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A House Divided: Threat Perception, Military Factionalism, and Repression in Africa

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Abstract

Why do African regimes repress certain contentious challenges but not others? We argue that in addition to opposition claims and tactics, African regimes are especially likely to view challenges expressing ethnic and/or religious claims as threatening. However, in theorizing the decision to use repression, we relax the assumption that the state is a unitary actor. Leaders with a history of factionalism in their security forces face a delegation problem: orders to repress may not be followed or could even cause intraregime violence and/or defections. For this reason, states with divided security forces are less likely to enact repression. This potential for fracturing the regime will be greatest when the challenge has ethnic or religious claims and targets the state, implying an interactive effect. Using the Social Conflict in Africa Database, we find that regimes with a history of past military factionalism are generally less likely to use repression and are especially less likely to repress contentious challenges making ethnic or religious claims.

Keywords

human rights, military power, domestic politics, political leadership

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The relationship between contentious collective action and government repression is a central subject in comparative politics and international relations. While some opposition movements are suppressed by the state, others are allowed to voice discontent without retribution. The cross-national quantitative literature on government repression has flourished over the past two decades, though it has privileged structural factors—such as regime type, economic conditions, and participation in war at home or abroad—as explanations for repressive behavior, while incorporating relatively little information about the attributes of the challenges themselves. In other words, the literature has focused largely on why certain *states* are more repressive than others, rather than why particular movements or events are repressed. To the extent that scholars have looked at particular contentious episodes, analyses have been limited by a relatively small number of cases, making broad cross-national comparisons difficult.

Even highly repressive regimes do not repress all challenges against them. In 2009, members of the Guinean Presidential Guard massacred 157 peaceful protesters at an opposition rally in Conakry. The opposition had been protesting the decision by Moussa Dadis Camara, the leader of a military junta, to participate in the upcoming 2010 presidential elections. Yet, a general strike called by the opposition on the first-month anniversary of the massacre passed without a crackdown by the government. While the same leader was in power and the same basic issue was at stake, these two outcomes were markedly different. Thus, while repression may be a function of contextual factors such as regime type, ethnic tensions, and economic conditions, such aggregate features cannot explain variation in government responses across events. Why do governments repress certain contentious events but not others?

We adopt a multilevel approach to studying repression by taking seriously both the characteristics of the contentious event—the specific claims and tactics of dissenters—and the nature of the regime in power. Along with previous studies of the dissent–repression nexus, the more threatening a movement is, the more likely leaders will be to respond with repression (Davenport 1995; Gartner and Regan 1996; Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003). In particular, we focus on threats from ethnic or religious opposition groups and argue that in general, states should be more likely to use repression against challenges making ethnically and religiously based claims. Because of entrenched clientelistic networks, attempts to challenge the ethnic and religious constellation of power—through either greater incorporation or regional autonomy—threaten the status of incumbent regimes. However, in contrast to much of the literature, we relax the assumption that the state is a unitary actor. Instead, we emphasize the potential for fault lines within the coercive apparatus of the state, and the effect these cleavages may have for the decision by leaders to repress challengers.

Our study focuses on Africa, where the ruler's control of the military has often been weak (Herbst 2004). Therefore, the preferences of rulers and of the security forces may not be one and the same when it comes to enacting repressive policies.

When faced with a challenge from popular forces, elites have an incentive to repress in order to maintain control. However, leaders facing a history of military factionalism in their security forces—divisions between the regime and coercive agents—have an additional challenge: orders to crack down on opposition supporters may not be followed or could even backfire, causing police and military forces to defect from the government.[1] Weak, unprofessional militaries may be reluctant to carry out orders and divisions within society—especially ethnic and religious divisions—may coincide with divisions in the security apparatus, making repression a risky proposition.

We develop several hypotheses and test these conjectures using the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD; Salehyan et al. 2012),[2] which contains data on over 10,000 conflict events in forty-seven African countries from 1990 to 2013. In this article, we present tests of both contextual factors (e.g., regime type and level of development) and event-specific attributes (e.g., dissident claims and tactics) that may condition the government decision to repress. We find that for cohesive security forces, repression is more likely to be used against opposition groups that express their claims in ethnic or religious terms. However, states with a history of past military factionalism are generally less likely to use repression; and in addition, repression of ethnically or religiously based, ascriptive movements is significantly less likely as past military factionalism increases. These results are robust to several estimators that address the hierarchical nature of the event data and the inclusion of controls.

The remainder of the article proceeds as follows. The following section situates our theory in the literature on repression. Then, we develop an argument relating threat perceptions and past military factionalism to the state leader's decision to repress. Then, we introduce our data, estimators, and results of our empirical models. The final section concludes with a discussion of the implications of our findings for the study of state repression in ethnically and religiously divided societies.

The Repression Literature

The literature on government repression and human rights abuse is now quite large (see Davenport 2007). Empirical studies typically follow one of two approaches.[3] First, some scholars study state coercion with highly aggregated measures of repression. These studies often utilize country-year indicators of how common human rights abuses are in general, with relatively little specific information on whom or what is actually being repressed (Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999; Davenport and Armstrong II 2004; Murdie and Davis 2012). Second, others measure repression at the event level, generally focusing on a restricted sample of countries (Francisco 1995, 1996; Moore 1998; Nam 2007; Franklin 2009). These studies include more information on opposition movements themselves, including their claims and tactics. However, given data constraints, such studies often focus on a small set of cases, which restricts variation on regime characteristics and other

structural variables. Thus, it is difficult to make broadly generalizable inferences about how regime characteristics and opposition behavior interact to produce outcomes of interest.

Starting with the first approach, over the past two decades or so, quantitative research on conflict and human rights abuse has sought to uncover broadly generalizable findings, using data from a large number of countries (for early studies, see Gurr 1968; Muller and Weede 1990). Scholars have devoted considerable effort to developing country-year, aggregate indicators of government repression and human rights abuse, such as the Cingarelli and Richards Human Rights Data set (Cingranelli and Richards 2010), the Political Terror Scale (Wood and Gibney 2010), and Freedom House's data on political and civil liberties (Freedom House 2011). These measures provide annual data on human rights practices, such as the prevalence of torture, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings as well as freedom of association and speech.

