SUMMER IS A STRANGE TIME TO BE WORKING in the Oxford Economics Department. Rows of student desks sit empty, and each day rolls seamlessly into the next — the silence punctuated only by intermittent storms and, occasionally, by Test Match Special. But the summer stillness in Oxford hides a buzz of activity for CSAE, in many places around the world.

This summer, CSAE researchers have been running or preparing fieldwork in Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Malawi, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania. The topics covered by this fieldwork range widely — on firm performance, entrepreneurship, labour markets, microfinance, property rights, agricultural information and political economy — and the data collected will be analysed using many different theoretical and empirical methods.

This newsletter illustrates some of that diversity. Markus Eberhardt, Zheng Wang and Zhihong Yu summarise important new research about ‘intra-national protectionism’ in China; Adrienne LeBas describes recent research on gangs in Nairobi and Lagos; and Achyuta Adhvaryu and James Fenske present very interesting results on the effect of war on citizen engagement in Africa.

The 2013–2014 academic year will be another exciting one for CSAE. The Centre will continue to drive policy-relevant research across a large number of issues and a wide range of countries, not least through extensive involvement by CSAE researchers in both the M.Sc in Economics for Development and the M.Phil in Economics. Our seminar series this year promises much, and next March, the 2014 CSAE Conference will again provide a unique showcase for development economics research from around the world. We will also be privileged in October to welcome four Research Fellows from the Centre for Research in Economics and Business at the Lahore School of Economics, building on a new and exciting relationship between CSAE and CREB.

We welcome a number of new development researchers to Oxford this year — including Climent Quintana-Domeque, a new Oxford University Lecturer coming from the University of Alicante; and two Nuffield Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellows: Sam Asher, joining us from Harvard University, and Selma Telalagic, joining us from Cambridge University. We also welcome Olivier Sterck (Université Catholique de Louvain), who will work as a post-doctoral researcher on issues concerning HIV/AIDS. The calm of the Oxford summer will soon give way to the frenetic action of another Michaelmas term — with its seminars, its visitors, its new students, its lectures, and much conference planning and preparation. I look forward to being a part of it all again.

Simon Quinn is a Deputy Director at CSAE and a University Lecturer in Development Economics.
Over the past decades economists have followed the development of China with great interest, typically siding with one of two views on the sources and prospects of the Middle Kingdom’s growth. One camp argues for the existence of a ‘China model,’ variously defined but typically representing state control over key industries. A second camp views China on a trajectory from planned to socialist market to free market economy and emphasises the progress made so far. Our research informs this debate, focusing narrowly on market integration, one aspect of a potential transition to a market-led system.

A seminal study by Alwyn Young in 2000 compared data from China’s Socialist period with those well after the economic reforms began, and suggested that although China had opened up internationally, it had become internally fragmented. The author argued that any economic system where the state played a significant role in determining prices, investment and output did not represent a viable strategy for long-run prosperity and that China was in danger of falling off the ‘razor’s edge’ that marks the narrow path towards establishing a successful market economy. Work by Carsten Holz in 2006 rejected these findings on grounds of weak evidence for a causal link between reforms and market fragmentation and argued that based on his own analysis, the ‘razor’s edge’ may be more suitably described as a highway, along which China proceeded rather comfortably.

A common factor in these and other studies of inter-regional trade barriers in China is that they try to identify aggregate and implicit measures of protectionism. In the absence of significant regional protectionism, one would for instance expect regional specialisation in production and/or price convergence across provinces to be detectable in the data, which is the focus of analysis in the existing empirical literature. Our study is the first to use firm-level data to investigate market integration in China, employing information on the public disclosure of ‘illegal’ drug...
discrimination we detect in our sample of all state-owned and all medium- and large non-state firms in China’s pharmaceutical industry over the 2001-2005 period. If we assume that all firms sell their drugs in all 31 provinces, then, in the absence of protectionism, the share of local firms being disclosed should be in line with the relative size of the local pharmaceuticals industry (the 45 degree line). As can be seen, local firms on average get disclosed disproportionately less than non-local ones.

