ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRATIZING STATES

Leonardo R. Arriola
Assistant Professor
larriola@berkeley.edu

Chelsea Johnson
PhD Candidate
cbj@berkeley.edu

Department of Political Science
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-1950

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Abstract: Although one in five elections around the world has been marred by physical violence since the third wave of democratization, scholars have yet to systematically investigate these cross-national patterns or to identify the sources of variation. This article examines the relationship between patronage politics and electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies — the set of countries most susceptible to such violence. Despite the adoption of formal democratic institutions in these countries, patronage continues to serve as an informal mechanism for accommodating the demands of political and economic elites. Drawing on an original cross-national dataset of electoral violence from 1985 to 2005, the authors show that the corruption associated with patronage politics can inhibit the onset of electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies. The authors find that corruption has a greater impact on the likelihood of electoral violence than either the institutional or sociological factors commonly cited in the extant literature.

The countries that transitioned through the third wave of democratization have adopted elections as an institutional mechanism for peaceful leadership selection, but non-violent competition has yet to become a norm in many of these countries. Violence has marred one in five contests among the nearly 600 national elections held for executive office between 1985 and 2005.[1] It has affected at least one national election in 68 of 154 countries during the same time period. Figure 1 shows that violence has become a recurring feature of elections in many countries despite greater electoral experience over time. Indeed, election-related killings have become so widespread that the United Nations Human Rights Council's special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings has recommended documenting such cases on an annual basis.[2]

— FIGURE 1 —

Despite the prevalence of electoral violence, scholars have yet to systematically examine whether the factors that are known to generate political instability more generally also determine whether electoral competition will spiral into a more violent form of contestation.[3] It remains unknown whether the incentives for electoral violence are heightened under institutions that foster winner-take-all competition rather than power sharing (Lijphart, 1977; Linz, 1990; Sisk, 1998). It remains unclear whether electoral violence is more likely to erupt in ethnically divided societies because politicians stoke communal tensions in order to win votes (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; Horowitz, 1985).

Electoral violence poses a special problem for countries where the future of democracy remains in doubt. Figure 2 shows that this violence is concentrated in parts of the world where democratic institutions either are newly implanted or have remained unstable since their creation.

Three-quarters of electoral violence occurs in countries that can be considered unconsolidated democracies, a term used throughout this article to broadly refer to regimes in which multiparty elections are held, yet authoritarian practices persist alongside democratic institutions.[4] However described — hybrid regimes, competitive authoritarian regimes, or electoral authoritarian regimes — these countries regularly hold elections without providing the full range of civil liberties or constitutional protections normally associated with democracy (Diamond, 2002; Levitsky and Way, 2002; Schedler, 2002). In many of these countries, violence has become a strategic option in the competition over elected office.

— FIGURE 2 —

The evidence suggests that conventional explanations are insufficient to account for the cross-national variation in electoral violence, particularly among unconsolidated democracies. Drawing on scholarship that has shown patronage to be a stabilizing mechanism in weakly institutionalized settings (Huntington, 1968; Scott, 1969; Lemarchand, 1972), we argue that electoral violence is less likely to occur in unconsolidated democracies where patronage politics continues to facilitate the exchange of political loyalties for material benefits. The patronage system enables political and economic elites to engage in mutually beneficial transactions that reduce the incentives for coercive tactics in political competition. We claim that electoral violence is unlikely to erupt in unconsolidated democracies where corruption, the everyday manifestation of patronage politics, can satisfy the interests of elites who otherwise have the capacity to organize violence in pursuit of those interests.

This article is one of the first to assess the determinants of electoral violence with cross-national data specifically collected for this purpose. Examining national elections held between 1985 and 2005, we show that greater corruption in unconsolidated democracies is associated with a lower likelihood of electoral violence. We estimate, for example, that increasing corruption from minimum to maximum levels lowers the predicted probability of pre-election violence in an African country from 0.38 to 0.04. While our results also corroborate the economic hypotheses relating to political violence, we find mixed support for the institutional and sociological hypotheses.

In what follows, we first proceed by reviewing the literature's standard arguments for the onset of political violence. We then develop the logic for our argument that the corruption facilitated by patronage has a dampening effect on the onset of electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies. After describing the data and methods, we present empirical findings regarding the determinants of pre- and post-election violence. We conclude by discussing the importance of investigating the informal mechanisms that regulate politics in democratizing states.

Existing Explanations for Political Violence

The literature on political violence provides a range of relevant hypotheses that could explain why electoral competition turns violent. The institutionalist approaches suggest that democracies with weak and fragile institutions should be more prone to electoral violence. Among the countries that transitioned to democracy over the past three decades, newly implanted institutions have proven ill equipped to peacefully moderate conflicts over the distribution of power and the allocation of resources. Given the weakness of these institutions, incumbents and

their opponents have an incentive to mobilize violence because elections heighten the uncertainty associated with political offices that have redistributive implications (Schedler, 2006; Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009).

Stressing the ways in which formal rules shape the competition over power, scholars influenced by Lijphart (1969) claim that institutions can be optimally designed to lower the risk of electoral violence. These arguments focus on the role of institutional mechanisms in diffusing power, thereby lowering the stakes associated with winning national elections. Linz (1990) argues that elections in presidential systems create dangerously high costs for losers who risk being shut out of the political process entirely. Majoritarian or winner-take-all electoral rules are similarly claimed to increase zero-sum perceptions among competing candidates and their respective communities (Sisk, 1998; Bermeo, 2003). In contrast, parliamentary systems, proportional electoral rules, and decentralized government structures are expected to lower the likelihood of electoral violence through greater political inclusivity, providing minority and opposition groups a voice in political decision-making and resource allocation (Lijphart, 1977; Brancati, 2006).

Economic hypotheses suggest that less wealth and slower growth should increase the likelihood of electoral violence. Poverty has consistently been identified as a destabilizing factor in the existing literature on political violence (Londregan and Poole, 1990; Collier and Hoeffler, 1998; Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Not only does poverty undermine state capacity and institutional quality by limiting tax revenue, but resource scarcity is also presumed to increase the ability of elites to manipulate perceptions of relative deprivation among their constituents, thereby heightening the zero-sum nature of electoral competition.