Studies using such aggregate measures focus on the impact of contextual factors—such as regime type, demographic and economic factors, and participation in war at home and abroad—on the behavior of the government in general. A path-breaking study by Poe and Tate (1994) demonstrates that democracies are less likely to abuse human rights, while states involved in a civil or international war are more abusive. Following up on this study, Davenport and Armstrong II (2004) find that democratization is only effective at constraining the state once a high threshold is met, a finding confirmed by Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005). This approach can tell us quite a bit about the countries that are more prone to violate civil and political rights but cannot assess variation within particular cases. That is, aggregate studies tell us more about cross-national variation in levels of repression—or changes in repressive behavior by states over time—than about whether leaders use force against particular types of activities or specific opposition groups. Newer data collection projects correct for changing standards in human rights reporting or disaggregate according to the form of repression and/or the perpetrators and targets of repression but still retain the country-year as the unit of analysis (Conrad, Haglund, and Moore 2013; Fariss 2014).[4]

The second approach treats repression as the outcome of strategic interactions between dissidents and governments. These "action-reaction" studies model repression as the outcome of tactical choices by dissidents and repressive or accommodative behavior on the part of the government (Francisco 1995, 1996; Nam 2007; Franklin 2009). Studies by Moore (1998, 2000) on Sri Lanka and Peru show that states strategically substitute between repression and accommodation when faced with challengers. When repression or accommodation is met with increased dissident activity, governments often change tactics. These studies have been extremely useful as they incorporate opposition behavior, focus on strategic interaction, and take into account dynamic sequencing. Yet such studies are limited in that they usually focus on a relatively small set of cases for which data are available. Moore (1998, 2000) focuses on two cases (Peru and Sri Lanka), while Francisco (1995,

1996) addresses a small number of European cases. Using Francisco's basic framework, Nam (2007) uses event-data-derived counts of protests to analyze the effect of democratic institutions on protest levels in sixteen European countries but does not factor in attributes of the events themselves. Another seminal study analyzes protests in New York City over time (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003), while more recent contributions in this vein have investigated repression-dissent dynamics between insurgents and coalition forces in Iraq (Linke, Witmer, and O'Loughlin 2012) and during North Ireland's Troubles (Sullivan, Loyle, and Davenport 2012).

Perhaps the most robust finding in this literature is that leaders are more likely to use repression as the perceived level of threat against the regime increases. Davenport refers to this as the "Law of Coercive Responsiveness" (Davenport 2007, 7). Protest movements that are large, that directly challenge government institutions or threaten the economy, and/or that use violent tactics or espouse extreme ideologies are likely to be seen as threatening to the incumbency of political elites, strengthening incentives to repress. The focus on threat perception is especially useful since characteristics of the opposition can be directly incorporated into models of repression and can account for variation within a single regime over time.

While both literatures have uncovered important findings, they each have their limitations. Country-level models generate highly generalizable findings that come at the price of concern about overaggregation. This literature tells us more about regime characteristics and general levels of human rights abuse but misses strategic interactions between states and social movements (Moore 1995; Young 2013). Action-reaction approaches allow for more theoretical nuance and can account for opposition behavior, but we are unable to assess the extent to which findings are broadly generalizable to many countries. These studies also contain little cross-national variation in regime characteristics. While a macro perspective is useful for telling us why some countries are more likely to abuse human rights and a micro perspective can answer questions about why some opposition activities are more likely to be repressed, event data on a large number of cases are needed to explore how regime attributes and opposition behavior interact to determine repressive outcomes.

Threat Perception, Military Factionalism, and Repression

Our approach emphasizes disaggregation to the event level in order to better account for spatial and temporal processes of regime repression (see Davenport 2007). At the same time, new data allow us to look at a much larger number of cases and to take into consideration regime characteristics in addition to, or interacting with, opposition behavior. As such, our theory generates expectations about which types of challenges are more likely to be repressed in addition to country-level factors that make repression more or less attractive for the regime.

Leaders face two types of threats: external and internal. As the level of external threat—or challenges from popular forces—increases, leaders are more inclined to

use repression to silence challengers. However, states are not unitary actors, and leaders often face internal threats from the very same forces—the military and police—that are called upon to enact repressive policies. Leaders facing a history of divided militaries and weak civilian control over security forces—conditions common to many African states—are especially concerned with regime defection and are less likely to engage in repression.

Threat Perception

Our analysis focuses on attributes of contentious events and regime willingness to respond with repression. In line with previous studies, the level of threat perceived by the regime is a critical determinant of the willingness to use coercive force to suppress opposition activity (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003; Gartner and Regan 1996; Ritter 2014). The literature has focused on two general dimensions of threat: tactics and claims.

Tactical choices include the mode of expression. Peaceful modes of dissent, such as demonstrations and labor stoppages, should be less threatening and less likely to be repressed than violent modes of dissent such as riots and lethal attacks. The monopoly on the legitimate use of force is the defining feature of the state, and as such we expect that leaders will respond more severely to contentious events using violent tactics. A second tactical choice is location. We expect that challenges occurring in urban areas will be more likely to be met with repression, as they pose proximate threats to political and economic stability. By virtue of their geographic concentration, urban dwellers face lower costs to acting collectively and thus can more credibly threaten protests that endanger the regime (Stasavage 2005). Challenges emanating from rural areas should be less likely to be repressed, since they generally will not have the same political and economic impact and because state security forces may not be able to reach remote areas.[5]

The claims made constitute a second dimension of threat. Contentious events that directly target the central government or a local government should be more likely to be repressed than those that target nongovernmental actors—for example, private firms, foreign governments, or rival ethnic groups. These nongovernmental actors are often the target of protests and labor stoppages. Contentious events that target nonstate actors do not pose as direct a threat to government and are more likely to be tolerated. By contrast, political claims—such as those seeking to liberalize the political system, promote opposition candidates, or press for major policy reforms—should be relatively more threatening to the government since they call for a redistribution of political power. Since officeholders wish to stay in power and restrict the size of the governing coalition to most favored supporters (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003; Heger and Salehyan 2007), regimes should be particularly sensitive to mobilizations that challenge political institutions and processes.

Especially in the African context, however, identity-based claims are likely to be particularly threatening to the political status quo. Ethnic and religious cleavages are

frequently important axes around which individuals and organizations mobilize support and contest power (Adida 2015; Horowitz 1985; Posner 2004). Ascribed traits make it easier for political entrepreneurs to identify potential supporters and exclude people and groups from patronage (Hardin 1995). Many scholars have noted that patron–client relationships, electoral campaigns, taxation policies, and social support networks in Africa often follow ethnic/religious lines (Kasara 2007; Habyarimana et al. 2007; Roessler 2011; Wantchekon 2003). From ethnic rioting following elections in Kenya, to religious-based terrorism in Northern Nigeria, to genocide in Rwanda, Burundi, and Darfur, ethnic identity is often the basis for violent conflict.