Since the assumption that all firms sell their products in all provinces is difficult to maintain, we carry out our regression analysis using additional information on compulsory advertisement licences available for a subsample of provinces: Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Inner Mongolia. The

Figure 1 – Disclosure and industry size in all 31 provinces
first two host the largest number of pharmaceutical firms and are among the most developed regions in the country. In contrast, Inner Mongolia is a peripheral province characterised by mining and livestock breeding.

Controlling for province-level idiosyncrasies and a host of other firm-level factors we find that the disclosure probability is 9-13% higher for non-local firms. Investigating whether this form of protectionism changed over time we find higher discrimination in the more recent sample years, in line with Young’s findings at the aggregate level.

In further analysis we attempt to provide evidence for three specific motivations for discrimination against non-local firms. Using the same sample as above we first test the influence of government affiliation (lishu) on disclosure probability. The lishu system represents a uniquely Chinese institution where the ‘iron fist’ of the planned economy meets the ‘invisible hand’ of the market. A lishu relationship can be at various levels of government, is distinct from ownership status, and entails government control as well as subsidies and support. Existing research on the economic implication of these relationships is somewhat mixed, finding improved access to credit for higher-level affiliated firms in one study and improved firm performance upon relinquishing of the affiliation in another. Our own analysis suggests that local firms with an affiliation to the provincial government are under-represented among disclosed firms, whereas non-local firms of the same affiliation are targeted disproportionately. We interpret this finding as pointing to the strong incentives for provinces to compete with each other.

Provincial competition is also investigated more explicitly in its relationship with disclosure patterns: FDAs might discriminate more readily against firms from provinces with a large pharmaceutical industry, in order to hit the rival province’s tax revenues. Using data for firms and disclosure in all 31 provinces we conclude that this channel indeed seems to be driving the patterns of discrimination.

A final motivation for discrimination against non-local firms relates to the importance of the pharmaceutical industry for the disclosing province: if there are only a small number of local drug firms which do not create substantial tax revenue then provincial FDAs may feel less inclined to protect them and thus safeguard their local fiscal base. Again using the full sample of firms we find evidence for selective discrimination along these lines. For both the provincial competition and fiscal base motives we conclude that the increase in non-local discrimination is economically significant along the channels described.

Since the mechanism of discrimination we detect points to relatively generic institutional roots of protectionism, we believe these findings have wider validity beyond the pharmaceutical sector. One policy implication is that reducing intranational barriers perhaps poses a greater challenge than lowering international barriers since the former typically requires much deeper and wide-ranging domestic reforms, both economic and political.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS
Markus Eberhardt is a lecturer in economics at the University of Nottingham and a Research Associate at CSAE. His research interests are related to productivity and knowledge creation and diffusion at the macro and micro levels.
Zheng Wang is an assistant professor in economics at the University of Nottingham Ningbo Campus. His research is primarily focused on international trade, development and political economy topics.
Zhihong Yu is a lecturer in economics at the University of Nottingham and a Research Fellow at CESifo, Munich. His research is mainly on international trade and industrial organisation.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH
Informal order and state rivals in Nairobi and Lagos.

One of the puzzles in development is why similarly designed policies and institutions yield very different results across contexts. We see this in development interventions, where programmes proven to be successful in randomised trials in one setting fail to ‘port’ to another location. Government policies often have outcomes that are surprising from the standpoint of formal design. Both economists and political scientists have turned to informal institutions as one potential cause of this disjuncture between design and results. One emerging strand of research, for instance, examines how ethnic clientelism in Africa shapes outcomes as various as voting, public goods investment, and welfare distribution. Clientelism is an institution, however, that tends to make sense: politicians remain in power by using it; clients receive benefits by acceding to it (even if those benefits may be societally suboptimal). But are all informal institutions similarly ‘functional’? Is this why they are difficult for states to displace?

