

## The Audrey Richards Annual Lecture in African Studies

Professor Keith Hart

### Waiting for Emancipation: The Prospects for Liberal Revolution and a Human Economy in Africa

Thursday 22 May 2014 at 5pm  
Rooms SG1 & SG2, Alison Richard Building, Cambridge  
Followed by a reception in the atrium

The informal economy, a concept Professor Keith Hart helped to coin in the 1970s, has taken over the world, largely as a result of neoliberal deregulation in recent decades. This lecture presents the idea of a human economy, in some ways a successor to the concept of the informal economy. Building on his early research in West Africa, Keith Hart reflects in this lecture on how and why Africa has been a symbol of global inequality.

Long after independence, Africans are still waiting for emancipation. Even so, Africa's development prospects in the twenty-first century are brighter than for a while. In the twentieth century, regional differences in the forms of African political economy converged on the model of agrarian civilization or the Old Regime. The antidote to the Old Regime is liberal revolution. Hart considers the role played by free trade and protection in the revolutions that made modern France, the United States, Italy and Germany, with particular reference to the latter's Zollverein (customs union). He examines the organization of international trade in Southern Africa, which includes the oldest extant customs union in the world. In conclusion, he reviews the prospects for greater integration of trade regimes in Africa as one path towards the development of a human economy.



**Professor Keith Hart** is currently co-director of the Human Economy Programme in the Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship at the University of Pretoria, and Centennial Professor of Economic Anthropology at the London School of Economics. An anthropologist by training, he contributed the concept of the informal economy to development studies and has written at length on money, including the collapse of the twentieth century's dominant form, national capitalism. He has taught in more than a dozen universities around the world, especially in Cambridge University where he was Director of the African Studies Centre. He runs a blog and website at [thememorybank.co.uk](http://thememorybank.co.uk) and is a founder and member of the fast-growing Open Anthropology Cooperative (OAC). His recent books include *The Human Economy: A Citizen's Guide* (2010) and *Economic Anthropology: History, Ethnography, Critique* (2011).

This event is sponsored by the A G Leventis Foundation

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