

> Thursday, February 10th, 2022

12:00 - 13:30

IFLAME RESEARCH SEMINAR

**RESEARCH
SEMINAR**



EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY



ABSTRACT

REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITION: INHERITANCE CHANGE AND FERTILITY DECLINE

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France's demographic transition occurred a century before any other country's. We test Le Play's hypothesis that this demographic transition was triggered by the harmonization of inheritance practices after the French Revolution. After a series of laws implemented in 1793, the Loi de Nivôse, year II, imposed the equality principle, effectively abolishing impartible inheritance practices that excluded non-heirs from inheriting. In regions that moved from impartible to partible inheritance, we expect fertility to decline if parents face a quantity-quality tradeoff. In regions that removed the exclusion of women, we expect fertility to decline because of women's empowerment and delay in marriage ages. To test these hypotheses, we compile a harmonized map of inheritance practices before the French Revolution at a highly-disaggregate level. We distinguish between partible vs. impartible inheritance and practices that exclude vs. include women. To estimate the effect of these inheritance practices on fertility, we use genealogical data and exploit the 1793 harmonization in a difference-in-differences framework.



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