Given the potential divisiveness and salience of ethnic/religious identities, regime challenges that are expressed in such terms are especially likely to be repressed. Ethnic/religious mobilization is particularly prone to escalate to violence and such claims are more likely to threaten empowered groups and clientelistic networks. These challenges jeopardize existing patronage networks, voting blocs, and potentially the tenure of the incumbent leader. Protests about comparatively "mundane" claims such as jobs, prices, or environmental problems, and so on, can often be accommodated without significantly altering governing coalitions. However, protests that call for greater inclusion of ethnic/religious groups in the central government, or alternatively, greater autonomy for particular groups or regions, disrupt the foundations of the incumbent regime (Heger and Salehyan 2007). Ceteris paribus, protests making ethnic and religious claims are more likely to be repressed by state forces.

Hypothesis 1: When faced with ethnic or religiously motivated dissent, states are more likely to use repression.

Military Factionalism

However, this relationship is likely to be contingent on the degree of military factionalism within the state. At independence, most African regimes inherited weak formal political institutions (Ekeh 1975; Englebert 2000). Despite some success stories, such as Botswana and Ghana, politics in Africa have often been characterized by weak central control over the periphery, deep ethnic divisions, neopatrimonialism, and low bureaucratic capacity (Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Herbst 2000). This weakness and division also pertains to African militaries, which have traditionally been factionalized and prone to defections, both in the barracks and on the battlefield (Herbst 2004). Given that there have been relatively few international conflicts on the African continent, the main purpose of many state security forces has been to maintain domestic control and preserve the incumbent leader's rule. Yet these security forces may also pose significant threats to the rulers they ostensibly serve: African governments are often more likely to be deposed by their own militaries through coups d'état than by external aggressors (Collier and Hoeffler 2005; McGowan 2003; Roessler 2011).

In part, the prevalence of coups and factional infighting in Africa can be attributed to ethnic divisions and competition for power. As argued above, ethnicity remains a powerful cleavage around which to mobilize partisan support (Arriola 2009; Eifert, Miguel, and Posner 2010). Jenkins and Kposowa (1992) demonstrate that countries that are ethnically divided are more likely to experience frequent coups. The 2008 coup in Guinea, for instance, was partly fueled by ethnic divisions as Malinke, Fulani, and Soussou factions within the government jockeyed for power.[6] Similarly, divisions between Northern and Southern ethnic groups have dominated Ugandan politics since independence, and these divisions are reflected within the security forces. Although coups can unfold quickly and strike at the central government, military mutinies also pose grave challenges that may evolve into civil war (Barua 1992). As a recent case in point, Tutsi soldiers that were incorporated into the Democratic Republic of Congo's military following a 2009 peace agreement mutinied in 2012, calling themselves M23. These forces claim to be the protector of the Congolese Tutsi minority and accuse the government of failing to protect Tutsi rights and fully implement the 2009 peace plan.[7]

Roessler (2011) makes a compelling argument about the dual nature of the threat faced by African leaders. Government leaders fear rebellion and dissent from popular forces, but they also fear being overthrown by actors within the governing coalition (see also McMahon and Slantchev 2015). By excluding rival ethnic groups from government, leaders try to minimize coup risk. Sharing power with rivals could give them access to the tools with which to overthrow the leader from within, especially if they are entrusted with control over the means of coercion. However, ethnic exclusion can make leaders more susceptible to a civil war as rival groups seek to secede or overthrow the state from the outside through an armed insurgency (Buhaug, Cederman, and Rød 2008). Therefore, there is a trade-off between attempts to coup-proof the state now versus risking a civil war in the future. Yet very few regimes embody full power sharing or full exclusion. Typically, leaders choose to exclude some groups from power while joining forces with others in a delicate balancing act.

Because of this risk of internal unrest, factionalized militaries and police forces pose special problems for incumbent leaders facing popular dissent. Engaging in repression entails a delegation problem: while a state leader may wish to repress a particular challenge, it must employ an agent (the military, police force, or gendarmerie) in order to do so (Demeritt 2015). Leaders of countries with a history of frequent factional infighting cannot count on coercive state institutions to effectively confront protestors and opposition activists. Divisions within society are likely to be reflected within the military, and therefore directives to repress can either be ignored or can backfire through military and police defections. Because of potential preference divergence between the government and the armed forces, governments face the risk that unpopular orders will lead military officers to overthrow the state through a coup, defect, and join the opposition or simply decline to act. Indeed, recent civil wars in Libya and Syria were fueled by military defections, as soldiers refused to obey orders to crush the opposition.

Therefore, regimes with factionalized security forces are likely to use repression sparingly. Knowing that social cleavages may be mirrored within the security apparatus, leaders are reluctant to issue orders that could inflame such tensions. Leaders of countries with a past history of factionalism are therefore more likely to exercise restraint when faced with popular unrest of all kinds. This conjecture is consistent with two separate theoretical mechanisms. First, the government may anticipate that its agents will act unfaithfully if called upon to repress; in order to maintain government cohesion, the government will not give the order in the first place. Second, the order may be given, but the agents fail to implement it.[8] While potential factionalism is difficult to observe directly, past intragovernment schisms may signal to the leader that the coercive apparatus is a potentially unreliable agent. Leaders observing past intragovernment violence thus may either issue orders to repress less frequently or their security forces are more likely to shirk orders. In both instances, the expectation is that past intraregime violence will be negatively associated with repression.[9]

Given that many African states and militaries are divided along ethnic lines, the question of agent loyalty becomes especially important when opposition activists express their claims in ethnic, tribal, or religious terms. Where there has been a history of divided loyalty within the security forces, orders to suppress ethnic or religious movements are especially likely to split the regime, and therefore, we expect the impact of military factionalism to be greater when regimes face ethnic/religious disputes. Unfortunately, we do not have reliable, cross-national data on the ethnic composition of African militaries. Yet we are able to observe whether or not countries have had a history of past coups, mutinies, and factional fighting. Importantly, as factional fighting and coups in Mauritania (N'Diaye 2006), Guinea-Bissau (Forrest 1987); Ivory Coast (Akindes 2004); Chad and Central African Republic (Debos 2008), among others, demonstrate, military factionalism is frequently manifested in tribal and ethnic loyalties rather than programmatic differences. Indeed, the two cases with the highest levels of factionalism in our data—the Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of Congo—have militaries that were formed as part of a power-sharing deal in which various ethnic militias were integrated into a common armed forces. We therefore formulate two additional hypotheses. The first pertains to factionalized security forces in general, while the second pertains to the interaction between ethnic and/or religious protests and factionalization. That is, the second hypothesis regards how past military factionalization conditions regime responses to ethnic/religious challenges.

