

# A dictator's toolkit. How cooptation affects repression in autocracies

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## Summary

Frantz and Taylor explore the interaction of two instruments of dictatorial rule: co-optation and political repression. They find that co-optation in the form of political parties and legislatures leads dictators to reduce restrictions on empowerment rights. Simultaneously it increases physical integrity violations as it draws opposition into the open. A closer look at the results provides evidence of notable model misspecification and weak predictive power.

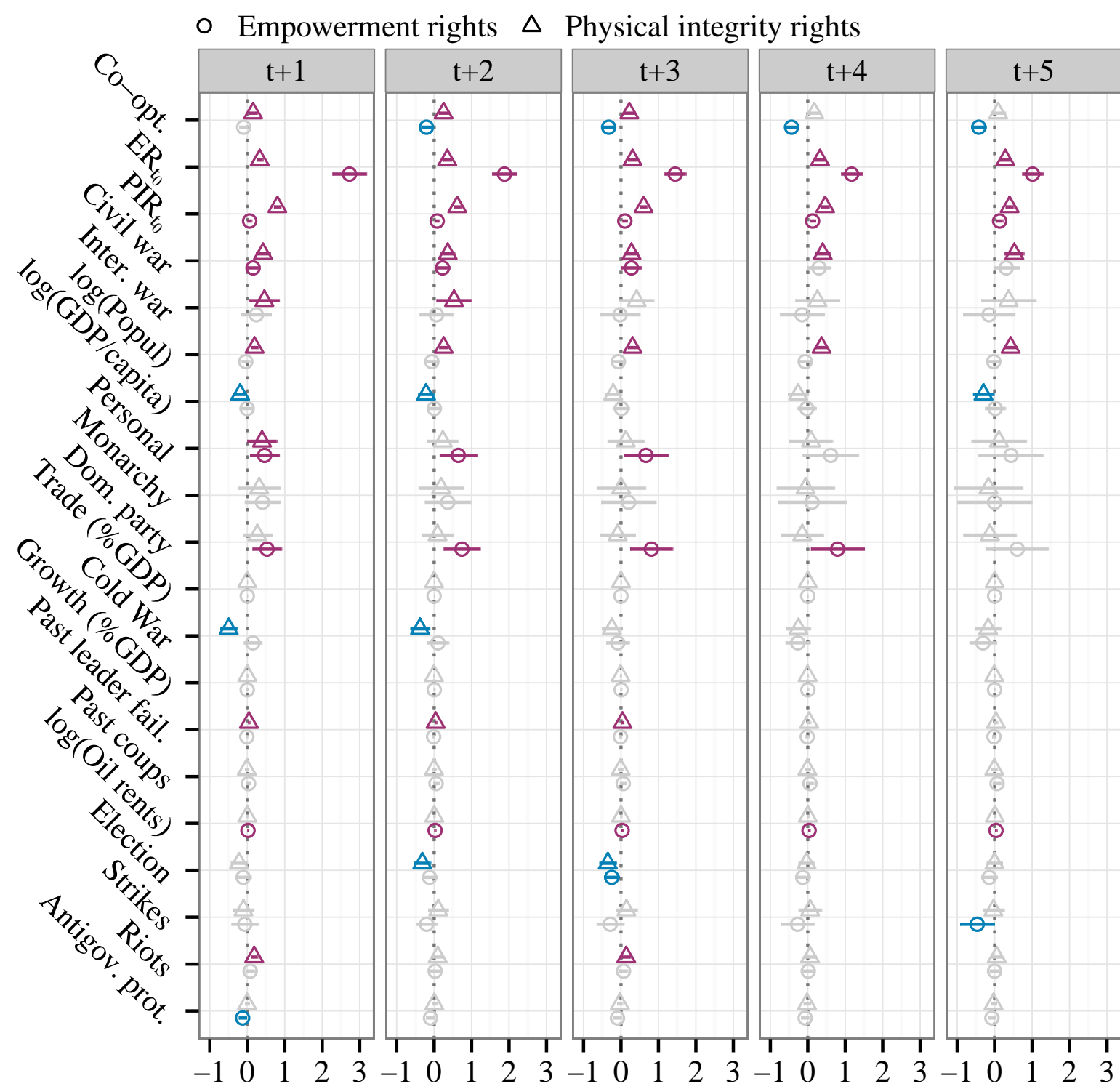
## Method and Material

Ordered logistic regression:  $\xi = \alpha + x\beta + \varepsilon$

$$y = \begin{cases} \text{level 1 if } -\infty < \xi \leq \alpha_1 \\ \vdots \\ \text{level } m-1 \text{ if } \alpha_{m-2} < \xi \leq \alpha_{m-1} \\ \text{level } m \text{ if } \alpha_{m-1} < \xi \leq \infty \end{cases}$$
$$Pr(y \leq j | x) = Pr(\xi \leq \alpha_j | x)$$

Design: 138 dictatorships between 1972 and 2007 are analyzed in a pooled cross-section design with 5 imputed datasets. The study explores the effect of co-optation at  $t$  on repression at  $t+1$  to  $t+5$ .