Electoral competition in ethnically diverse societies is conventionally associated with the risk of electoral violence. Scholars have long claimed that elections create incentives for politicians to engage in "ethnic outbidding" (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972) and to manipulate communal grievances in order to mobilize voters (Horowitz 1985), inevitably resulting in the violent breakdown of democracy. Election periods are perceived as heightening uncertainty and, particularly in the context of politicized ethnicity, polarizing groups and raising the potential for violent conflict (Guelke 2001). However, despite the intuitive appeal of this explanation, recent scholarship has demonstrated mixed effects of ethnic diversity on violence in democratic settings (Wilkinson 2004). Chandra (2004) and Birnir (2007) have shown that ethnic-based parties can, in fact, play a stabilizing role in multiethnic democracies.

Patronage Corruption and Electoral Violence

While the dominant explanations for political violence stress the role of structural conditions, such as weak institutions and impoverished economies, we focus our analysis on the strategies that politicians use to hold onto power precisely under those conditions. We argue that electoral violence is less likely to erupt in unconsolidated democracies where patronage continues to function as a redistributive mechanism among elites. Personalized patron-client networks facilitate transactions that satisfy the interests of elites who have the capacity to organize violence and mitigate their incentives to do so. These transactions often entail corruption in that they are based on unlawful economic activities or the illicit flow of resources.

In claiming that corruption can reduce the likelihood of electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies, we draw on scholarship that suggests patron-client networks can create a stabilizing interdependence among elites by transforming public resources into private

benefits. Huntington (1968, 64) calls corruption "a substitute for reform," which ensures that groups become vested members of the political system rather than its alienated opponents. Scott (1969, 1144) similarly argues that political machines can cultivate support through "finely organized" corruption. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003, 103) attribute the political survival of leaders with small winning coalitions to their ability to generate private benefits for their supporters, which includes corruption. Other studies show that such arrangements can become self-sustaining, inducing loyalty and reducing competition, as long as private benefits continue to flow (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Magaloni 2006; Manzetti and Wilson 2007).

Corruption is known to grow after political liberalization in countries with established patronage systems (Montinola and Jackman 2002; Treisman 2007). It grows, in part, because politicians need resources to win office. They can secure those resources by seeking out the support of businesspeople who also happen to require the aid of state officials in circumventing rules that impinge on their profit-making opportunities (della Porta and Vannucci, 1999; Rose-Ackerman, 1999). Under these circumstances, the exchange of resources for favors can result in corrupt practices such as the selective non-enforcement of regulations, the preferential access to procurement contracts, and the discretionary granting of licenses to unqualified firms. Politicians can facilitate these elite forms of corruption with relative ease, since, unlike civil service jobs or public housing units, they are not necessarily exhaustible or limited by fiscal constraints.

The corruption that flourishes in unconsolidated democracies represents an implicit tripartite bargain among incumbents, opposition politicians, and businesspeople. The deliberate circumvention of laws enables incumbents to purchase political acquiescence without having to resort to coercion. It allows opposition politicians to negotiate access to resources for their constituents despite their exclusion from government. And it allows businesspeople to

accumulate rents regardless of who is in power. Businesspeople may, of course, derive additional rents if a particular party is in power; however, a regime that allows corruption to become widespread will enable them to conduct their affairs despite alternations in office. It is precisely for these reasons that the political will required to implement anti-corruption measures is often found to be lacking in democratizing countries (Riley, 1998; Maor, 2004). The political costs of combatting corruption simply outweigh the socioeconomic benefits.

Patronage-related corruption in unconsolidated democracies lowers the likelihood of electoral violence because it enables elites to reduce the uncertainty associated with electoral competition, particularly where there is doubt that newly created formal institutions will be effective or respected. Under these conditions, elites only have an incentive to organize violence if the existing patronage system can no longer accommodate their demands and if election outcomes are expected to affect their material prospects. Incumbents have an incentive to use violent repression if they believe their continued access to resources might be jeopardized through turnover. Their opponents have the same incentive if they believe that political exclusion will limit their own economic opportunities.

The depiction presented here for relationship between patronage-based corruption and electoral violence is consistent with the evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa, where one in four elections is associated with violence, as indicated in Figure 2. Despite the adoption of democracy's formal institutions across the region, political and economic elites continue to rely on personalized patronage networks to secure their access to resources (Chabal and Daloz, 1999; van de Walle, 2007). De Sardan (1999) claims that the exchange of illicit favors involving state functions forms a "corruption complex" in most African countries. Bratton (2007, 98) further notes that "[c]orruption, clientelism, and 'Big Man' presidentialism — all dimensions of

neopatrimonial rule — tend to go together as a package… Indeed, these practices are so ingrained in African political life as to constitute veritable political institutions." These informal institutions have facilitated the intra-elite accommodation required for political stability in African countries.

Electoral violence erupts in African countries where these informal institutions restrict elite access to resources along partisan or ethnic lines. The violence that has repeatedly tainted Kenya's multiparty elections, for example, has its origins in the elite struggle over patronage resources. The regime of President Daniel arap Moi, who ruled from 1978 through 2002, may have "survived through corruption" (Hornsby 2012, 791), but that regime was consolidated throughout the 1980s by withdrawing patronage from certain elite factions. Moi undertook "an assault against corruption in the upper reaches of the [government] ministries, undermining the patronage networks" specifically linked to his predecessor's co-ethnics (Widner 1992, 137). Moi, in short, created a disaffected class of elites who associated their material prospects with his removal from office (Throup and Hornsby, 1998). The resumption of multipartism in the 1990s became perceived by these elites as an opportunity to overcome their exclusion. By the same token, the elites who emerged with Moi's sponsorship have viewed these elections as a threat to their own economic future. Both sides have thus had sufficient incentive to invest in violence as a means of securing their preferred electoral outcomes (Mueller, 2008; Kagwanja, 2009). Examining the 2007-2008 post-election violence, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2008, 3) notes that the country's "infrastructure of violence" is financed by political and economic elites. The KNHCR specifically names 21 parliamentarians and 44 businesspeople among the nearly 200 individuals identified as the organizers of violence.

Data and Methods

To test the argument advanced in this article, we use an original dataset of electoral violence in 596 elections held worldwide between 1985 and 2005. The units of analysis are national elections that meet the following criteria: permit universal suffrage; permit the participation of multiple parties; and allow for the possibility of turnover in the executive office, whether a president or prime minister. We assess the determinants of electoral violence under these conditions through binomial logistic regression models of pooled time-series cross-sectional data.[5]

Dependent Variables

We define electoral violence as acts that violate the physical integrity of individuals, whether as candidates or voters. Since it remains unknown whether different mechanisms catalyze violent events during the various phases of the electoral process, we distinguish between the onset of pre-election and post-election violence. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics on specific patterns associated with both pre- and post-election violence.