In a recent article, I look at the organisational manifestations of informal order in slums in Nairobi, Kenya, and Lagos, Nigeria. Or, more simply: gangs. Scholars working in urban Latin America have sometimes found that urban gangs play ‘shadow state’ roles, providing services such as loans and contract enforcement. These criminal organisations may also provide zones of predictable governance in otherwise dangerous cities. In Africa, urban militia and other informal ‘specialists in violence’ have an additional quality that might predispose them to rootedness and even accountability. In both Nairobi and Lagos, gangs or militia often graft themselves atop – and legitimize themselves with reference to – ethnicity. But does ethnicity constrain violent organisations from predation? Do militia and other violent organisations in African cities actually ‘function’ in the sense of providing goods for the communities they ostensibly represent?

The article’s unsurprising answer is that it is complicated. The links between militia, less organized gangs, and local communities have both positive and predatory components. To make this more concrete, the photos above accompanying this article were taken in Agege, a low-income neighbourhood in Lagos that includes areas of informal settlement. As one can see, doorposts are marked with different symbols: a crown on each door in one area; peacocks endemic
in another. These markers are house numbers, useful for local residents, but they also mark organisations’ territories. In the article, I underline that these local block-level associations and vigilante groups, often dismissed by outsiders as merely criminal and predatory ‘area boys’, often have complicated links to local communities – and provide community goods, such as security and street numbering – even as they engage in crime and demand protection rents. Formal ethnic militia can also play shadow state roles. In several parts of urban Nigeria, militias were initially paid by merchants for the provision of security, and some were even celebrated in song and theatre. Public opinion data from slums in both cities seems also to support the notion of violent organisations as potential providers of benefits: slum dwellers report higher degrees of perceived safety than other urban residents, even as they express greater tolerance for the use of violence ‘in support of a just cause’.

The story is still more complicated, though. Formal ethnic militias have proven attractive targets for use by politicians. In these cases, the notion of ethnic self-defence has typically fallen away, and organisations have turned more predatory and violent vis-à-vis local communities. Communities find it more difficult to differentiate between ordinary criminals and ‘real’ (read good) militia members, and popular support for these vigilante groups becomes more mixed. In some cases, state attempts to crack down or eliminate violent organisations can reinforce predatory tendencies. The Kenyan government’s violent repression of Mungiki, a Kikuyu ethnic militia and criminal organization, changed the structure of the organisation and divorced it still further from its supposed ethnic constituency.

How does this kind of qualitative work enhance our understanding of how formal and informal institutions interact? This article was written at an interesting crossroads. In 2010, I had just started new work in Nigeria as part of the IIG (Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth) initiative. This would eventually lead to both large-scale survey research across urban Nigeria and an ongoing panel survey in Lagos. But I was still very rooted in semi-ethnographic research that I had started in Nairobi slums in 2007. What united these two projects was an interest in the rule of law: in Kenya, I wanted to understand why elections remained so very violent; in Nigeria, I wanted to understand what makes people willing to pay taxes. Specialists in violence seemed, to my mind, quite central to both of these questions.

In our paper ‘Beyond the fiscal contract: Attitudes toward taxation in urban Nigeria,’ an earlier version of which is available as CSAE Working Paper 2013-02, my coauthor Cristina Bodea (Michigan State University) and I tried to incorporate the insights from this qualitative research on gangs into our analysis of attitudinal data from 11 Nigerian cities. Proxying for these kinds of informal institutions is difficult. Respondents are often unwilling to respond to direct questioning about violent organizations. But we found that individuals were far less likely to express belief in a citizen obligation to pay tax when they reported access to community club goods, including vigilante group protection. Individuals without access to these state substitutes were more likely to both believe in a citizen obligation to pay tax and to actually pay taxes.

It would seem, therefore, that states face challenges in extending authority and securing societal compliance in areas where state rivals are well-embedded. How to counter this? Repression, as the case of Mungiki in Kenya suggests, is both ineffective and costly in terms of human lives. It generates local grievances that make communities even less likely to turn toward the state for services and protection, which has certainly been the case in Nairobi’s slums. Some Nigerian authorities have hit upon a different strategy. In the absence of strong tax enforcement agencies, many local authorities have instituted what might be seen as varieties of tax farming, in which they piggy-back upon or borrow the capacity of existing non-state actors. Some of these, such as unions and market associations, are uncontroversial. But both slum residents and tax officials say that expanded tax collection has also relied on the muscular efforts of semi-criminal elements, such as area boys and bus rank touts. This is a controversial step for states, but it may be that cooptation of rivals is a surer path to expanded state control than direct confrontation.

