

Youssouf Merouani

PhD Candidate in Economic History

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Research Profile

I study how innovation emerges and who gets to innovate. I build large-scale patent and inventor microdata (390,000 French patents, 255,000 unique inventors, 1791–1900) and develop machine-learning pipelines—Computer Vision for handwritten records, fine-tuned LLMs, and bespoke probabilistic record linkage—to transform archives into analyzable data. My work introduces embedding-based methods to measure concepts that historical data typically cannot capture, such as quantifying patent influence without citation metadata. Current projects examine (i) the gender patenting gap (**JEH**, forthcoming), (ii) how collaboration reshapes inventors' technology trajectories (Job Market Paper), and (iii) the life-cycle demography of women inventors.

Education and Current Position

- 2021–now **PhD in Economic History (ongoing)**, Lund University, Sweden
Dissertation: “Pins and Pistons: Gender and Patenting during the French Industrialization”
Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Faustine Perrin and Prof. Dr. Josef Taalbi
- 2018–2020 **Master’s in Business Studies**, Södertörn University, Sweden
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Marcus Box

Working Papers

- Job Market Paper **Merouani, Y.** What Happens When Inventors Collaborate? Evidence from 19th-Century French Patents. [\[PDF link\]](#)
- In prep. **Merouani, Y.** A Demography of Married Women Inventors in the nineteenth century.

Selected Publications

- forthcoming Women Inventors: On the Origins of the Gender Patenting Gap. **Journal of Economic History**. (with Perrin, F.)
- 2024 Myths and Biases: An Exploration of Women’s Historical Patenting Activities. In C. Le Chapelain (ed.), **Nineteenth Century Businesswomen**, Springer. doi:[10.1007/978-3-031-56411-6-13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-56411-6-13) (with Perrin, F.)
- 2023 Surviving on the Island: Linking Firm Survival and Contextual Factors in a Peripheral Region. In M. Xheneti et al. (eds.), **Contextual Embeddedness of Entrepreneurship**, Edward Elgar, pp. 12–31. doi:[10.4337/9781035320684.00009](https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035320684.00009) (with Box, M., Larsson Segerlind, T. & Rytkönen, P.)
- 2022 Gender and the long-run development process: A survey of the literature. **European Review of Economic History**, 26(4), pp. 612–641. doi:[10.1093/ereh/heac008](https://doi.org/10.1093/ereh/heac008) (with Perrin, F.)

Technical Skills

- Machine Learning Transformer fine-tuning, semantic embeddings, ensemble modeling, zero-shot learning
- Computer Vision Handwritten-text extraction with vision-language models, OCR pipelines

Record Linkage	Probabilistic matching (Fellegi–Sunter), transformer-based entity matching, graph-based resolution
Data & Tools	Python (PyTorch, Pandas, vLLM), SQL, Git, OpenRefine
Languages	French (fluent), English (fluent), Swedish (native), Arabic (native)

Grants

- 2025–2026 NAISS Small Compute 2025 — *Record linking inventors in 19th-century France.* **PI.** HPC GPU allocation (May 2025–June 2026).

Conferences & Meetings

- 2025 World Economic History Congress, Lund. *Organizer, Presenter, Panelist*
- 2024 Workshop in Machine Learning, Lund. *Presenter*
- 2023 15th Swedish Economic History Meeting, Lund (*Organizer, Presenter*); European Historical Economics Society Conference, Vienna (*Presenter*); V. Kongress für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, Leipzig (*Presenter*)
- 2022 World Economic History Congress, Paris. *Presenter*
- 2021 Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business (RENT), Turku. *Presenter*

Refereeing

Cliometrica, Social Science History.

Academic Service

- 2024–2025 PhD Representative, Board of the Department of Economic History, Lund University.

References

Prof. Dr. Faustine Perrin (Primary Supervisor)
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Prof. Dr. Josef Taalbi (Co-Supervisor)
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