The dependent variable for the onset of pre-election violence is dichotomized to equal 1 if a minimum of 25 physical injuries or deaths were reported in the 12 months before the election, up to and including the polling day; it is 0 otherwise. We use this threshold in an attempt to distinguish systematic behavior from episodes related to isolated accidents or personal vendettas. To ensure that our observations only capture violent events directly related to the election — apart from non-political or ongoing civil wars — we focus on events in which violence occurs between government forces or incumbent supporters and opposition political party followers. We also ensure that the relevant events are described as being motivated by the

electoral process itself. Descriptive data were collected from a variety of sources, including international and local media, election monitoring reports, and U.S. State Department human rights reports. We identify 107 instances of pre-election violence among the 596 elections held between 1985 and 2005.

— TABLE 1 —

The dependent variable for the onset of post-election violence is dichotomized to equal 1 if a minimum of 25 physical injuries or deaths were reported in the 12 months after the election; it is 0 otherwise. The same coding procedures and data sources used to classify instances of pre-election violence were employed to classify post-election violence. We identify 78 instances of post-election violence among the 596 elections held between 1985 and 2005.

Independent Variables

We use a variety of measures to test the competing institutional, economic, and sociological hypotheses associated with the onset of electoral violence. Whenever possible, we test alternative measures of our central concepts in order to maximize the reliability of our results. Where appropriate, independent variables are lagged one year prior to the election.

Unconsolidated democracies are conventionally expected to be more likely to experience electoral violence. We test for this relationship by using the aggregate index from the Polity IV Project to capture the potential range in levels of democracy (Marshall et al. 2010). This index is a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (fully autocratic) to 10 (fully democratic).[6] We also use the Polity scores to categorize regimes into three types: electoral autocracies (-10 to 0), partial

democracies (1 to 7), and full democracies (8 to 10) (Epstein et al. 2006). Unconsolidated democracies make up half the sample: electoral autocracies account for 26.4% of elections and partial democracies for another 25.8% of elections.

To assess the claim that electoral violence is less likely to erupt in unconsolidated democracies with higher levels of corruption, we employ the corruption index from Political Risk Service's *International Country Risk Guide* (ICRG).[7] This is a particularly appropriate measure because the ICRG, which covers 166 countries since 1984, calculates the degree of corruption through surveys that ask businesspeople and country experts about the extent of patronage, nepotistic behavior, and other forms of clandestine ties between politics and business within each country.[8] Fjelde (2009) has previously used this variable to show that oil-rich states can lower the likelihood of civil war onset through higher levels of corruption. For this analysis, we invert the ICRG scores so that higher numbers, ranging from 0 to 6, reflect greater corruption. The average corruption score in the sample is 2.63; the median is 3. Since we expect the effect of corruption to be conditional on regime type, lowering the likelihood of pre-election violence only in unconsolidated democracies, we include a multiplicative interaction between the ICRG corruption index and our various regime indicators.

The existing literature provides clear expectations regarding the dampening effects of parliamentarism, proportional representation, and decentralization on electoral violence. Drawing on data compiled by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)[9] and the Institutions and Elections Project (IAEP) at Binghamton University,[10] we include dichotomous variables to indicate whether an election is held in a parliamentary system, whether the country's legislature is elected through proportional representation, and whether a country has elected regional governments. Approximately 48.5% of all cases represent

parliamentary elections; 43.8% of legislatures are elected through proportional representation; and 46.9% of elections occur in countries where regional leaders are elected.

A dichotomous variable indicates whether the executive enjoys sole control over the electoral calendar, assuming that this may put the fairness of the electoral process into doubt. We distinguish between cases that have an independent mechanism for electoral decisions and those in which the incumbent has the power to manipulate electoral frequency and, likely, competitiveness. These data are also from the IAEP. Slightly over half of elections in the sample are held in countries where the executive controls the electoral calendar.

Higher levels of economic development and economic growth are expected to decrease the likelihood of electoral violence. Measures for these variables are from the World Bank's compilation of World Development Indicators.[11] Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is used as an indicator of economic development at purchasing power parity for cross-national comparative purposes and logged in order to improve linearity. Economic growth is measured through the percent change in GDP. The mean GDP per capita in the sample is approximately US$9,981 and the mean GDP growth is 3%.

A higher degree of ethnic diversity is expected to be associated with a higher likelihood of electoral violence. While several indices of ethnic diversity are available, we use Fearon's (2003) operationalization of ethnic fractionalization for its attention to both descent-based identification and sociopolitical consequence. The index ranges from 0 to 1 to indicate the probability that two randomly selected individuals will be members of different ethnic groups. Additionally, we draw alternative indicators of ethnic politicization from Cederman et al.'s (2010) Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset: a fractionalization index of ethnopolitically relevant groups, a polarization index of ethnopolitically relevant groups, the percentage of the

discriminated population, a count of the number of ethnopolitically relevant groups, a count of the number of relevant groups included in government, and a count of the number of relevant groups excluded from government.

To assess the factors affecting the outbreak of post-election violence, we use a dichotomous coding for the onset of pre-election violence as well as an alternative categorical measure for intensity of that violence. Pre-election violence intensity is coded as 0 if there were no violent events; 1 if combined injuries and deaths remained below our minimum threshold of 25; 2 if isolated incidents resulted in fewer than 100 injuries and deaths; 3 if sustained conflict resulted in fewer than 100 injuries and deaths; 4 if isolated incidents resulted in over 100 injuries and deaths; 5 if sustained conflict resulted in over 100 deaths; and as 6 if there were over 1000 deaths. Among violent elections, the average intensity in the pre-electoral period was 3.

Other factors thought to affect the likelihood of post-election violence are coded dichotomously, including: whether international election monitors were present (45.6% of elections);[12] whether the election resulted in turnover (50.1% of elections); whether opposition parties boycotted the election (10.7% of elections); and whether losers publicly made allegations of electoral fraud (32.9% of elections).[13] A dichotomous variable based on information from the IDEA indicates whether electoral rules require a runoff in the absence of an absolute majority for any single candidate in the first round of voting. Approximately 42.4% of all cases utilize a two-round electoral system, though runoffs occurred only in 17.1% of all elections.

Since the degree of competition and level of voter mobilization might also influence the likelihood of post-election violence, data on vote shares and voter turnout were also collected from the IDEA and crosschecked with a variety of sources, including Binghamton University's Election Results Archive.[14] The final vote shares of candidates were compiled to compute a

measure of the margin of victory, or the difference between vote shares of the top two candidates. The average margin of victory is 20.7%. Average voter turnout in the sample is 71.6%.