TO FIND OUT MORE

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Adrienne LeBas is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government at American University, Washington DC.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH


The economics of HIV

We welcome this term a new post-doctoral colleague, Olivier Sterck, above, who joins us from the Université Catholique de Louvain. Olivier had already studied at CSAE under James Fenske for part of 2012, so knows us well.

Olivier will be working as part of an innovative research collaboration developed with and funded by a relatively new British organisation, the Rush Foundation, and including Imperial College, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Harvard University, and the Blavatnik School of Government in addition to CSAE. The Rush Foundation's overall objective is to fund 'disruptive ideas' for tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic more effectively. They came to us with a view to developing a programme of policy-oriented research which would be of direct value to African decision makers as well as the donor community, based on the concern that the financing of the response to the pandemic will increasingly fall to African governments as donor funds flatline and the numbers of people on antiretroviral therapy grow. In particular, they were interested in CSAE's good working relationships with African finance ministries and others responsible for overall allocation of resources. Olivier has done a good deal of work on behavioural aspects of HIV, notably in Burundi, and we are very pleased to have him join us to work on this project.

An initial workshop in June 2012 showed a good deal of enthusiasm for co-ordinated work to find a good basis for balancing expenditure on prevention with expenditure on treatment, as well as to investigate smarter ways of tackling both aspects. Paul Collier suggested using a 'stocks and flows' model along the lines of a debt sustainability model to assist in optimising the balance between treatment and prevention, and this gained general acceptance. (As Professor Happy Siphambe, a leading academic from Botswana, put it at the workshop, we needed to be 'turning off the tap rather than mopping the floor'.)

Each institution funded by the Rush Foundation will lead on a different but related component of this work. Marcel Fafchamps, Richard Manning and Olivier himself have been involved in further meetings to develop the project concept in more detail.

This project will also be pioneering a new collaboration within Oxford between CSAE in the Department of Economics and the Blavatnik School of Government (BSG). Paul Collier, who already spans both CSAE and BSG, is the Principal Investigator. A Senior Research Fellow is being recruited by BSG to take overall responsibility for the project, given its strong link to policy. Olivier will work on the project for a three-year period in CSAE, and BSG will also be recruiting at least one Research Officer with detailed country knowledge. This is very much in line with the synergetic relationship that we see between the high-quality research at CSAE and the exceptional opportunity that BSG provides to address policymakers directly on the lessons emerging from such research.

Olivier’s interests include sports (running, cycling), as well as piano and composition. We are very pleased to have him in the CSAE team.
In a recent working paper we study the impact of exposure to violent conflict during childhood on political beliefs, attitudes, and engagement in Africa. We pursue this line of inquiry for two reasons. First, beliefs and political engagement matter for a wide range of political and economic outcomes. It is important, then, to understand how Africans’ political views are formed, and what pressures influence their political participation. Second, while recent studies have demonstrated that children who live through war are less healthy, less educated, and have worse labour market outcomes as adults, the effects of war on preferences, beliefs, and similar variables have not received the same attention. Moreover, research has shown that children growing up in adverse circumstances are surprisingly psychologically resilient. It is not obvious, then, whether exposure to conflict breeds distrust, factionalism, or disengagement from the political system — channels through which violence could beget violence.

To answer this question, we combine data on political engagement and attitudes from the 2005 Afrobarometer, a collection of nationally representative surveys from 18 sub-Saharan African countries, with spatial data from the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) on wars and their intensity since 1945. Using a difference-in-differences approach, we find that exposure to war for children between ages 0 and 14 has little effect on later-life political engagement or attitudes.

In order to show that our results are not due to misspecification, endogenous selection, or measurement error, we take several approaches. We show that our results are robust across a variety of specifications. We aggregate measures of political attitudes and engagement using several alternative methods, including mean effects and factor scores. We instrument for our principal measure of war exposure using alternative data sources. We show that our results cannot be explained by failings of either the Afrobarometer or PRIO data. To show that selective migration out of war-affected regions does not explain our findings, we remove areas that are likely destinations for migrants, we remove individuals whose locations do not match their ethnic identities, and we re-define treatment at country-by-year and ethnicity-by-year levels that do not permit out-migration. Finally, we demonstrate that other studies that have quantified the effects of exposure to war have, with a few exceptions, found results that are not much larger than our own.

