

# Thesis Supervision

Bas Machielsen

# Who am I?

- ▶ Bas Machielsen
- ▶ Assistant Professor Applied Economics
- ▶ Research:
  - ▶ Economic History
  - ▶ Political Economy
  - ▶ Applied Microeconomics
- ▶ Strong focus on **causal inference**
- ▶ Research philosophy: case studies to illustrate a more general idea

## Topic suggestions

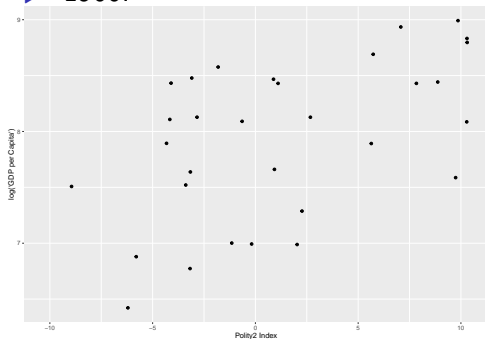
# Political Connections and Firms

- ▶ Research question outlines:
  - ▶  $D_i$  (Treatment): Politician in BoS/BoD of Firm
  - ▶  $Y_i$  (Outcome): Firm Performance
  - ▶ Challenge:  $D_i$  is not random, but correlated with a lot of  $X_i$  that influence  $Y_i$ .
  - ▶ Potential to use matching methods and/or IV
  - ▶ Lots of coding to create your dataset

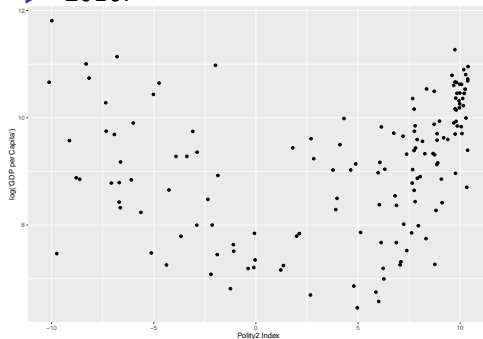
# Politics, Development & Growth

- ▶ Relationship between Autocracy/Democracy and Economic Well-Being
- ▶ Seminal papers:
  - ▶ Jones & Olken (2005): Do leaders matter?
  - ▶ Acemoglu et al. (2019): Does democracy cause growth?
- ▶ Potentially nicer to look at lower-level (within-country) data

▶ 1900:



▶ 2010:



# Persistence of Historical Institutions

- ▶ Set-up:
  - ▶ Outcome  $Y_i$  has “deep roots” caused by some  $D_i$  long ago
  - ▶ This  $D_i$  usually did not come to be randomly, but at the margin, it did
  - ▶ Example (Dell 2011): Spanish conquest of Latin America was bounded by mountainous areas
  - ▶ Comparing villages just within vs. just outside of the old imperial borders
- ▶ Other seminal papers:
  - ▶ Acemoglu et al. (2011), Occupied areas by Napoleon in Germany do better
  - ▶ Dell & Olken (2020): Positive development effects of extractive colonialism in Indonesia
  - ▶ Voigtlander & Voth (2012): Deep roots of persecution in Nazi Germany

# Your Thesis

- ▶ If you want to answer a research question using:
  - ▶ Microeconomic data (usually: individuals, municipalities, firms)
  - ▶ Microeconometric techniques (IV/OLS, RDD, DiD)
  - ▶ Faintly related to any of the subjects above, then I'd love to supervise your thesis!
- ▶ Other things I am interested in include:
  - ▶ Attempts at *automated data collection* using deep learning
  - ▶ Language and pictures as data (NLP and Computer Vision)

# References

- Acemoglu, D., Cantoni, D., Johnson, S., & Robinson, J. A. (2011). The consequences of radical reform: The French Revolution. *American economic review*, 101(7), 3286-3307.
- Acemoglu, D., Naidu, S., Restrepo, P., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). Democracy does cause growth. *Journal of political economy*, 127(1), 47-100.
- Dell, M. (2010). The persistent effects of Peru's mining mita. *Econometrica*, 78(6), 1863-1903.
- Dell, M., & Olken, B. A. (2020). The development effects of the extractive colonial economy: The dutch cultivation system in java. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 87(1), 164-203.
- Jones, B. F., & Olken, B. A. (2005). Do leaders matter? National leadership and growth since World War II. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120(3), 835-864.
- Voigtländer, N., & Voth, H. J. (2012). Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3), 1339-1392.