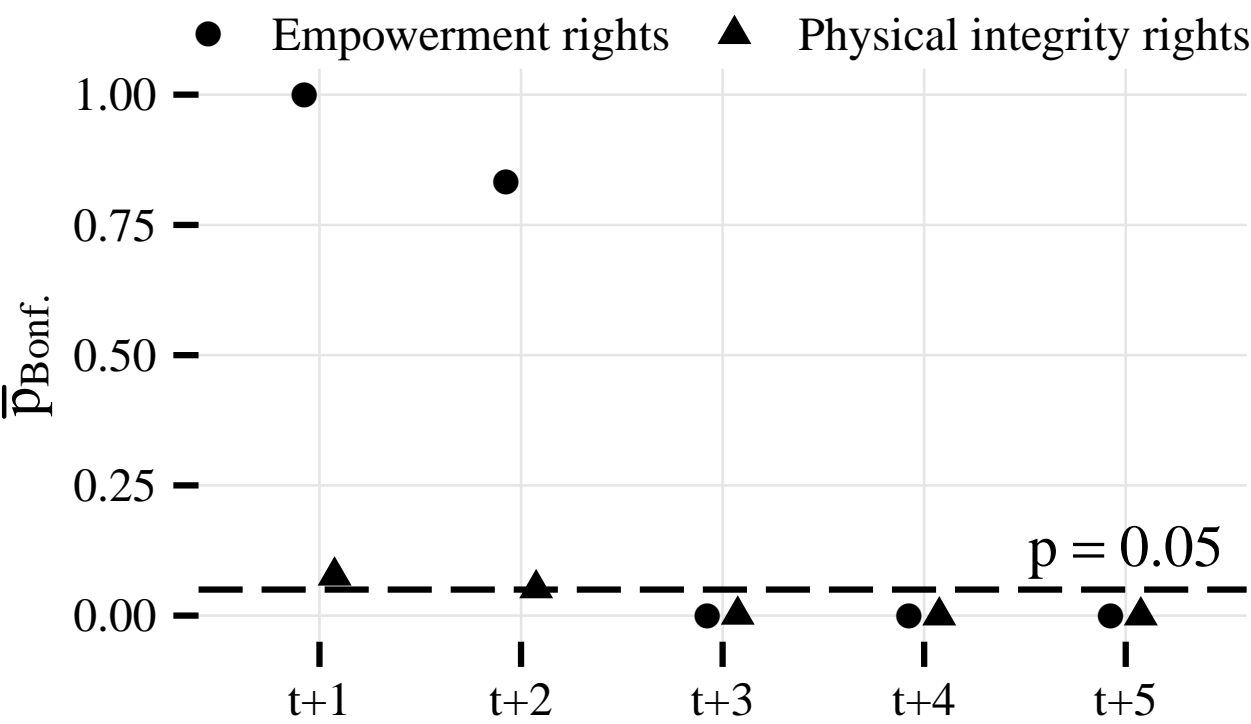
## First impression



The original results can be reproduced up to 2 decimal places. Most often co-optation via legislatures and political parties **reduces** restrictions on empowerment rights. Simultaneously, it **encourages** physical integrity violations.

