasis on small-scale farming, which was at the time seen by many scientists and policy-makers as the engine of agricultural progress, especially after family farms proved their resilience in the Long Depression. I have continued working on the scientific bases of agricultural policies of the Interwar studying the systematic collection of farm accountancy data by international organisations in the Interwar period ("Agricultural numbers: the statistics of the International Institute of Agriculture in the Interwar period" in *Agricultural History Review*, 65, pp. 277-296).
2. By drawing on Skinnerian history of political thought, I have investigated the economic and political thought of the Neapolitan enlightenment, focusing in particular on Antonio Genovesi and his pupils. The influence of political economists on government – their ability to set goals and devise strategies – has been the main question I addressed in my 'On the concept of 'Felicitas Publica' in eighteenth century political economy' (*Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 37, 2015, pp. 449-471) and 'La nazione meglio polita: buon governo e costituzione economica della Cina alla scuola di Genovesi' (*Società e Storia*, 161, 2018, pp. 471-497). A new article on Genovesi is forthcoming in *Il Pensiero Economico Italiano* (1/2021)
3. Finally I have studied the case of early Russian Marxism, within the framework of the SNF project IZLRZ1-163856/1 directed by François Allisson on the Swiss-Russian economist Nikolaj Sieber. A co-authored article on the intellectual biography of Sieber and the beginning of Russian Social-democracy has been published in the *European Journal for the History of Economic Thought* (2020).

Current research

In September 2019, I received Horizon 2020, Marie Skłodowska Curie Individual Fellowship for the Farmaccounta project. Farmaccounta is dedicated to farm accountancy data as a source to assess the impact of the Great Depression on European agriculture. It combines economic history with an innovative emphasis on the life-cycle of data and data production. I look at a so far neglected source, namely the series of farm accountancy data statistics published by the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) between 1929 and 1939. Farm accountancy data statistics of the IIA contain interesting information on the effect of the depression on salaries, debt service and other costs incurred by farmers in a number of European countries. But they do not interest me only for what they reveal about the state of agriculture during the late 1920s

and 1930s. Instead, they are so valuable because they reveal the existence of a network of agrarian associations across Europe that tried to steer agricultural policies in agreement with their political and social agenda. Moreover, the data prove how crucial accounting was as the *lingua franca* of the agricultural “agro-industrial scientific society” that emerged in the first half of the 20th century. My enquiry shows that such data essentially shaped the effort that European agrarian groups made during the interwar period to present themselves as the voice of European agriculture in the international arena. They do not just legitimised the agrarianist discourse but enabled agrarian leader to construct a coherent agrarian interest.

While funding from the MSCA is supposed to continue until September 2021, solutions can be devised to make it compatible with other appointments if need be.

Relevant publications

The most relevant publication for the tenure track professorship in agrarian history are those mentioned above, in point 1 of the Experience section, namely:

- *Observing Agriculture in Early Twentieth-Century Italy: Agricultural Economists and Statistics* (Routledge 2016) and into several articles, among others
- ‘Microfoundations of Italian Agrarianism: Italian Agricultural Economists and Fascism’ *Agricultural History*, 92, 2017, pp. 369-396.
- “Agricultural numbers: the statistics of the International Institute of Agriculture in the Interwar period” in *Agricultural History Review*, 65, pp. 277-296.

Together they address the issue of the foundation of agricultural policy in the first half of the 20th century, laying the foundation for my current and future work on European agrarianism. They also outline the tools available to agrarian experts in order to apprehend and describe rural societies and how experts acted to transform rural societies, thus contributing to the “data revolution” that forms the object of the DATAREV project.

Future research

In the future, thanks to the ERC starting grant DATAREV, I intend to complete my work on European agrarianism and its accounting practices, by extending it backwards to the crucial period of the 1870s, and by collecting farm accountancy data on a Europe-wide scale. The project therefore combines history of quantification, social and economic history and can be of interest for colleagues at the Institute for Social and Economic History as well as colleagues who work in the history of quantification.

I plan to address new topics as well. In particular, I want to investigate the concept of global economy, how it made its appearance in the European 18th century and how it gained traction over the 19th century, especially after the Chrystal Palace exhibition of 1851 and the 1873 crisis, until it came to inspire the creation of international institutions, transnational lobbies and social movements during the 20th century. This theme relates well with the work done by others in the Faculté des Lettres of Unil in the field of global governance but also on the history of commercial exhibitions.

Part of the DATAREV project concentrates on the materiality of data and policy making by introducing into historiography concepts derived from political science and economics, such as “expert discourse” and Robert J. Shiller’s “narrative economics. In the future, I plan to apply for additional external funding from the Austrian Science Fund, the European Research Council, and other agencies in order to try these methods and concepts out by looking at expert contributions to the creation of the Euro in the 1980s and 1990s. Questions concerning justifications and legitimacy of the European Monetary Union acquired a peculiar relevance for debates in the European Union and historians have been relatively silent about them.

