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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, Tilburg University	2019-2024
M.Sc. Economics, Tilburg University <i>with Distinction</i>	2017-2019
M.Sc. Specialized Economic Analysis, Barcelona School of Economics <i>with Distinction</i>	2013-2014
M.Sc. Management, Pompeu Fabra University	2012-2013
B.A. Economics, Boğaziçi University	2007-2011

REFERENCES

Prof. Bilge Erten
Northeastern University
b.erten@northeastern.edu

Prof. Burak Uras
Williams College
bu1@williams.edu

Prof. Christoph Walsh
Tilburg University
cbtwalsh@uvt.nl

VISITING POSITIONS

Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September–December <i>Visiting Scholar</i>	2023
Department of Economics, Harvard University, January–July <i>Visiting Scholar</i>	2022

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Development Economics, and Macroeconomics

WORKING PAPERS

Convicts and Comrades: Coerced Labor's Impact on Early Labor Unions

Job Market Paper

Tilburg University CentER Best Graduate Student Paper Award, 2023

Abstract: What role did the use of convict labor play in the establishment of early labor unions? This paper introduces a model where certain firms employ convict labor, reproducing the empirical patterns observed in the data. Workers face reduced wages and migrate to other firms, while firms see heightened profits, exacerbating income inequality. In response, workers organize, form unions, and initiate strikes. The calibrated model highlights the role of unions in narrowing income disparities. Empirically, I use an instrumental variable approach to demonstrate that, at the turn of the 20th century, convict labor significantly boosted union growth, strikes, and membership. This influence has persisted as regions with a history of heavy dependence on convict labor continue to display higher rates of union membership in the present day. These findings provide the first evidence of the role of coerced labor in the formation and persistence of labor unions.

The Legacy of School Shootings: The Long-Term and Intergenerational Effects (*submitted*)
Tilburg University CenterER Best Graduate Student Paper Award, 2022

Abstract: In recent decades, countless US students have been on school grounds during shootings. This paper examines the long-term and intergenerational effects of school shootings on earnings, educational attainment, and geographic mobility. I find that exposure to a school shooting decreases survivors' hourly wage by 20.8% and that this effect persists over their lifetime. Furthermore, I show that the effect of school shootings lasts beyond the initially treated and has detrimental effects on their children. I find that having shooting-exposed parents decreases children's hourly wage by 18.8%.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

Unions and Firms

with Burak Uras

Abstract: How do labor unions and firm size dynamics co-evolve in the context of institutional and technological change? This paper offers the first quantitative macro analysis explaining the interplay between labor unions and firm size distribution in the United States. It highlights the pivotal institutional and technological factors driving firm growth and union formation. Building on historical facts regarding the co-evolution of firm size and labor unions, we argue that low-cost factor innovation by large-scale firms undermines workers' conditions, thereby stimulating the formation of unions. In our model, increasing returns to scale, associated with factor-cost-reducing innovation, endogenously sets a minimum firm size threshold for engaging in innovation. This threshold, influenced by institutional and technological factors, impacts the proportion of innovative firms in the economy. The relationship between the measure of innovators and labor unions exhibits a non-monotone pattern: while at low- and high ends of innovation intensity of the economy, labor unions cease to exist, unions prevail at intermediate levels of innovation intensity. This theoretical model aligns with the empirically observed trends of union prevalence over the century. It enables the quantitative identification of significant institutional and technological shifts that have contributed to firm growth, playing a crucial role in the fluctuating presence of labor unions.

Secularist Reform, Human Capital, and Polarization: Islam and Ataturk's Turkey

with Alice Dominici and Quang Phúc Phùng

Abstract: How does secularization impact a society's human capital development and political polarization? How is this influenced by local religious diversity? We delve into Ataturk's reforms in Turkey, which sought to reduce religious institutions' influence on politics, education, and daily life. We introduce a two-period OLG model in which the previous generation's political tastes guide their children's education decisions, affecting future human capital. Religious reforms shock these preferences, perpetuating polarized views. Empirically, we find that districts with higher pre-reform religiosity enroll fewer girls in secular schools. Next, using mosque locations from before the republic, we show how adopting the Turkish call to prayer magnifies societal polarization in electoral results. Given Turkey's distinctive context, this paper offers novel insights into how religious diversity interacts with transformative, growth-oriented reforms—under Ataturk's secularization agenda.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Tilburg University CenterER Best Graduate Student Paper Award	2023
NWO-TISEM Incentive Grant	2023
Tilburg University CenterER Best Graduate Student Paper Award	2022
TISEM International Research Visit Scholarship	2022

SKILLS

Programming/Statistics: R, STATA, Python

Languages: Turkish (Native), English (Bilingual Proficiency), Dutch (Limited Working Proficiency), Spanish (Elementary Proficiency)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Seminar and Conference Presentations

2023 (*incl. scheduled*): Northeastern University, Williams College Brown Bag Seminar, University of Massachusetts Amherst Internal Seminar, LSE/Bocconi Economic Analysis Seminar, Development & Economic History Research Group (Tilburg University), Cologne FRESH Meeting 2023, ECONtribute WIMLEEH Workshop (Bonn University), Warwick PhD Conference, ENTER Jamboree (Mannheim University), HEC Paris Economics PhD Conference, Workshop on the Economics of Crime (LSE/Northeastern)

2022: North American Summer Meeting of the Econometric Society; Harvard University (Seminar in Labor Economics), IZA Summer School in Labor Economics, Toulouse University (Applied Microeconomics Seminar), Tilburg University (Applied Microeconomics Seminar and Graduate Students' Society Seminar Series)

2021: Barcelona School of Economics (Labor Economics Summer School), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (ENTER Network Seminar), Tilburg University (Economics Department Internal Seminar and Behavioral and Experimental Group Seminar), Université Libre de Bruxelles ECARES (Economics Department Internal Seminar)

2020: Successfully Navigating Your Economics PhD Mentoring Workshop organized by Jennifer Doleac and Maya Rossin-Slater, Tilburg University (Graduate Students' Society Seminar Series)

Referee Service

Journal of Macroeconomics

Review of Economics of the Household

Services

Co-founder, Development Economics and Economic History Research Group <i>Formerly Economic History and Political Economy Reading Group</i>	2021 - 2024
Faculty Council Member, TiU International	2021 - 2022
Seminar Organizer, European Network for Training in Economic Research	2020 - 2022
Seminar Organizer, Graduate Students' Society	2020 - 2022
Ph.D. Representative, Graduate Students' Society	2019 - 2020
Mentor, Graduate Students' Society	2019 - 2023
Student Representative, Graduate Students' Society	2017 - 2019

TEACHING

Ph.D. Microeconomics 3, Tilburg University	2020 - 2023
B.Sc. Public Sector Economics, Tilburg University	2020 - 2023
B.Sc. Macroeconomics for EOR, Tilburg University	2020 - 2021
Ph.D. Microeconomics 1, Tilburg University	2019 - 2020
B.Sc. Thesis Supervision, Tilburg University	2019 - 2024

WORK EXPERIENCE

Business Analyst, Sharp Electronics	2014 - 2017
Research Assistant for Gabrielle Fack, Barcelona School of Economics	2013 - 2014