Hypothesis 2: As the frequency of past military coups and mutinies (military factionalism) increases, the probability the state will engage in repression decreases.

Hypothesis 3: Conditional on facing ethnic or religiously motivated dissent, the probability of the state engaging in repression decreases as factionalism increases.

Yet not all ethnic or religious claims are explicitly concerned with altering governing coalitions or gaining greater political rights for disaffected groups. Pastoral conflict between tribes in northern Kenya or riots between ethnic factions in Uganda does not necessarily threaten incumbents or make claims on the state. Therefore, we must account for ethnic or religious *threats to the government*, which should be most likely to split the regime and potential divisions in the security forces. In other words, we further distinguish between politically motivated ethnic or religious unrest with conflicts that are not focused on the state. In doing so, we hypothesize that there is a three-way interaction between ethnic/religious claims, targeting the central government, and the degree of military factionalism.

Hypothesis 4: Conditional on facing ethnic or religiously motivated dissent that targets the government, the probability of the state engaging in repression decreases as factionalism increases.

Thus, our theoretical framework models outcomes as arising from interactions between attributes of the regime and attributes of the specific acts of dissent. The previous section argues more threatening protests are more likely to be faced with repression. We add to the threat perception framework by including ethnic challenges as an especially salient dimension of threat. Hypotheses 2 to 4 develop an argument about the nature of the state and the interaction between opposition claims and military factionalism. These hypotheses focus on the internal threat that many rulers face and how the nature of the opposition accentuates schisms within the regime itself. The implied null hypothesis would be that factionalism is unrelated to repression, perhaps because government leaders will use more loyal, ethnically homogenous units or paramilitary groups to enact repression. Thus, leaders will continue to repress challenges and bypass divided branches of the security services, leading to a nonsignificant result. Our empirical test will allow us to reject (or fail to reject) this possibility.

Data, Estimation, and Results

To test our hypotheses, we rely on event attribute data taken from the SCAD (Salehyan et al. 2012). We utilize data on events in forty-seven African countries over the period 1990 to 2009. The year 1990 represents a logical beginning point for our analysis, as many scholars point to a structural break in governance patterns in the region as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, increasing conditionality on the part of international donors, structural adjustment, and democratization (Bratton and Van de Walle 1997; Bates 2008; Kalyvas and Balcells 2010). From a practical perspective, the ability to collect data through online news archives significantly expanded in the 1990s.

The data are derived from key word searches of Associated Press and Agence France Presse news wires. Each record in SCAD refers to a unique conflict event.

Events can last for a single day to several weeks or months and can be reported by a single article or many news articles. SCAD reflects an intermediate approach to collecting event data between highly detailed, dyadic action-reaction-type data and global, highly aggregated data. One of the virtues of this approach is that it allows for collecting more information on event attributes—who did what to whom and why—while facilitating cross-national and intertemporal comparisons.

SCAD contains information on several attributes of the event in question, which we use in our analysis. In this study, our dependent variable is whether or not government forces repressed the event. The original data code repression according to a three-part scheme: no repression reported (74 percent of events), nonlethal repression (e.g., tear gas, arrests, etc. 18 percent of events), and lethal repression (lethal tactics resulting in deaths, 8 percent of events). For our analysis, we collapse this coding into a single binary measure of *repression*.

Several independent variables are also drawn from the event attributes in SCAD. First, we include an indicator variable if the event was *violent*: riots, progovernment violence, and anti-, extra- and intragovernment violence were all coded as violent (these event categories are described in Salehyan et al. 2012). In the full sample, events were evenly distributed between violent and nonviolent (49 percent/51 percent). We then include indicators for whether the central government (47 percent of events) or regional government (6 percent of events) was the *target* as well as whether the event occurred in an *urban* area (55 percent of events)[10] or whether the event was *nationwide*, occurring in several cities and rural areas (11 percent of events). We include event *duration*, in days, as longer events may provide more opportunity to enact repression.

Despite explicitly controlling for event attributes that may affect the baseline probability of repression, there is still concern that repression will be systematically less likely in response to certain types of events: violent events in rural areas where neither the central nor regional government are a target, such as cattle raiding in the Karamoja cluster, which spans peripheral parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda. To the extent that these conflicts occur in areas where the state is not present, the nonrepression of these events may be less reasonably attributed to ruler expectations about intraregime dynamics and be more a function of low state penetration in rural areas (Herbst 2000). Thus, we include an additional control for violent events in rural areas where neither the central nor regional government is the target (*rural nonstate violence*, 21 percent of events).

In order to model whether particular issues and opposition claims were more likely to result in repression, we collapsed the information in the SCAD issue codings into three types of claims: political (28 percent of events), economic (29 percent of events), and ethnic/religious (17 percent of events).[11] Randomly sampled issue notes for ethnic/religious issues include clashes between Muslims of different ethnic groups over the construction of a mosque in Mali, protests over forced removal of Arab herders from government lands in Niger, and clashes between Xhosa and Zulu factions in South Africa's townships under apartheid. All other event types form the

baseline, omitted category in the regression tables below. Some overlap exists because multiple issues could be coded for a single event; for instance, a single event can be both economic and political.[12]

While these data are at the event level, we include several variables measured at the country-year level. The key country-year independent variable is a past history of *military factionalism*. To model this, we use a running count of past instances of intragovernmental violence, as listed in the SCAD database: armed clashes between two or more actors within the government, including events ranging from coups and attempted coups to mutinies to fighting between units in the armed forces and police. Examples range from a 1999 mutiny by Burkinabe soldiers over back wages, clashes between the presidential and vice presidential guards during the 2006 elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and fighting between rival factions in the Lesotho military, police, and prison system (Salehyan et al. 2012). This variable ranges from zero (43 percent of observations) to ten past instances of intragovernment violence (the DRC and Ivory Coast).[13] In order to test whether past military factionalism has a more pronounced effect with respect to particular issue areas, we interact this term with the issue indicators. Again, we expect an interaction between ethnic/religious claims and our factionalism variable to be significant and negative. We also include a three-way interaction between ethnic/religious claims, state targeting, and military factionalism in order to test Hypothesis 4.