Our findings have two principal implications. First, individuals are indeed resilient in their political beliefs and engagement. For most outcomes, we find that initial effects dissipate with age, becoming negligible in later adulthood. In addition to being consistent with studies from psychology on resilience after traumatic events, this pattern of results can be understood in the context of the literature on economic shocks. Existing studies have found that both economies and individuals recover quickly from the destructive effects of conflict. Second, existing studies of war exposure have focused on the most affected groups within populations exposed to war. Our
and other health shocks that have reduced their adult heights. Similarly, both exposure to war and participation as child soldiers disrupt children’s schooling and hence their later labour market outcomes. By contrast, while exposed children have experienced psychological problems, they are resilient in their capacity to re-integrate.

There are two major limitations to these studies. First, they are largely context-specific, and so are effectively an accumulation of case studies. Second, by focusing on the most affected sub-samples within larger populations, they often over-state the typical impact on the treated population. Further, this area of study has largely neglected political outcomes. We are able to overcome many of these difficulties. Our data cover several countries, with a consistent measure of war exposure that is independent of local context, and a spatial measure which allows us to consider the entire affected population. Further, our data permit us to look at a rich set of potential political outcomes.

The second area to which we contribute focuses on long-run recovery from conflict. At the macroeconomic level, adverse effects of war can be persistent, though there are many cases in which societies recover very quickly. At the microeconomic level, in addition to the studies cited above, several recent papers have shown that war negatively affects physical and mental health, human capital accumulation, and other measures of welfare. Exposure to violence shapes individuals’ later preferences and behaviour. Exposed individuals face trouble gaining income and are left poorer. They shift towards less-risky, worse-performing assets, and spend less.

A sub-set of this research has focused on political outcomes. These studies provide a set of results that are counterintuitive and, in some cases, conflicting. Individuals who are exposed to crime, war and genocide often have greater levels of political participation, vote more often, and contribute more to public goods. Conversely, trust, inter-ethnic cooperation, and membership in associations decline during the course of a war, although social capital recovers rapidly afterwards.

This research area remains small, and we contribute new evidence to it. Most studies of this type limit their investigation to the survivors of a single conflict. Our broad sample helps confront concerns about generalisations. Dealing with multiple outcomes in one paper allows us to resolve some of the apparent contradictions in the research literature. Because we measure many individuals long after their exposure to war, we can measure recovery over time. Further, the effects on children’s political outcomes may differ substantially from effects on adults, a gap our study attempts to fill. We find — consistent with previous results that catch-up occurs quickly after war ends — that political attitudes and behaviours are not typically altered permanently by war exposure.

TO FIND OUT MORE

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS
Achyuta Adhvaryu is an Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business.

James Fenske is the Deputy Director at CSAE and a University Lecturer in Economic History at Oxford.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH
War, resilience and political engagement in Africa, by Achyuta Adhvaryu and James Fenske CSAE Working Paper 2013-08
Researchers at CSAE and the Center for Research on Economics and Business (CREB) at the Lahore School of Economics are partnering on joint work to research economic development and poverty reduction in Pakistan. This work has been supported by a grant from the British Academy’s International Partnerships programme, along with financial support from the Lahore School of Economics.

Former Oxford doctoral student Ginger Turner is working with CREB Research Fellows Uzma Afzal and Farah Said on the impact of the 2010 floods on decision making. Using survey methods and behavioural games in flood affected areas of Punjab, the team measured risk taking behaviour; willingness to contribute towards public goods; and household decisions in insurance choice investment in flooded and nearby, similar unaffected villages. The results will help to shed light on long-term determinants of individual decision making.