Control Variables

We include control variables related to political instability and demographic pressures. The number of years since the last regime transition is used as a measure of regime durability (Marshall et al. 2010). A dichotomous variable indicates whether a country experienced a civil war in the decade prior to an election (Gleditsch et al. 2002). In this sample, 27.8% percent of elections took place in a post-conflict setting. A measure of population size is drawn from the World Bank's World Development Indicators. Countries are also coded according to region: East Asia/South Asia, Latin America/Caribbean, Middle East/North Africa, or Sub-Saharan Africa.

Empirical Analysis

Tables 2 and 3 report the results from the binomial logistic regression analysis of pre-election violence onset. These results, shown in log-odds units, consistently indicate that pre-election violence is less likely to occur in unconsolidated democracies with higher levels of corruption. The results also indicate that the outbreak of pre-election violence is generally associated with poverty, slow growth, and civil war history. However, there is no consistent relationship with institutional arrangements, sociological context, or ethnic politicization.

— TABLE 2 —

In Table 2, the interaction term representing corruption in unconsolidated democracies clearly affects the onset of pre-election violence, attaining the .05 significance level in two-tailed tests in most models. This interaction term indicates that the effect of corruption critically depends on the level of democracy.[15] Taking the constitutive elements of the interaction together suggests that greater corruption has a dampening effect on pre-electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies, which are alternately identified in Table 2 through the discrete categories for electoral autocracy and partial democracy as well as through lower scores on the Polity index.[16] Electoral autocracies that provide greater opportunities for corruption are especially less likely to experience electoral violence. Consider, for example, a simulated African electoral autocracy.[17] The predicted probability of pre-election violence would be .79 if such a country had a minimal level of corruption, or 0 on the inverted ICRG scale. The predicted probability would drop to .02 in the same electoral autocracy if the level of corruption were raised to the maximum level of 6 on the inverted ICRG scale.

Figure 3 illustrates how the predicted probability of pre-election violence among African countries varies according to the interaction between the levels of corruption and democracy. Based on the estimates from Model 5, the predicted probabilities plotted in the left-hand panel of Figure 3 reflect the fact that pre-election violence is largely a problem of unconsolidated democracies, that is, countries with Polity scores that fall below 5.[18] Consider a scenario from the left-hand panel of Figure 3. For an African country with an ICRG corruption score of 0, indicating low corruption, and a Polity score of 0, the predicted probability of pre-election violence would be 0.38. Yet, the right-hand panel of Figure 3 shows that the predicted probability would fall to 0.04 for this same country if the level of corruption were to rise to the maximum level of 6 on the inverted ICRG scale, indicating high corruption. The right-hand

panel of Figure 3 further shows that, as expected, greater corruption stops having a pacifying

effect at the highest levels of the Polity index, that is, once democratic institutions and norms

have been clearly implanted.

— FIGURE 3 —

The results in Tables 2 and 3 provide less consistent support for institutional hypotheses.

Despite the conventional wisdom on institutional design, parliamentarism, proportional

representation, and decentralization do not inoculate countries against electoral violence.

Parliamentarism attains statistical significance in some models, but the sign moves counter to the

hypothesized direction: parliamentary systems appear to have a greater likelihood of pre-election

violence when compared to presidential systems. The estimated log odds on proportional

representation and decentralization also generally fail to attain statistical significance. These

unexpected results may reflect endogeneity: the countries most likely to experience violence due

to pre-existing conflicts may also have been more likely to adopt institutions like

parliamentarism as a solution. The electoral violence associated with parliamentarism would then

be a result of the effort to cope with this type of problem in the first place.

The one institution that does have a significant impact on the likelihood of electoral

violence is electoral administration. The estimated log odds on executive authority to schedule

elections shows that this discretionary authority is associated with a greater likelihood of pre-

election violence. Although this is an imperfect proxy for the rules governing the way in which

elections are implemented, it reflects the power of incumbents to manipulate electoral calendars,

if not conditions, for their own benefit. And overt manipulation may well correlate with other abuses, provoking greater resistance among the opposition in the process.

The wealth and growth hypotheses are supported across all models in Tables 2 and 3. As theory would predict, the onset of pre-election violence is less likely to occur at higher levels of income. Consider once more the simulated African country described above with a Polity score of 0 and a corruption score of 0. The predicted probability of pre-election violence in such a country would be 0.38 based on the estimates from Model 5.[19] Increasing its per capita income from the regional mean by one standard deviation — from $1500 to $5300 — lowers the predicted probability to .12. Increasing that African country's level of economic growth from the regional mean by one standard deviation, from 4.03% to 11.6%, would similarly lower the predicted probability to .29. The problem for democratizing countries in Africa is that they are unlikely to double average per capita income or nearly triple the rate of economic growth. Just as exclusion from patronage networks creates incentives for electoral violence, resource scarcity also appears to increase the incentives for violent political strategies.

Despite the widespread notion that electoral violence in multiethnic societies stems from the politicization of ethnicity, the results in Tables 2 and 3 provide little support for this claim. In Table 2, the sign on the estimated log odds for the Fearon index suggest that greater ethnic fractionalization is associated with a lower likelihood of pre-election violence, but this result does not attain statistical significance. In Table 3, the alternate indicators from Cederman et al.'s Ethnic Power Relations dataset generally fail to attain statistical significance. The exception is in Model 10, which shows, counterintuitively, that the likelihood of pre-election violence increases with a larger number of ethnic groups included in government; the likelihood decreases with a larger number of ethnic groups excluded from government.

Previous political instability is found to affect the likelihood of pre-election violence. Countries that experienced a civil war in the decade leading up to an election are more likely to see violence during election campaigns. Surprisingly, however, other indicators of political instability, such as regime durability, appear to have little impact on that likelihood. Likewise, the regional variables indicate that Sub-Saharan African countries have no greater disposition toward electoral violence once factors such as regime type and income level are taken into account. In this regard, Latin American countries appear to be more susceptible to electoral violence than would be predicted based on either regime type or income level.

Table 4 reports the results from the binomial logistic regression analysis of post-election violence onset. The results show that post-election violence is often an extension of the pre-electoral phase. Once violence erupts during campaigning, it is likely to continue after the polling day. This is evident from the empirical record: the data indicate that 44.9% of elections with pre-election violence go on to experience post-election violence, while only 5.9% of elections with no pre-election violence do so.