For controls, we include democracy, which is based on the combined Polity score. The Polity score is a 21-point index of democracy, ranging from the least (-10) to most ($+10$) democratic. We code country-years as being democratic if Polity ≥ 6 (Marshall and Jaggers 2011). Davenport and Armstrong II (2004) and Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005) show that the negative effect of democracy on government repressive behavior only appears at relatively high thresholds, and so this indicator variable should be associated with a lower probability of repression. We control for regime durability, which is the count of years since a regime change; also from the Polity IV data set. We control for (log) gross domestic product per capita and population; based on prior studies, we expect that leaders of wealthier countries will be less likely to repress, while leaders of more populous countries will be more likely to repress (Poe and Tate 1994; Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999; Poe, Rost, and Carey 2006); data are from Heston, Summers, and Aten (2009). We control also for armed conflict or civil war occurring within the state (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). Governments facing armed challenges may be more likely to engage in repression as all dissent is seen as threatening. Alternatively, states involved in civil war may have fewer resources available to repress challenges not directly related to the armed conflict. The variable, armed conflict intensity, ranges on a scale from zero to one (between 25 and 999 battle-related deaths in a given year) to two ($\geq$ 1,000 battle-related deaths in a given year).

We include a time trend in order to model any linear temporal trends in the probability of repression, such as that which might arise due to less reporting in earlier periods. Because reporting bias is a significant concern when using event data based

on media reporting (Nam 2006; Schrodt 2012), we include a control for the total number of nonconflict-related news reports on a given country in a given year, divided into quartiles.[14]

The nested structure of our data drives our choice of modeling techniques. For data with a hierarchical structure (events within years and years within countries) multilevel modeling approaches are preferable, as it is likely that errors are correlated within a grouping structure due to unobserved and/or unmodeled factors (Gelman and Hill 2007). We report results from three estimators in Table 1. Models 1 and 4 are estimated using random effects logistic regression with observations clustered at the country-year (i.e., errors for events Nigeria in 2001 are assumed to be correlated). Models 2, 3, 5, and 6 address the multilevel structure of the data more explicitly. Models 2 and 5 use multilevel logistic regression, estimated using generalized linear latent and mixed models (GLLAMM; Rabe-Hesketh, Skrondal, and Pickles 2004) and models 3 and 6 use multilevel random-effects logistic regression. In both models 2 and 3, errors are clustered within years and within countries, with years nested in countries. This accounts for the fact that we have multiple yearly observations per country, and within each country, multiple observations (events) within a single year. All base models are run on a sample of 6,764 events, covering forty-seven countries and the years 1990 to 2009 (the last year for which all data are available).

The results are broadly similar in both statistical and substantive significance across models.[15] Likelihood ratio tests confirm the multilevel models perform better than a simple pooled logistic regression (model 3, likelihood ratio test vs. logistic regression $\chi^2 = 165.49, p < .001$); random effects parameters for years and countries were often significant under both hierarchical specifications ($p < .01$). Thus, despite the inclusion both of event attributes and country-year variables, significant cross-sectional and temporal unit effects remain.

As hypothesized, we find that military factionalism, as measured by past intraregime violence, is associated with a significant reduction in the likelihood of repression ($p < .001$ in models 1 and 2, $p < .05$ in model 3). A one standard deviation (*SD*) increase from the mean value (from two to five past incidents of intragovernment conflict) decreases the probability of repression by 22 percent. We do not find that economic claims and political claims have a statistically significant interactive effect with past military factionalism.

We find also that ethnic/religious claims of protesters have a negative and statistically significant interactive effect with regime factionalization. When contentious events involve ethnic or religious claims, countries with a history of past intragovernment violence are especially less likely to conduct repression. Coefficient estimates, and levels of statistical significance, for the claims variables are conditional on the mediating variable—intraregime violence—taking on a value of zero (Braumoeller 2004). In order to ease the interpretation, we display the interaction effect graphically. Figure 1 plots the predicted probabilities of nonethnic/religious events and ethnic/religious events being repressed as a function of past intragovernment

Table 1. Threat Perception, Military Factionalism, and Repression in Africa, 1990 to 2009.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Variables	Random effects (country-year)	GLLAMM multilevel random effects	XTLOGIT multilevel random effects	Random effects (country-year)	GLLAMM multilevel random effects	XTLOGIT multilevel random effects
Violent	0.549***	0.649***	0.571***	0.557***	0.658***	0.578***
	(0.076)	(0.071)	(0.076)	(0.077)	(0.072)	(0.076)
Central government target	1.176***	1.227***	1.097***	1.337***	1.385***	1.259***
	(0.087)	(0.082)	(0.087)	(0.103)	(0.098)	(0.103)
Regional government target	1.308***	1.426***	1.266***	1.291***	1.414***	1.248***
	(0.134)	(0.126)	(0.134)	(0.134)	(0.126)	(0.134)
Urban	0.306***	0.144*	0.284***	0.300**	0.143	0.279**
	(0.095)	(0.087)	(0.095)	(0.095)	(0.088)	(0.095)
Nationwide	−0.171	−0.179	−0.201	−0.174	−0.177	−0.201
	(0.126)	(0.113)	(0.126)	(0.126)	(0.114)	(0.126)
Duration	−0.001	0.000	−0.001	−0.001	0.000	−0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Rural nonstate violence	−0.371***	−0.451***	−0.402***	−0.386**	−0.462***	−0.417**
	(0.139)	(0.126)	(0.139)	(0.140)	(0.127)	(0.140)
Political claims	0.471***	0.501***	0.420***	0.438***	0.470***	0.389***
	(0.098)	(0.094)	(0.098)	(0.099)	(0.095)	(0.099)
Economic claims	−0.110	−0.080	−0.153	−0.144	−0.108	−0.185
	(0.104)	(0.097)	(0.104)	(0.105)	(0.098)	(0.105)
Ethnic/religious claims	0.372***	0.415***	0.389***	0.391**	0.435***	0.409**
	(0.130)	(0.122)	(0.130)	(0.131)	(0.123)	(0.131)
Military factionalism	−0.107***	−0.078***	−0.057*	−0.058	−0.032	−0.004
	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.039)
Political claims × military factionalism	0.008	0.009	0.015	0.024	0.023	0.031
	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Economic claims × military factionalism	0.003	−0.007	0.012	0.018	0.005	0.026
	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism	−0.113***	−0.135***	−0.111***			
	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.043)			