Kate Vyborny, a DPhil student at Oxford, is working with Lahore School’s Dean of Economics, Azam Chaudhry, and CREB Research Fellow Haseeb Ashraf, on patronage structures in rural Punjab and their effect on the delivery of government assistance. As a part of this collaboration, the research team has collected primary panel data on these relationships and a range of government services and programmes across Punjab, including cash transfer programmes; scholarships and free textbooks; and building and repair of local infrastructure. Preliminary findings suggest that patronage relationships are prominent in Punjab, but their importance is reduced when households have better access to opportunities outside their village, through motorway connections to larger cities. Results also suggest that politicians are successful in directing assistance to members of their own clan, but ongoing research is testing whether this varies by programme design. For example, formalized targeting schemes might reduce this effect, or programmes which deliver cash or goods to people through schools and other institutions might be less affected than programmes where assistance is delivered directly to households. The results will be informative for policymakers in aid institutions and developing countries who are considering a choice of programmes for the poor, and how best to deliver such programmes effectively.

Two new projects are also in the design phase as part of this international collaboration. CSAE Deputy Director Simon Quinn and Kate Vyborny, along with CREB director Naved Hamid and Research Fellows Hammad Ahmed and Asha Gul, are designing a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in collaboration with the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) to study the impact of incentives offered by donors to community NGOs across all regions of Pakistan, in order to help donors to engage more effectively with NGOs implementing anti-poverty programmes. The results of this research will be relevant for donors channelling assistance through NGOs all over the developing world. The second project involves Marcel Fafchamps (CSAE Co-Director), Simon Quinn, Giovanna d’Adda (University of Birmingham), and Farah Said and Uzma Afzal from CREB. This work is funded by DFID through the iiG research programme and the researchers are designing an RCT to compare the effectiveness of micro-savings and micro-loans as means for households to manage risk. This research will be supported in Pakistan by two Oxford DPhil students, Rachel Cassidy and Pavel Luengas-Sierra.
The British Academy International Partnerships programme discussed on the previous page has also supported exchange visits between CSAE and CREB, to develop these and other projects and to build the capacity of Lahore School early-career researchers. Simon Quinn and Kate Vyborny from the CSAE have both spent time working on these projects and participating in fieldwork in Lahore. We are delighted that four Research Fellows from the Lahore School will be visiting the CSAE during October to present preliminary findings and to attend lectures and seminars.

Hamna Ahmed is a Senior Research and Teaching Fellow at CREB. She holds a Master’s degree in Economics from the University of Warwick. Her research interests include development economics, education and international trade.

Uzma Afzal is a Senior Research and Teaching Fellow at CREB. She holds an M.Phil in Economics from the Lahore School of Economics. Her areas of interest are economic development, health economics, education, and political economy.

Asha Gul is a Junior Research and Teaching Fellow at CREB. She holds an M.S. with distinction in Economics from the Lahore School of Economics; her master’s thesis used panel data to analyse the impact of migration on asset accumulation by rural households in Punjab. Her current research focuses on migration and social mobilization.

Farah Said is a teaching and research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Economics and Business at the Lahore School of Economics. Farah completed her MSc in Financial Economics from the Said Business School, University of Oxford. Farah’s research has included work on the pattern of migration and the determinants of poverty in Pakistan.
CSAE 2014 call for papers

CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA
St Catherine’s College, Oxford - 23–25 March 2014

Keynote speaker
Leonard Wantchekon, Professor of Politics at Princeton University.

Call for papers
Papers addressing economic analysis of the broad issues relevant for economic development in Africa are invited for the CSAE 2014 conference. Papers on countries other than those in Africa are welcome, providing they deal with issues central to African development.

Please note that due to the high demand to present papers at this conference, we will only be considering full drafts of papers for 2014. Please ensure your paper also includes a short abstract.

All papers for consideration must be submitted via the online submission site at http://www.csa.eox.ac.uk/conferences/

Funding
There is a limited budget to fund African presenters who are currently living and working in Africa, who will be travelling from Africa to the conference. Funding will cover flights, accommodation, and conference registration costs only.

Detailed submission instructions can be found online at http://www.csa.eox.ac.uk/conferences/

Deadline for submissions
Thursday 31 October 2013 midnight

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The Centre for the Study of African Economies carries out economic research with a particular focus on Africa. Its aim is to improve economic and social conditions in developing countries.

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