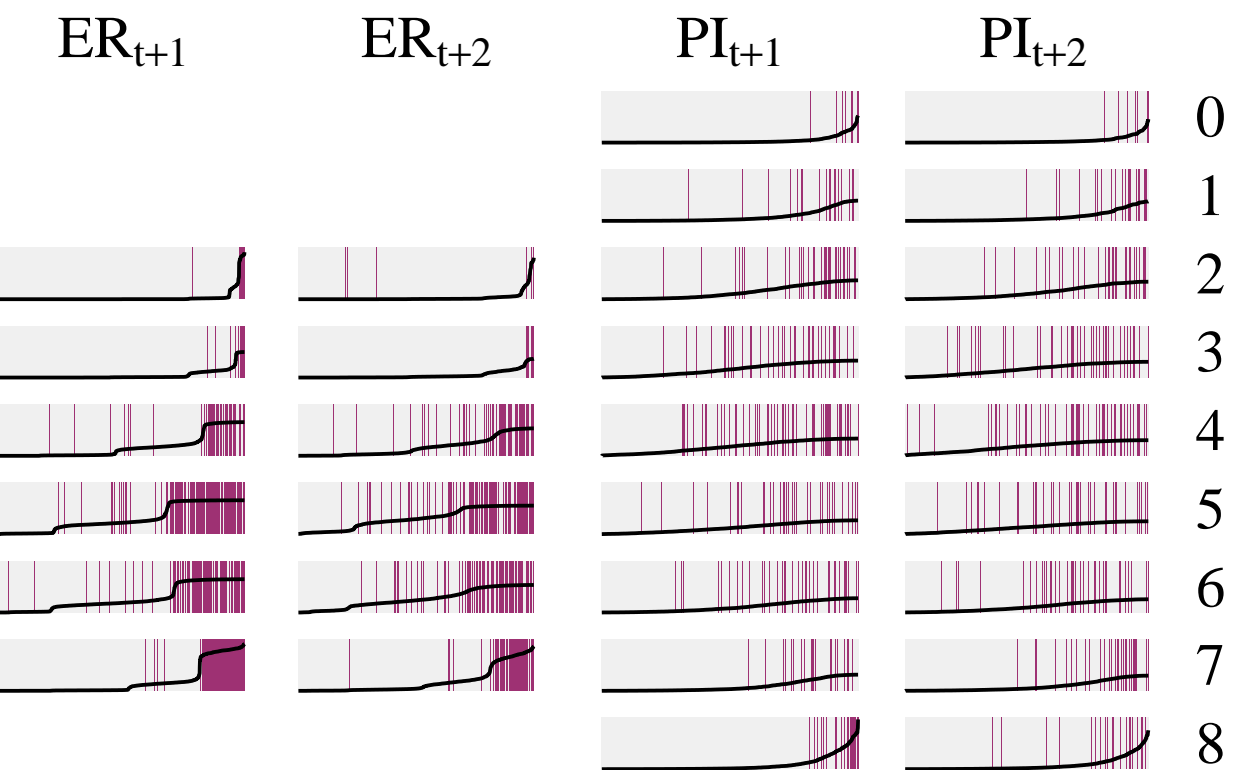
## Replication results

### Parallel regressions assumption

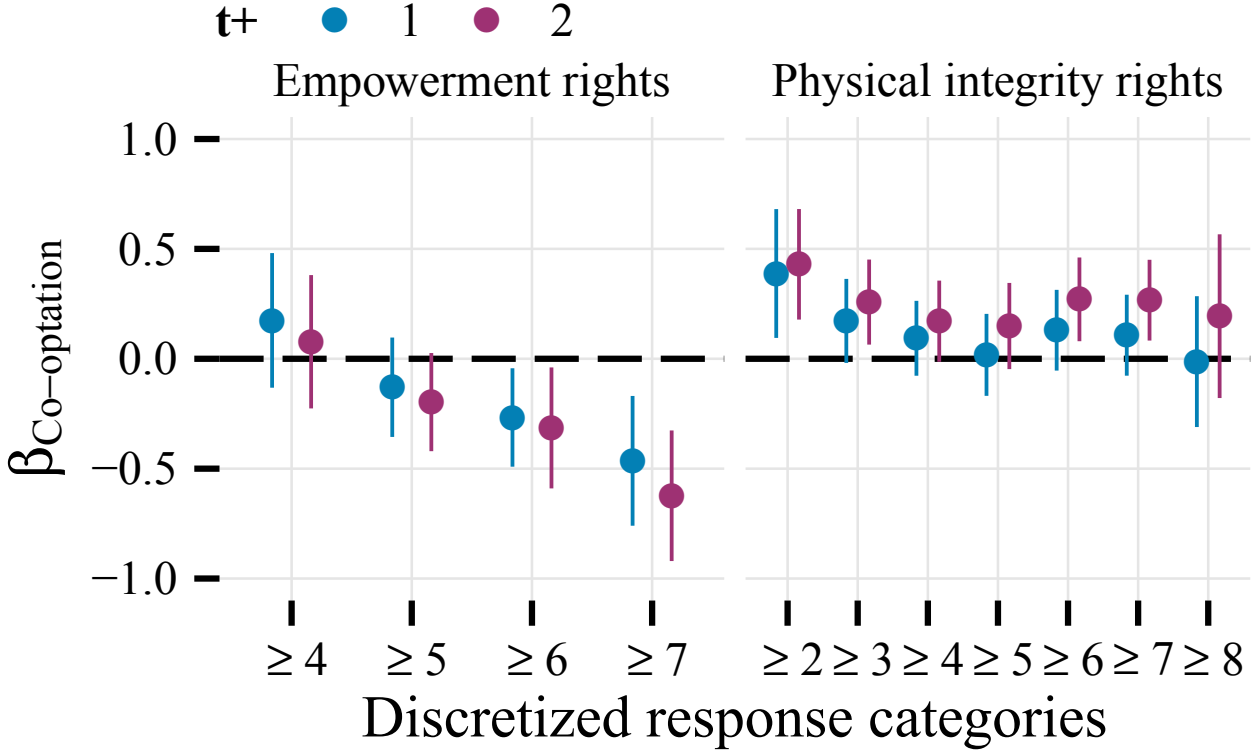


Using a  $\chi^2$ -test the coefficients from each imputation round can be compared to their multinomial alternatives. Only four models reject the multinomial alternative hypothesis of non-constant coefficients with average p-values above 0.05.