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Variables	(1) Random effects (country-year)	(2) GLLAMM multilevel random effects	(3) XTLOGIT multilevel random effects	(4) Random effects (country-year)	(5) GLLAMM multilevel random effects	(6) XTLOGIT multilevel random effects
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism (central government not targeted)				−0.113*	−0.139**	−0.114*
				(0.048)	(0.044)	(0.048)
Central government target × military factionalism (nonethnic/religious claims)				−0.085**	−0.079**	−0.087**
				(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.030)
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism (central government targeted)				−0.246***	−0.243***	−0.237***
				(0.071)	(0.061)	(0.071)
Democracy	−0.285**	−0.304***	−0.149	−0.298**	−0.315**	−0.155
	(0.115)	(0.118)	(0.140)	(0.116)	(0.119)	(0.141)
Regime durability	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.002	0.003	0.003
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Log GDP per capita	0.124**	0.116**	0.128	0.114*	0.106*	0.117
	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.088)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.089)
Log population	0.184***	0.204***	0.151*	0.184***	0.205***	0.151
	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.082)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.082)
Armed conflict intensity	−0.377***	−0.336***	−0.147	−0.373***	−0.332***	−0.149
	(0.076)	(0.077)	(0.096)	(0.076)	(0.077)	(0.096)
Time trend	0.025***	0.017*	0.018**	0.026**	0.018	0.019*
	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.009)
Media coverage	−0.032	−0.043	−0.029	−0.038	−0.048	−0.030
	(0.050)	(0.054)	(0.062)	(0.051)	(0.054)	(0.063)
Constant	−54.259***	−38.624*	−40.938**	−56.911***	−41.082*	−41.883*
	(16.497)	(20.409)	(17.454)	(16.620)	(20.648)	(17.534)
Observations	6,764	6,764	6,764	6,764	6,764	6,764
Country-years	765	756	756	765	765	765
Countries	47	47	47	47	47	47

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. GLLAMM = generalized linear latent and mixed models; GDP = gross domestic product; XTLOGIT = time-series, cross-section logit.
***$p < .001$.
**$p < .01$.
*$p < .05$.

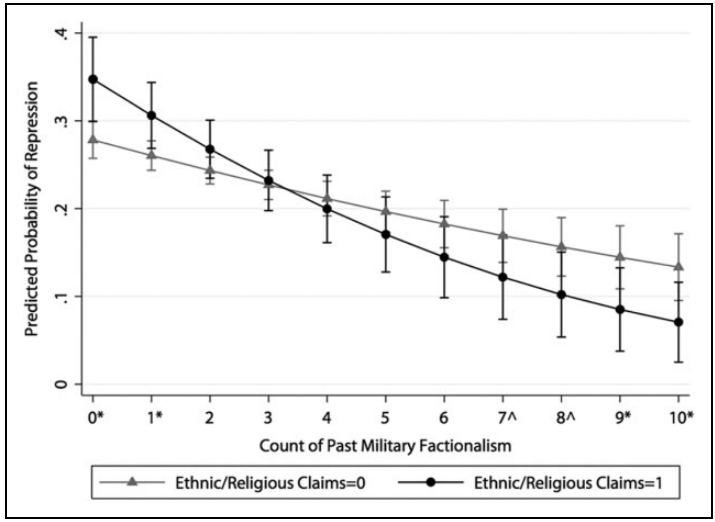

Figure 1. Conditional effects of ethnic/religious claims and past military factionalism on government repression of social conflict. *Denotes two-tailed, two-sample *t*-test significant at <.05, ^denotes two-tailed, two-sample *t*-test significant at <.1. 95 percent confidence intervals are depicted. Estimates derived from Table 1, model 1.

violence. At low and high values of past military factionalism, the interaction is statistically and substantively significant. At zero instances of past intraregime violence, ethnic/religious dissent is 25 percent *more* likely to be repressed than dissent which is not ethnically/religiously motivated. This finding is consistent with the threat perception argument, as ethnic and religious lines are often significant cleavages around which political mobilization takes place. However, as past intraregime violence increases, ethnically/religiously motivated events are less likely to be repressed. In the extreme, a country with ten previous instances of intraregime violence is 47 percent *less* likely to repress an ethnically/religiously motivated event than a nonethnically/religiously motivated event.[16] These findings support the conjecture that a history of violent schisms within the regime conditions responses to ethnic challenges in ways that are different from government responses to other challenges. When past factionalism is not present, governments behave more repressively to ethnically and religiously motivated challenges. However, when there is a history of past military factionalism, these challenges are much less likely to be repressed.

Further investigation of this dynamic reveals an interesting interaction with a third component of threat perception: whether the central government is directly targeted. Even if the military is characterized by a history of factionalism and ethnic/religious claims are being made, these claims may not be perceived as especially threatening by the government if they do not target the government. For example, in one of our cases, Muslims from different ethnic groups clashed over the building

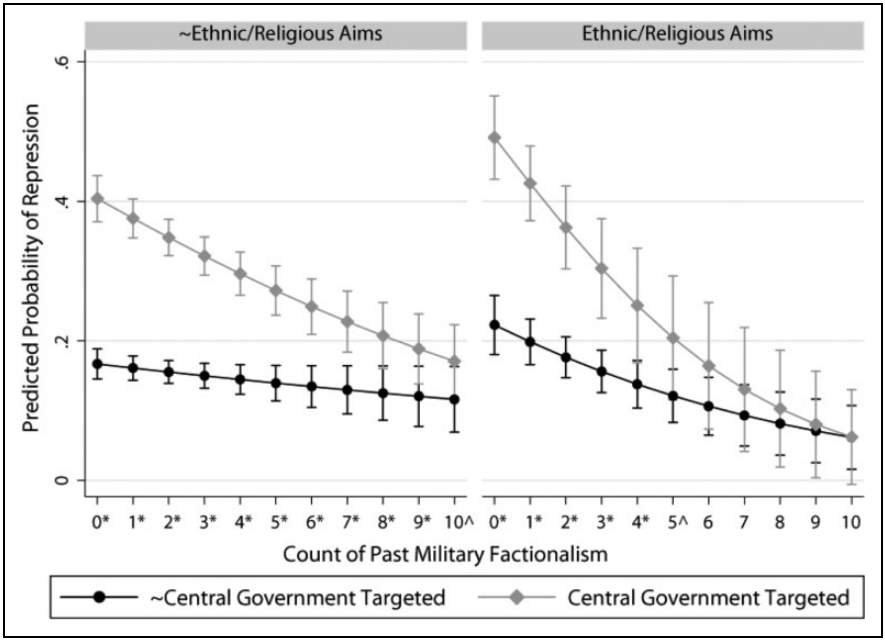

Figure 2. Conditional effects of ethnic/religious claims, central government targeting, and past military factionalism on government repression of social conflict. *Denotes two-tailed, two-sample *t*-test significant at <.05, ^denotes two-tailed, two-sample *t*-test significant at <.1. 95 percent confidence intervals are depicted. Estimates derived from Table 1, model 4. The sections marked with a tilde ~ imply "not."