— TABLE 4 —

Table 4 suggests that the outbreak of post-election violence is largely related to opposition strategies, namely, in choosing to boycott an election or alleging fraud after election results are announced. Interpreting these results is complicated, however, by the fact that these opposition strategies are themselves shaped by pre-election violence. The data reveal that elections with pre-election violence are nearly four times more likely to be associated with opposition boycotts: 29 of 107 elections with pre-election violence are boycotted by the

opposition, whereas only 35 of 454 elections with no such violence are boycotted. The opposition is also nearly three times more likely to allege fraud in cases where pre-election violence occurs: these charges are made in 73 of 106 pre-election violence cases; they are made in 121 of 483 non-violence cases.

The opposition-related results can be interpreted in line with Magaloni's (2010) model of electoral fraud. Opposition actions may signal a level of coordination that threatens a regime, especially when these moves cast doubt on the political legitimacy ostensibly conferred by an election. Violence erupts in these circumstances because the incumbent uses coercion to impose a contested electoral result or because the opposition is able to mobilize sufficient numbers to confront state security forces on the streets. The data indicate that opposition parties, like incumbents, can use violence at all stages of the electoral process. Table 1 shows that opposition-led attacks on incumbent supporters are reported in 61% of cases with pre-election violence. The same holds true after the election: opposition-led attacks are reported in 42% of cases with post-election violence.

The results in Table 4 show that institutional arrangements are poor predictors of post-election violence once the onset or intensity of pre-election violence is taken into account. Countries with parliamentarism and proportional representation are no less likely to experience such violence, and countries using a runoff system are no more likely. An elected regional government is the one institutional design associated with a lower likelihood of post-election violence. This may reflect the lower stakes associated with national elections in countries where power and resources have been decentralized.

The dynamics associated with specific election cycles fail to attain statistical significance. The likelihood of post-election violence is unrelated to voter turnout, the margin of victory, or

electoral alternation. This last finding is evident in the data: 13.6% of elections that result in turnover are associated with post-election violence, as are 12.6% of elections with no turnover.

Conclusion

Although it may seem intuitive that electoral violence is more likely to break out in poor countries with weak institutions, this article shows that much of the received wisdom is subject to doubt. This article shows that neither institutional arrangements nor social diversity strongly determine a country's propensity for electoral violence. Instead, this article finds that electoral violence in unconsolidated democracies is related to the capacity of patronage systems, as informal institutions, to accommodate elite resource demands. The evidence indicates that these regimes renegotiate the terms of redistribution through corruption, that is, by permitting elites to engage in illicit activities that satisfy their own needs as well as the demands of their constituencies.

This article draws on examples from African countries to develop its theoretical contribution and to illustrate the magnitude of its empirical findings. But the article's implications hold for the study of unconsolidated democracies worldwide. The findings presented here suggest that electoral violence among this set of countries is associated with the breakdown of informal patronage systems. These also happen to be the systems that sustain authoritarian tendencies in unconsolidated democracies. Violent elections may thus signal a transition away from patronage politics that impede further democratization. In this respect, future studies of electoral violence must consider how multiparty competition is influenced by the resilience of informal institutions.

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Figure 1. Incidence of Electoral Violence over Time, 1985-2005
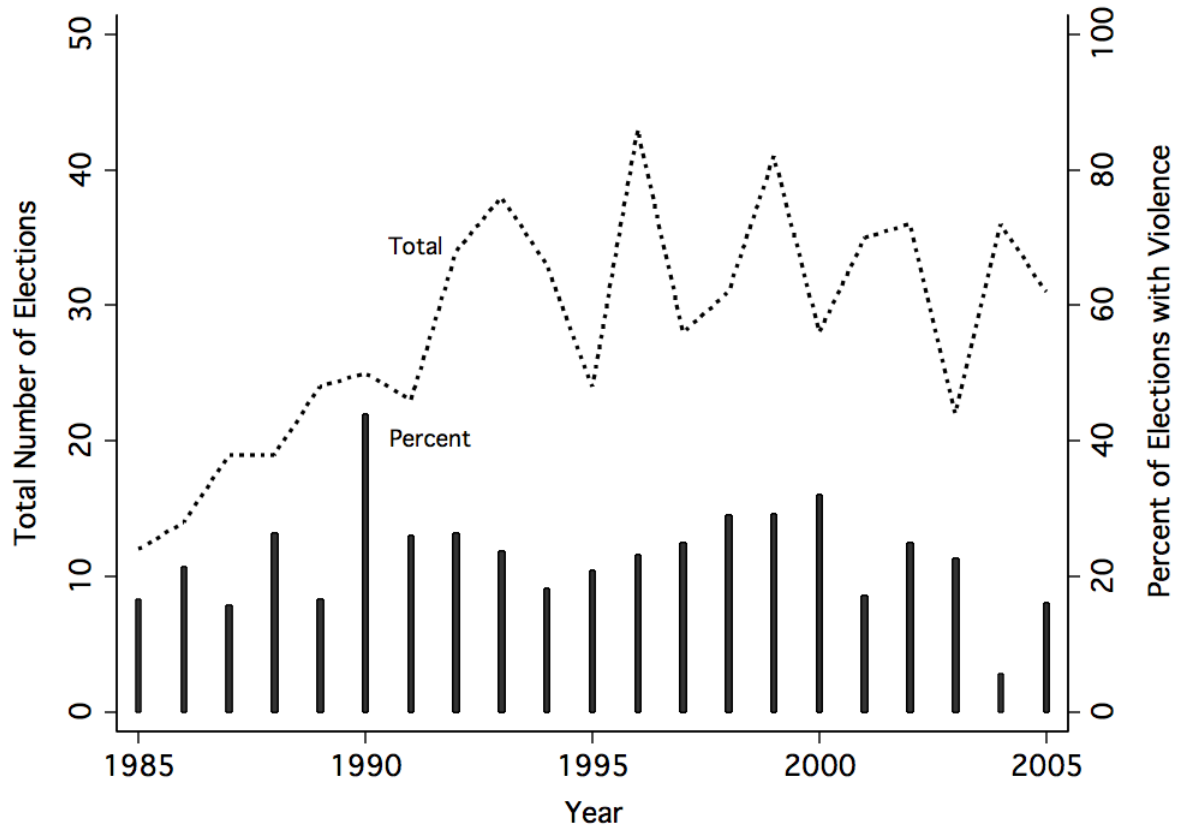
Figure 2. Incidence of Electoral Violence across Regions, 1985-2005

