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 Evanston, IL 60208 Citizenship: Switzerland

Fields Primary: Development Economics, Political Economy
 Secondary: Economic History, Applied Microeconomics

Education Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University, 2022 (Anticipated)
 Dissertation: *Essays on Development Economics and Political Economy*
 Committee: Nancy Qian (Chair), Seema Jayachandran, Christopher Udry, Ameet Morjaria
 M.A., Economics, Northwestern University, 2018
 M.Sc. (*with distinction*), Economics, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2016
 B.A. (*summa cum laude*), Economics, University of Zurich, 2014

Fellowships & Awards Graduate Dissertation Fellowship, 2021 – 2022
 Distinguished Teaching Assistant, 2017

Grants Global Poverty Research Lab (Northwestern), \$2620 and \$1100

Teaching Experience Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University, 2017 – 2021
 Statistical Decision Analysis (Executive MBA)
 Practical Data Analytics with Advanced Methods (MBA)
 Law and Economics
 Econometrics
 Teaching Assistant, University of Zurich, 2013 – 2014
 Statistics

Other Experience Research Assistant, Prof. Nancy Qian, Northwestern University, 2018 – 2021

Job Market Paper “Political-Economic Causes and Consequences of Chinese Foreign Aid”
 Trillions of foreign aid have failed to achieve broad-based economic development. Are strategic motives by donor countries to blame? I study China, a prominent but controversial donor, to make progress on this question. I build a new and unique contract- and firm-level dataset to identify the mechanism behind a domestic political objective driving China’s aid allocation. I show that the Chinese government uses aid, that it gives to other countries, to generate employment for Chinese workers in response to local unrest in China. Local variation in unrest in China also influences the timing and recipients of aid. I exploit this variation in shift-share IV estimates of the effects of Chinese aid on recipient countries. I find positive, economically significant effects on levels of GDP, consumption, employment and diplomatic relations. The results show that domestic political objectives drive Chinese foreign aid. However, this does not undermine the benefits of Chinese aid to recipients, challenging the prevalent view that aid driven by strategic motives is necessarily ineffective or even harmful.

Other Papers**“Chinese Capital Flight to the US Real Estate Market” (with Joe Long)**

Wealthy foreign real estate buyers have increased rapidly over the past few decades. Of particular note are those from China; in 2016 alone, Chinese buyers were the source of over 100 billion USD of outflows to foreign real estate markets. This paper investigates the effect that these wealthy Chinese buyers have on local US housing markets. Using a novel instrument, the paper demonstrates that an increase in the share of wealthy Chinese buyers in a locality causes an increase in house price growth. As a result of this increased growth, local governments benefit from increased property tax revenues, but do not see a drop in sales tax revenues, suggesting that the vacancy rate for wealthy Chinese is not actually different from counterfactual buyers, while a drop in rental prices suggests that wealthy Chinese are more likely to rent out their houses and less likely to move into them.

“State-Building in Multi-ethnic Societies: Origins of National Identity in Tanzania” (with Ruth Carlitz and Ameet Morjaria)

Leaders throughout history have understood the importance of national identity for governing societies. The extent to which leaders can shape identity through policy however is an open question. Lack of sub-national variation in relevant policies, data paucity, and identification challenges have hindered progress. We confront these challenges in a context where the matter is especially pressing: the founding of new, multi-ethnic states in post-colonial Africa. We study the Ujamaa reforms in Tanzania in 1970–1981, which comprise one of the largest nation-building policy experiments. These reforms dramatically altered the nature of public education. On the one hand, primarily through villagization, which forced much of the country’s multi-ethnic rural population to live together in government administrated villages, the reforms expanded access. On the other hand, the content of the curriculum changed. We combine differences in intensity of villagization across districts with differences across school cohorts induced by the timing of the policy to identify the effect of Ujamaa education on citizens’ identification with the nation. We show persistent, positive effects on national identity as measured both by survey responses and ethnic intermarriage. Treated cohorts are also more likely to express positive views for a strong, Tanzanian central state and less likely to question state authority.

“The Long-Run Effects of Agricultural Productivity on Conflict, 1400–1900” (with Murat Iyigun, Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian)

This paper provides evidence of the long-run effects of a permanent increase in agricultural productivity on conflict. We construct a newly digitized and geo-referenced dataset of battles in Europe, the Near East, and North Africa from 1400–1900 CE and examine variation in agricultural productivity due to the introduction of potatoes from the Americas to the Old World after the Columbian Exchange. We find that the introduction of potatoes led to a sizeable and permanent reduction in conflict.

Work in Progress**“Chinese Firms and the CCP” (with Jaya Wen and Cheryl Wu)****“Digital Networks and the Diffusion of Political Movements” (with Utsav Manjeer)****“Agricultural Productivity, Inequality and the Size of Nations” (with Murat Iyigun and Nancy Qian)****Other Professional Experience**

Embassy of Switzerland, Bangkok, Thailand, 2015

Academic graduate intern in the diplomatic section (full-time)

Yukka Lab and finatris AG, Zurich, Switzerland, 2014 – 2015

Project manager in a financial technology start-up (part-time)

Dolder Corporate Finance, Zurich, Switzerland, 2012 – 2013

M&A project associate (part-time)

UBS, Zurich, Switzerland

International Wealth Management talent development program (full-time)

Languages

German (native), English (fluent), French (intermediate), Thai (beginner)

Programming

Stata, R, ArcGIS, Matlab (basic), Python (basic)

References

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