of a mosque in Mali. Given that neither group targeted the government, it is possible the government would not view such an event as a challenge, and therefore strategic concerns related to past factionalism and ethnic/religious claims would be rendered moot. Models 4 to 6 address this issue by including a three-way interaction between military factionalism, ethnic/religious claims, and whether the central government was targeted. Thus, the models present estimates for four separate intercepts and slopes (ethnic/religious issue = 0/1 and central government targeted = 0/1). The substantive effects are presented in Figure 2.

For challenges that are neither expressing ethnic/religious claims nor targeting the state, the relationship between past factionalism and repression is statistically insignificant and substantively small: a + 1 *SD* increase from the mean value (from two to five past incidents of intragovernment conflict) is associated with only a 7 percent diminution in the probability of repression. Moreover, the baseline probability of repression is low, ranging from 0.17 to 0.12 across values of military factionalism. This indicates that for challenges that neither target the state nor express ethnic/religious grievances, past factionalism is not a significant factor affecting the use of repression.

Alternately, ethnic/religious claims that also target the state clearly condition the effect of past factionalism on repression: a + 1 *SD* increase from the mean value (from two to five past incidents of intragovernment conflict) is associated with a 44 percent diminution in the probability of repression. At zero instances of past factionalism, the probability of repression is almost double the baseline (0.49 vs. 0.25 in the sample); at its maximum value (10), it is less than one-fourth (0.06 vs. 0.25). Moreover, both ethnic/religious claims and central government targeting moderate the effect of past military factionalism independently: the coefficient estimates on the interaction terms are negative and significant under all specifications. Thus, past military factionalism moderates both core components of threat perception: ethnic/religious claims and central government targeting.

Our findings regarding control variables are consistent with previous research. Violent events are more likely to be repressed: with values for other variables held at their means, violent events are more likely to be repressed than nonviolent events ($p < .001$ across specifications). Events that targeted the central government or regional government are associated with more than a doubling in the probability of repression ($p < .001$ across specifications, referring to the uninteracted coefficients). Events in urban areas are slightly more likely to be repressed than those occurring/that occur in rural areas ($p < .05$ in model 2, $p < .01$ in models 1 and 3). Events that challenge the political status quo (political claims) are more likely to be repressed ($p < .001$ across specifications). There is no evidence that events espousing economic claims are more likely to be repressed. Interestingly, more intense armed conflict makes repression of a particular contentious challenge—outside of the conflict dynamic, as SCAD does not include battles in civil conflicts—are less likely to be repressed. Whether this is due to the state's coercive capacity being overextended or whether rulers choose to behave more permissively toward other types of challenges is a subject for future inquiry.

Robustness Checks

Despite the inclusion of controls for both event attributes and country-year level covariates of repression, some might worry that the findings are driven by strategic substitution of tactics and claims on the part of dissenters and that countries with a history of past factionalism are challenged in systematically different ways than those which are not. Thus, the effects might be attributed to selection. The *t*-tests confirm that regimes with no past factionalism (i.e., equal to zero) experience fewer ethnic/religious challenges (ethnic/religious challenges as percentage of all challenges, No past factionalism = 14 percent, ethnic/religious challenges as percentage of all challenges, Any past factionalism = 19 percent, $p < .01$), fewer violent challenges (47 percent vs. 53 percent, $p < .01$), and more challenges targeting the central government (50 percent vs. 43 percent, $p < .01$) than regimes with any history of past factionalism.[17] The standard techniques for dealing with selection (Heckman 1979) are inappropriate because of the data structure—the observational unit in the first

stage would be tactical choices/claims within events, whereas units in the second stage are events themselves—and because valid instruments would be required for each of the tactical choices/claims variables as well as separate instruments for the interaction terms (Woolridge 2012, 236-37).

Instead, we address this possibility two ways. First, we stratify the sample into only those observations with some history of past factionalism (i.e., zero cases of intra-government violence), in which tactical choices have already been conditioned by regime splits. Results for the random effects logistic regression model are reported in Table 2, models 7 and 8. Second, we run the same models with fixed effects by country-year, in order to mitigate concerns that the findings are driven by unobserved regime- or country-level factors that might affect the choices of tactics by dissidents; results are reported in Table 2, model 9 and 10.[18] In both instances, we find additional support for the interaction between past factionalism and ethnic/religious claims, with the uninteracted coefficient on ethnic/religious claims being positive and significant in both specifications, while the interaction between ethnoreligious claims and past factionalism is negative and significant ($p < .05$). Further, in models 8 and 10, we find additional support for the three-way interaction between central government targeting, ethnic/religious claims, and past factionalism. Thus, our results are robust to this specification. However, in model 4, we do not find a significant effect for military factionalism itself, implying that increasing the count of past coups and mutinies beyond the first one does not have a strong effect.

Moreover, one might worry these findings are driven by omitted variable bias, and what they are capturing are the effects of ethnic fractionalization, horizontal inequality across ethnic groups, or the effects of leaders with extremely small ethnic bases of support. Rulers with small ethnic bases of support may be more likely to use repression to guard their position (Heger and Salehyan 2007). Rulers of more diverse countries may anticipate more ethnic challenges and believe their security forces to be more fractious (Walter 2006). Alternately, rulers of more diverse countries may find ethnic challenges less threatening, as ethnicity is a less viable identity around which to mobilize politically (Posner 2004). Military factionalism is positively ($r = .45$) correlated with ethnic fractionalization (Roeder 2011);[19] the two countries with the highest scores for military factionalism (Ivory Coast and the DRC) are both characterized by high ethnic fractionalization (>90 percentile) and have been under the rule of leaders with relatively small ethnic bases of support.[20] We address these potential confounds in the Online Appendix (Table A1); while ethnic fractionalization affects the probability of repression, the main findings regarding military factionalism (Table 1, models 1 to 3) are unaffected by the inclusion of these additional controls. Finally, we might be concerned that past military factionalism is really capturing the effect of recent conflict and/or military infighting, which might condition the use of repression through alternate channels. The results are robust to the inclusion of controls for time since last armed conflict and time since the last instance of military factionalism (Table A2). See the Online Appendix for an extended discussion.