Horizontal bar chart. X-axis: "Percent of Elections with Violence" ranging from 0 to 50. Categories (top to bottom): East Asia/South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, Middle East/North Africa, Eastern Europe, Industrialized Democracies. Legend: Pre-election violence (black), Post-election violence (gray).
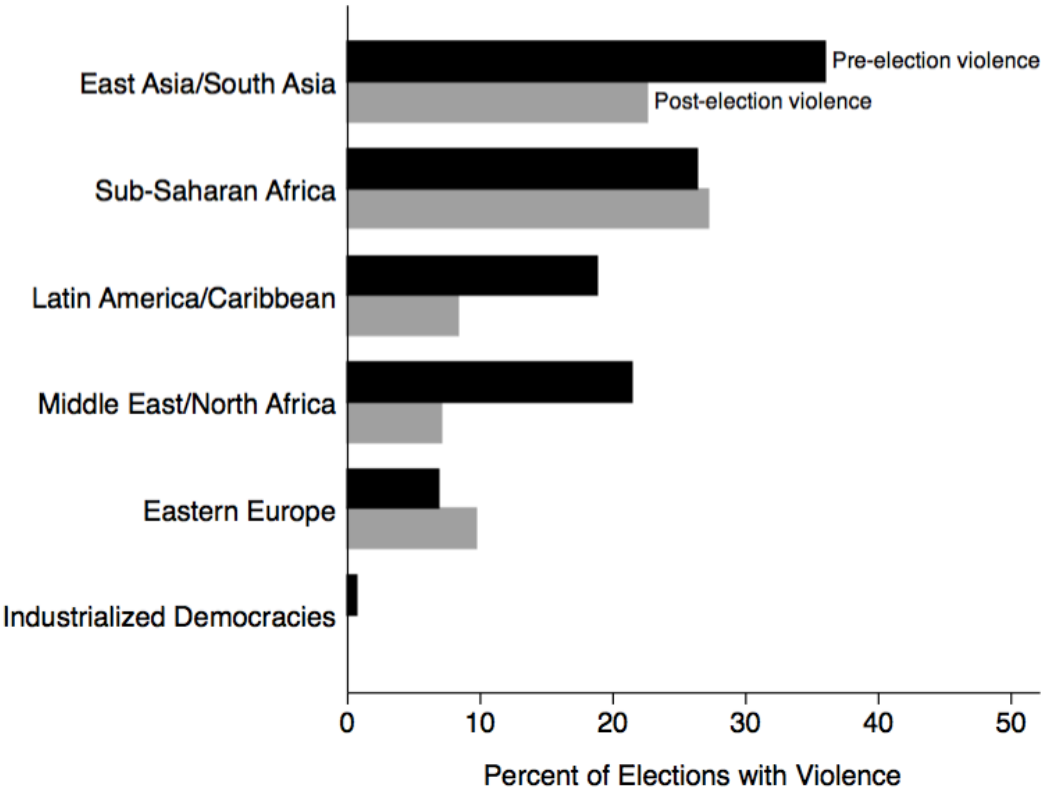
Table 1. Electoral Violence Patterns

	Violent Elections	Non-Violent Elections	N
Pre-Election Violence			
Mean number of incidents reported			
Injuries	289	2	546
Deaths	80	>1	580
Days with violence in month before election	4	>1	530
Percent of elections with reported instances			
Political assassinations	38%	5%	577
Government forces attack opposition supporters	67%	8%	575
Incumbent followers attack opposition supporters	52%	10%	574
Opposition followers attack incumbent supporters	61%	10%	572
Post-Election Violence			
Mean number of incidents reported			
Injuries	214	1	542
Deaths	143	>1	571
Days with violence in month after election	5	>1	556
Percent of elections with reported instances			
Political assassinations	18%	2%	576
Government forces attack opposition supporters	67%	7%	577
Incumbent followers attack opposition supporters	36%	4%	576
Opposition followers attack incumbent supporters	42%	5%	574

Note: Elections are coded as having pre-election violence if 25 or more individuals are reported as injured or killed before the election date. Elections are separately coded as having post-election violence if 25 or more individuals are reported as injured or killed after the election date. Estimates of injuries and deaths are based on international and local media, election monitoring reports, and annual U.S. State Department human rights reports.

Table 2. Logistic Regression Analysis of Pre-Election Violence Onset

|	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Corruption level	1.504***	1.247***	0.864**	1.005*	-0.519*
	(0.413)	(0.468)	(0.347)	(0.527)	(0.265)
Electoral autocracy	5.521***	6.264***	7.228***	9.316***	
	(1.655)	(2.006)	(2.185)	(2.458)	
Electoral autocracy × corruption	-1.331***	-1.538***	-1.491**	-2.126***	
	(0.470)	(0.573)	(0.589)	(0.709)	
Partial democracy	4.486**	3.796**	2.915*	3.155*	
	(1.766)	(1.913)	(1.706)	(1.894)	
Partial democracy × corruption	-1.209**	-1.038*	-0.701	-0.876	
	(0.505)	(0.552)	(0.513)	(0.619)	
Polity					-0.732***
					(0.151)
Polity × corruption					0.155***
					(0.040)
Prior election violence				1.285**	1.235**
				(0.610)	(0.611)
Parliamentary government		0.289	1.192	1.415*	1.908**
		(0.528)	(0.830)	(0.843)	(0.885)
Proportional representation		0.478	0.417	-0.001	0.310
		(0.523)	(0.583)	(0.644)	(0.618)
Elected regional government		-0.707*	-0.927**	-0.421	-0.379
		(0.374)	(0.417)	(0.526)	(0.567)
Executive schedules election		0.607	1.239***	1.232***	1.342***
		(0.400)	(0.418)	(0.461)	(0.482)
GDP per capita PPP, log		-0.609*	-1.009*	-1.542**	-1.386**
		(0.333)	(0.519)	(0.679)	(0.546)
GDP change, %		-0.086***	-0.105***	-0.073***	-0.067***
		(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.022)
Ethnic fractionalization		-0.604	-1.352	-0.816	-1.332
		(1.319)	(1.151)	(1.189)	(1.315)
Population, log		0.428***	0.686***	0.730***	0.734***
		(0.147)	(0.169)	(0.200)	(0.174)
Regime durability		0.004	-0.001	0.011	0.012
		(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Civil war in past decade		0.849**	0.894**	1.059**	1.051**
		(0.351)	(0.384)	(0.431)	(0.459)
Sub-Saharan Africa			0.259	-1.462	-0.331
			(1.820)	(2.085)	(1.649)
East Asia/South Asia			1.152	-0.078	0.407
			(0.967)	(0.986)	(0.918)
Latin America/Caribbean			2.359**	1.984**	2.661***
			(0.955)	(0.860)	(0.888)
Middle East/North Africa			-1.840	-2.264*	-2.017*
			(1.172)	(1.252)	(1.138)
Constant	-6.438***	-7.933*	-9.042*	-6.113	-1.625
	(1.426)	(4.094)	(4.996)	(6.098)	(5.347)
Log likelihood	-178.597	-127.953	-111.997	-71.602	-70.952
Pseudo R^2	0.197	0.325	0.409	0.473	0.478
Observations	421	383	383	295	295