### Predictive accuracy

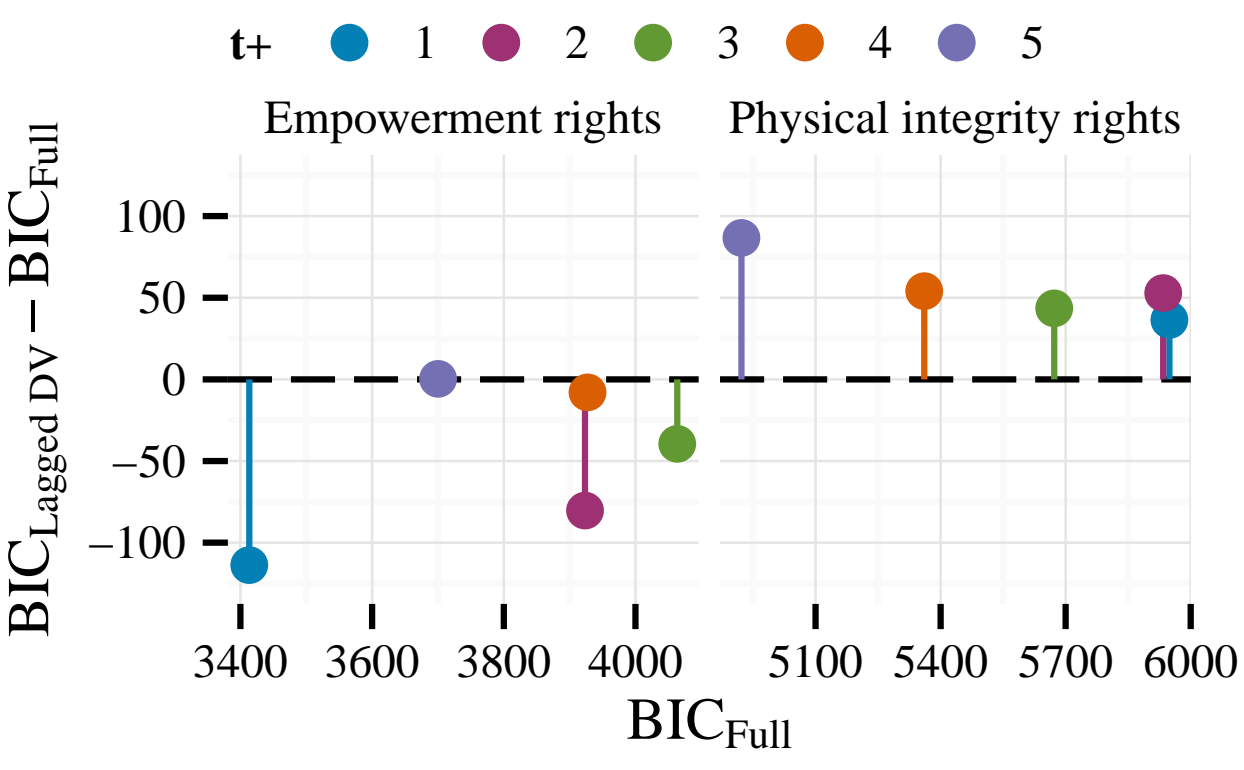


As can be seen from the separation plots empowerment rights restrictions at  $t+1$  are somewhat reliably predicted. Already at  $t+2$  predictive accuracy declines visibly. In contrast, co-optation offers no leverage on physical integrity violations.



An alternative test draws on  $j-1$  logistic regressions with response  $1_{y_i(y_i \geq j)}$ . Coefficients should differ little as  $j$  increases. Although perfect separation occurred (not shown), the test raises strong concerns about co-optation.

### Parsimony



All models include lagged responses to account for serial autocorrelation. However, in many cases the lagged response offers the most parsimonious fit to the data. Again co-optation offers little leverage on political repression.

## Future development

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## Conclusions

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## References

Frantz, Erica & Andrea Kendall-Taylor (2014) A dictator's toolkit: Understanding how co-optation affects repression in autocracies. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(3): 332-346.

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Contact



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