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PERSONAL INFORMATION: September 3, 1987, Citizenship: German

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES:

B.Sc. Economics, Mannheim University, 2010

MASTERS LEVEL WORK:

M.Sc. Economics, Goethe University Frankfurt, 2012

DOCTORAL STUDIES:

Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm University, 2012 to present

Thesis Title: “*Essays in Development and Political Economics*”

Expected Completion Date: June 2018

Thesis Committee and References:

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TEACHING AND RESEARCH FIELDS:

Primary fields: Development Economics, Political Economics

Secondary fields: International Trade, Economic History

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Spring 2017	PhD mini course: ArcGIS in Economics, Department of Economics, Lecturer
Spring 2017	PhD course: Analysis and Management of Big Data, Department of Economics, Teaching assistant for Professor David Strömberg
Spring 2015	PhD mini course: ArcGIS in Economics, Department of Economics, Lecturer
Spring 2014	PhD course: Macroeconomics II, Department of Economics, Teaching assistant for Professor John Hassler and Professor Per Krusell
Spring 2011	Bachelor course: Principles of Economics, Department of Economics, Goethe University, Teaching assistant for Professor Rainer Klump

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT:

2015-2016	Harvard University, Visiting Graduate Student
2012-2014	Research assistant, Institute for International Economic Studies
2011-2012	Research assistant, Goethe University Frankfurt, Professor Sebastian Krautheim
2011	Research assistant, Goethe University Frankfurt, Professor Helmut Gründl
2009-2011	Research assistant, Center for European Economic Research, Mannheim

REFEREEING EXPERIENCE:

Journal Development Economics

HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND FELLOWSHIPS:

2017	Fundación Ramón Areces Grant
2016	Mannerfelt Travel Grant, K&A Wallenberg Foundation
2014	Handelsbanken Jan Wallander and Tom Hedelius Foundation

JOB MARKET PAPER:

“[Property Rights, Resources and Wealth: Evidence from a land reform in the United States](#)”

Abstract: This paper compares the effectiveness of two alternative property rights regimes to overcome the Tragedy of the Commons. One regime is to distribute access rights under public ownership, as proposed by Samuelson, the other is to sell land to generate private ownership as proposed by Coase. However, as property rights are not randomly allocated, causal evidence on the relative effectiveness of these two regimes is scarce. I exploit a spatial discontinuity generated by the 1934 Taylor Grazing Act, which created 20,000 miles of plausibly exogenous boundaries that separated publicly owned rangeland from open-access rangeland. I combine these boundaries with data on the timing of private-property sales to jointly estimate the effects of public and private ownership on resource exploitation and income in a spatial regression discontinuity design. Using satellite-based vegetation data, I find that both property rights regimes increased vegetation by about 10%, relative to the open-access control. Census-block-level income data reveals that public ownership raised private household income by 13% and decreased poverty rates by 18%. To study mechanisms, I exploit variation in pre-reform police presence and panel data on farm values, and show that legal enforcement through police presence is a necessary condition for the positive and long-lasting effects of both regimes to arise.

RESEARCH PAPERS:

[“State repression, exit, and voice: Living in the shadow of Cambodia’s Killing Fields”](#)

(Joint with A. Madestam)

Abstract: Is state repression an effective strategy for silencing dissent and changing political beliefs? We address this question using evidence from history's most severe episode of state-led repression, the genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, to estimate the long-term effect of political violence on political behaviour. To establish causality, we rely on the Khmer Rouge's desire to create an agrarian society, moving forced labor to areas experiencing higher agricultural productivity. Using historic rainfall to generate exogenous variation in productivity shows that more people died in productive communes. Higher productivity under the Khmer Rouge leads to more votes in favor of the opposition over the authoritarian incumbent and increased support for democratic principles four decades later. At the same time, citizens become more cautious in their interactions with the local community as captured by lower participation in community organizations and less trust. Our findings suggest that state repression makes people more convinced about the need for opposing views but more careful in expressing them, resulting in a less personal and more competitive political environment.

[“The Effects of Migration and Ethnicity on African Economic Development”](#)

Abstract: Migration between countries has been shown to have positive effects on economic outcomes such as trade by fostering economic and cultural integration. In Africa, where ethnic identification is reasonably strong, omitting ethnic links between countries likely introduces a considerable bias in the estimates. Following the literature, I use past migrant clusters as instruments to show that migration in 1990 led to more bilateral exports for neighboring countries in the period 1989--2014. To account for the ethnic heterogeneity of African countries, I generalize this approach and use pre-colonial ethnic linkages between of home- and foreign-countries as an instrument for migration. The results suggest a downward bias when not accounting for ethnic heterogeneity. I discuss potential concerns of pre-colonial ethnic linkages and find no evidence of omitted variable biases caused by similar languages, preferences, or conflict. Ethnic connections instead facilitate trade, especially for groups that are excluded from government coalitions. The results are consistent with a model of international trade where cross border connections decrease the fixed costs of exporting.

[“Who Benefits from Free Education? Long-Term Evidence from a Policy Experiment in Cambodia”](#)

(Joint with M. Cheung, A. Madestam and J. Svensson)

Abstract: Free primary education is considered an important public policy to promote poor children's schooling. We explore a nationwide policy experiment in Cambodia in 2000 that abolished primary school fees to assess this claim. The paper investigates the effects of the program by combining differences in fee exposure across province, time, and cohort. One additional year of free education had no impact on children living in households below the consumption poverty line, but increased the likelihood of completing primary school, led to more years of schooling completed, and raised literacy for children in households above the poverty line. To ensure a causal interpretation of the heterogeneous effects, we exploit weather-induced agricultural volatility to estimate the difference across the consumption poverty line. Though poor and non-poor children attended school to same extent after the reform, poor children were less likely to progress and complete the higher grades. The findings are consistent with the idea that poor children and their parents are affected by the local community's educational norm, where income segregation may explain why poor students fail to take advantage of the policy change.

[“Eroding the incumbency advantage: Evidence from a wealth shock in the western United States”](#)

Abstract: I study the effect of a large wealth transfer to the rural population on their political preferences. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 placed 142 million acres under public ownership and documented the rights to access these lands for nearby farmers. These property rights on public land increased the wealth almost immediately since they were an accepted collateral and influenced the pricing of a farm. I focus on close elections and show that counties affected by this policy were initially more likely to elect a democratic congressman at a magnitude similar to the incumbency advantage. This preference for redistributive policy is completely eroded almost immediately after the policy took place. Focusing on congressional elections during the great depression, I show that the most likely explanation is a change in preferences away from redistribution.