Robust standard errors, clustered by country, in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, two-tailed tests.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Analysis of Pre-Election Violence Onset

	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Corruption level	-0.516**	-0.489*	-0.441*	-0.475*	-0.489*
	(0.246)	(0.265)	(0.261)	(0.251)	(0.270)
Polity	-0.754***	-0.739***	-0.714***	-0.738***	-0.811***
	(0.145)	(0.154)	(0.155)	(0.150)	(0.156)
Polity × corruption	0.157***	0.155***	0.149***	0.156***	0.173***
	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.043)
Ethnopolitical fractionalization	-1.009				
	(1.040)				
Ethnopolitical polarization		0.913			
		(0.731)			
Discriminated population, %			2.619		
			(2.683)		
Number of ethnopolitical groups				-0.042	
				(0.050)	
Number of included groups					0.226*
					(0.137)
Number of excluded groups					-0.110**
					(0.056)
Prior election violence	1.289**	1.318**	1.305**	1.185*	1.131*
	(0.609)	(0.632)	(0.611)	(0.635)	(0.640)
Parliamentary government	1.994**	1.753**	1.748*	1.595*	1.562*
	(0.974)	(0.845)	(0.899)	(0.901)	(0.855)
Proportional representation	0.519	0.497	0.543	0.385	0.488
	(0.571)	(0.567)	(0.568)	(0.595)	(0.565)
Elected regional government	-0.542	-0.521	-0.506	-0.616	-0.575
	(0.541)	(0.533)	(0.503)	(0.518)	(0.536)
Executive schedules election	1.203**	1.459***	1.306***	1.438***	1.572***
	(0.513)	(0.496)	(0.498)	(0.502)	(0.516)
GDP per capita PPP, log	-1.459***	-1.239**	-1.157**	-1.147**	-1.210**
	(0.449)	(0.506)	(0.523)	(0.542)	(0.485)
GDP change, %	-0.069***	-0.068***	-0.072***	-0.071***	-0.067***
	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Population, log	0.779***	0.657***	0.616***	0.705***	0.726***
	(0.195)	(0.185)	(0.172)	(0.222)	(0.241)
Regime durability	0.015	0.009	0.013	0.010	0.009
	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)
Civil war in past decade	0.940**	0.814*	0.907**	0.997**	0.976**
	(0.434)	(0.455)	(0.426)	(0.461)	(0.489)
Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.386	-1.166	-0.764	-0.978	-1.903
	(1.682)	(1.593)	(1.697)	(1.907)	(1.437)
East Asia/South Asia	0.538	0.402	0.517	0.185	-0.118
	(0.910)	(0.928)	(0.924)	(1.050)	(0.930)
Latin America/Caribbean	2.653***	2.575***	2.384***	2.170**	2.065**
	(0.985)	(0.799)	(0.866)	(0.957)	(0.813)
Middle East/North Africa	-2.246*	-2.011*	-2.577*	-2.446**	-2.709**
	(1.220)	(1.131)	(1.490)	(1.180)	(1.076)
Constant	-1.848	-2.129	-2.261	-3.089	-2.838
	(4.485)	(4.966)	(5.043)	(5.218)	(4.803)
Log likelihood	-69.920	-70.101	-70.204	-70.435	-68.398
Pseudo R-squared	0.484	0.480	0.480	0.478	0.493
Observations	293	290	290	290	290

Robust standard errors, clustered by country, in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, two-tailed tests.

Figure 3. Predicted Probability of Pre-Election Violence among African Countries
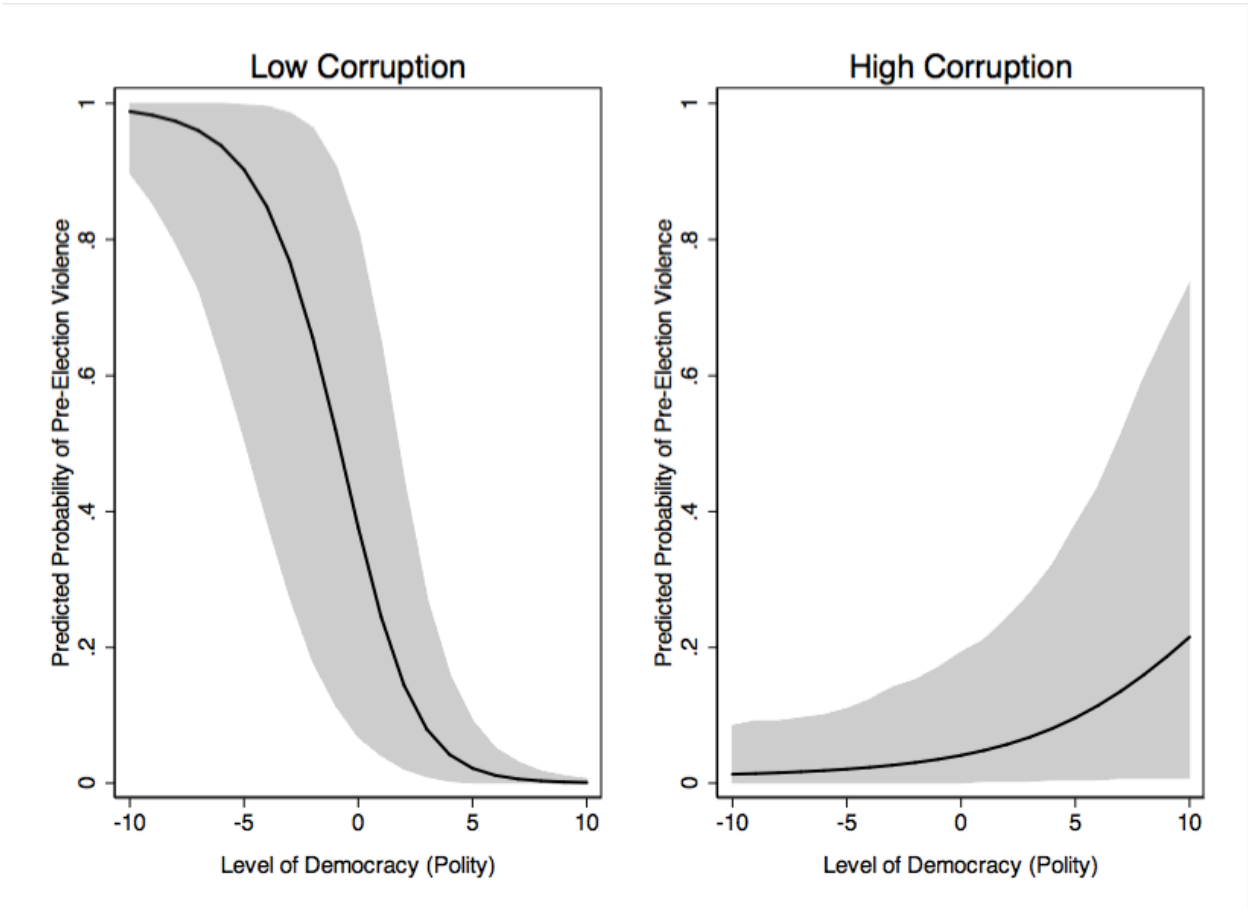
Note: The black lines indicate the predicted probabilities based on estimates from Model 5 in Table 2. The shaded regions represent 95% confidence intervals.