Publication Strategy

In the first two years, I plan to publish articles based on my current research on agrarian experts and agrarian statistics. The articles display a global history perspective on problems of agricultural history and are intended for global history and general history journals, such as the *Journal of Global History*. At the same time, I intend to reinforce my reputation in the history of economic thought by publishing an article in *History of Political Economy*, and expand into the history of quantification by publishing in STS journals (to be defined more precisely).

I also plan two books for the coming years. One, based on the FARMACOUNTA and DATAREV project will be dedicated to European agrarianism and, compatibly with the requirements of the EU on Open Access

publishing, is meant for a series in rural studies, ideally Yale University Press Agrarian Studies series. The other book, on the history of the concept of global economy is intended for students of international political economy, economic history and international relations.

Teaching statement

Summary

As a fellow at the Dept. of Economic History of the London School of Economics and as teaching assistant at the University of Utrecht, I have had the opportunity to teach and design graduate and undergraduate course. My experience ranges over interactive tutorials, seminars and frontal lectures. Through it, I have consistently aimed at leading students to question and reassess their received views of the past.

Experience

I have been a teaching assistant at the University of Utrecht in the History of Economics course led by Prof. Harro Maas in 2011 and 2012. During the intense weekly tutorials, I went with the students through the texts of economists of the past, helping them question the dominant narrative of an interrupted and linear progress of the economic science and situating the work of economists in a broader historical context.

At the Economic History Department of the London School of Economics, I have been teaching assistant for the graduate course in the economic history of South East Asia led by prof. Kent Deng and teaching assistant for the graduate introduction to Economic History led by Dr Debin Ma. Professor Deng's course was intended to familiarize students with economic development in non-European societies and relied on different theories of non-capitalist or peasant forms of production. Students found this course extremely difficult and the teaching assistant's task was extremely important in helping them grasp the ideas behind prof. Deng's approach.

Dr Ma's course presented the students with a number of models and up-to-date approaches to economic history and showed how they had been applied to the classic problems of economic history: the firm, growth, standards of living, monetary history, the industrial revolution and the Great Divergence, institutions and development, and so on. It thus introduced the students to the most advanced intellectual tools available to economic historians. I particularly enjoyed the challenge presented by this course, because it required inventive and creative ways to help students understand the significance of different abstract models for historical realities and positive students' evaluations rewarded my dedication.

At LSE, I also led the graduate and undergraduate courses in the history of economic ideas. The undergraduate course was particularly challenging given the diverse background of my students. By insisting on primary sources, I invited students to rethink what they knew about economics and pushed them to question their assumptions. The graduate course concentrated on the effect of economic ideas on economic performance. It struck – I believe – a difficult balance between theoretical ambitions and concrete case studies. The seminar structure, involved the students in animated discussions on the performativity of economic ideas.

In supervising bachelor and master students, I have been keen in preserving their autonomy, while insisting that they reflect on the problems of selecting their source and on the activity of writing.

Teaching philosophy

My experience persuaded me that managing the diverse background of students is a crucial part of the teacher's task, and that clear information concerning the course structure, the working load and the exam are key to a positive students' experience. An inclusive style of teaching and transparent instructions are, therefore, key objectives for me.

Considering the diverse background of history students, it is important that already at the undergraduate level they confront primary sources. At the same time, it is essential that the instructors provide them with broader interpretative coordinates to navigate the primary sources, both in terms of methods and general chronology. Reading in class during tutorials and detailed reading instructions (questions and schemes) often proved invaluable aids for the undergraduate students. Hands-on visits to LSE archives (carefully pre-arranged with the archivists) were extremely helpful with graduate students who struggled to see how economic ideas got constructed and came to affect the outside world.

Helping my students understand the motivations of the agents was the main goal of my courses, as it is one of the main drivers of my research. Especially as a teaching assistant in economic history, I found that presenting the students with simple simulations, asking them to make decisions in fictional situations bearing some similarities with historical events was very effective in letting them appreciate the constraints faced by

historical agents and their motives. As a teaching device, I highly value limited and strictly controlled simulation games.

Having experienced as a student, teacher and researchers so many different institutions of higher education, I am keenly aware of the importance of trusting the advice of colleagues and cooperating with them when designing and running courses in a new institution.

For the ERC project I will have to supervise two PhD students. I intend not only to foster their ability to conduct research but also to promote their socialization within academia, by pushing them to participate to conferences and workshops from the very beginning and build their own network of academic contacts.

References

Prof. Mary Morgan, London School of Economics and Political Science, m.morgan@lse.ac.uk

Prof. Giovanni Favero, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, gfavero@unive.it