Table 4. Logistic Regression Analysis of Post-Election Violence Onset

	Model 11	Model 12
Pre-election violence onset	1.204***	
	(0.387)	
Pre-election violence intensity		0.594***
		(0.120)
Electoral turnover	0.477	0.295
	(0.493)	(0.502)
Vote difference: top two candidates	-1.435	-1.084
	(0.958)	(0.905)
Voter turnout	0.701	1.112
	(1.257)	(1.253)
Runoff system	0.343	0.445
	(0.644)	(0.688)
Opposition boycott	1.469***	1.418**
	(0.558)	(0.557)
Opposition alleges fraud	1.050**	0.957*
	(0.506)	(0.508)
International election monitors	0.287	0.286
	(0.426)	(0.463)
Polity	-0.073	-0.069
	(0.050)	(0.046)
Parliamentary government	-0.854	-0.812
	(0.789)	(0.843)
Proportional representation	-0.372	-0.604
	(0.462)	(0.496)
Elected regional government	-0.929**	-0.942**
	(0.413)	(0.410)
GDP per capita, PPP log	0.238	0.171
	(0.321)	(0.335)
Population, log	0.538***	0.457**
	(0.168)	(0.187)
Sub-Saharan Africa	2.916*	2.244
	(1.510)	(1.544)
East Asia/South Asia	2.329*	1.732
	(1.361)	(1.363)
Latin America/Caribbean	2.063	1.713
	(1.339)	(1.376)
Middle East/North Africa	0.486	-0.241
	(1.526)	(1.450)
Constant	-15.653***	-13.903**
	(5.415)	(5.853)
Log likelihood	-87.413	-82.519
Pseudo R-squared	0.365	0.401
Observations	361	361

Robust standard errors, clustered by country, in parentheses. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$, two-tailed tests.

Endnotes

[1] Executive elections include both presidential and parliamentary elections. Elections are coded as having pre-election violence if 25 or more individuals are reported as injured or killed before the election date. They are separately coded as having post-election violence if 25 or more individuals are reported as injured or killed after the election date.

[2] United Nations Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston," A/HRC/14/24/Add.7, 21 May 2010.

[3] Notable exceptions include Laakso, 2007; Hoglund, 2009; Straus and Taylor, 2009; Boone, 2011; Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski, 2012.

[4] We conceptualize unconsolidated democracies as those that score below 8 on the Polity IV scale (Marshall et al. 2010). We use the Polity scores to code countries with scores from 8 to 10 as full democracies; countries with scores between 1 and 7 as partial democracies; and those with scores from -10 to 0 as electoral autocracies (Epstein et al. 2006). Regardless of regime classification, all countries examined in this article legally permit multiple candidates to vie for national office. Of 137 violent elections between 1985 and 2005, 26 occurred in full democracies, 42 in partial democracies, and 66 in electoral autocracies.

[5] Since heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation are a concern when analyzing time-series cross-sectional data, we estimate the binomial logistic regression using robust standard errors clustered by country. The number of countries is larger than the number of elections per country, so temporal dependence is less of a concern.

[6] Note that, regardless of Polity score, all countries in this sample permit multiparty elections.

[7] We do not use the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, which measures perceptions of public sector corruption, due to its limitations. The project only began coverage in

1995, which excludes almost half of the observations in our dataset. Also, the instruments for operationalizing corruption were changed over the course of the project, which limits comparability over time.

[8] http://www.prsgroup.com/ICRG.aspx.

[9] http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm.

[10] http://www2.binghamton.edu/political-science/institutions-and-elections-project.html.

[11] http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators.

[12] Walter (2002) argues that international monitors may help to keep the peace by "bearing witness" to regime transitions and electoral processes.

[13] See Lehoucq (2003) for a discussion of the relationship between electoral fraud and post-election violence.

[14] http://cdp.binghamton.edu/era/index.html.

[15] New democracies are known to have higher average levels of corruption than established democracies (Treisman, 2007). However, among unconsolidated democracies examined in this sample, there is only a weak association between the Polity score and the ICRG corruption score: the correlation is -0.118.

[16] The results presented in Table 2 can be replicated with the size of the winning coalition (W), originally developed by Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003), as an alternative measure for regime type.

[17] The simulated values discussed throughout this section were generated through Clarify (Tomz et al. 2001). For these simulated values, the independent variables in Model 4 of Table 2 are set as follows: electoral autocracy=1, partial democracy=0, prior election violence=0, parliamentary=0, proportional representation=0, elected regional government=0, executive

schedules election=1, log of GDP per capita =7.29, GDP change=4.03, ethnic

fractionalization=.73, log of population=15.32, regime durability=9.32, civil war=0, Sub-Saharan

Africa=1, East Asia/South Asia=0, Latin America/Caribbean=0, Middle East/North Africa=0.

[18] The independent variables in Model 5 of Table 2 are set as follows: prior election violence=0,

parliamentary=0, proportional representation=0, elected regional government=0, executive

schedules election=1, log of GDP per capita =7.29, GDP change=4.03, ethnic

fractionalization=.73, log of population=15.32, regime durability=9.32, civil war=0, Sub-Saharan

Africa=1, East Asia/South Asia=0, Latin America/Caribbean=0, Middle East/North Africa=0.

[19] The simulated values remain the same as in the previous example.