Table 2. Restricted Sample and Fixed Effects Estimates of Repression and Military Factionalism, 1990 to 2009.

Variables	(7) Random effects (country-year)	(8) Random effects (country-year)	(9) Fixed effects (country-year)	(10) Fixed effects (country-year)
Violent	0.560***	0.575***	0.560***	0.570***
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.083)	(0.083)
Central government target	1.018***	1.404***	1.103***	1.283***
	(0.121)	(0.191)	(0.095)	(0.114)
Regional government target	1.343***	1.343***	1.257***	1.240***
	(0.176)	(0.176)	(0.143)	(0.143)
Urban	0.188	0.167	0.276***	0.276**
	(0.135)	(0.137)	(0.103)	(0.103)
Nationwide	−0.213	−0.229	−0.197	−0.193
	(0.177)	(0.179)	(0.135)	(0.136)
Duration	−0.001	−0.001	−0.001	−0.001
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Rural nonstate violence	−0.426**	−0.485*	−0.322**	−0.331*
	(0.192)	(0.195)	(0.147)	(0.148)
Political claims	0.964***	0.885***	0.372***	0.336**
	(0.200)	(0.204)	(0.109)	(0.111)
Economic claims	−0.021	−0.088	−0.259**	−0.294*
	(0.209)	(0.212)	(0.113)	(0.114)
Ethnic/religious claims	0.464*	0.476	0.453***	0.472**
	(0.249)	(0.252)	(0.146)	(0.147)
Military factionalism	−0.053	0.005		
	(0.038)	(0.044)		
Political claims × military factionalism	−0.088*	−0.067	0.020	0.035
	(0.047)	(0.048)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Economic claims × military factionalism	−0.010	0.008	0.013	0.029
	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism	−0.130**		−0.115**	
	(0.062)		(0.046)	
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism (central government not targeted)		−0.106*		−0.089**
		(0.043)		(0.032)
Central government target × military factionalism (nonethnic/religious claim)		−0.119		−0.122*
		(0.066)		(0.050)

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Variables	(7) Random effects (country-year)	(8) Random effects (country-year)	(9) Fixed effects (country-year)	(10) Fixed effects (country-year)
Ethnic/religious claims × military factionalism (central government targeted)		−0.284**		−0.234**
		(0.090)		(0.074)
Democracy	−0.339**	−0.365*		
	(0.173)	(0.173)		
Regime durability	−0.006	−0.006		
	(0.005)	(0.006)		
Log GDP per capita	0.306***	0.287***		
	(0.083)	(0.083)		
Log population	0.202***	0.187*		
	(0.077)	(0.077)		
Armed conflict intensity	−0.428***	−0.421***		
	(0.107)	(0.108)		
Time trend	0.039***	0.041**		
	(0.013)	(0.013)		
Media coverage	−0.248***	−0.238**		
	(0.091)	(0.091)		
Constant	−83.044***	−88.272**		
	(26.675)	(26.829)		
N	3,854	3,854	5,754	5,754
Country-years	283	283	462	462
Countries	21	21	45	45

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. GDP = gross domestic product.
***$p < .001$.
**$p < .01$.
*$p < .05$.

Discussion and Conclusions

Despite gains in economic development and poverty eradication, and a flourishing of civil society post-Cold War, many African states are still characterized by comparatively weak institutions, high levels of political instability, and poor performance with respect to human rights. One can point to a variety of structural correlates of the latter: low levels of economic development, armed conflict, and weakly democratic political institutions. But these factors offer us no explanatory power in answering why, in the same year, election-related riots in Lagos, Nigeria, are met with repression while persistent ethnic rioting in Jos is not. Our theory provides a plausible explanation in which (1) past military factionalism and (2) the claims motivating challenges and the targets of those challenges interact to condition government threat perceptions and the use of repression. Moreover, our multilevel approach, which models both structural factors and event attributes, gives us empirical leverage on these puzzles. We demonstrate that while ethnically and religiously motivated challenges are more frequently met with repression in cohesive regimes, past intraregime violence makes leaders much less likely to repress these challenges. Given that many African militaries are characterized by ethnic cleavages, popular unrest along ethnic lines is especially likely to split the regime. For this reason, leaders will be particularly reluctant to engage in repression. These findings speak to active debates in the African politics, ethnic politics, civil–military relations, and the study of repression and human rights.

Our empirical approach points to fruitful areas for future research. Our theoretical focus pertains to the interaction of threat perceptions and intraregime schisms. However, there are many additional questions that could be illuminated by a multilevel approach. For instance, the link between democracy and human rights protection is one of the most robust in the empirical literature. However, these findings are based on aggregate measures of repression. Both qualitative and quantitative studies point to the coexistence of severe repression against particular groups (armed dissidents, rural peasants, and threatening minorities) in an environment of generally nonrepressive state behavior (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong II 2011). An event-based approach could illuminate the conditions under which democracies, when compared to autocracies, will respond coercively to opposition groups. Moreover, looking at how past repression continues future dissent, at the event level, would be useful. When faced with a state that has repressed them in the past, movement leaders may choose to substitute tactics and claims in order to avoid direct repression.

Our study is, however, limited in a number of respects. Most notably, our measure for schisms within the regime is a rather blunt one and only counts the number of coups, mutinies, and factional fighting within the state. Improved data on the structure of the military and security forces would help considerably with understanding the attributes of repressive institutions. The SCAD data also do not allow us to look at temporal sequencing within protest campaigns as each protest event is aggregated into a single record. In the future, particularly with enhanced automated text

analysis, research may be able to look at daily reporting of contentious events for a large number of countries. In addition, our study focused on Africa, where strong ethnic attachments and weak military institutions may be especially prevalent, but our general theoretical framework should apply to other divided societies as well. Ultimately, because of lack of data at this point, we are unable to test this assumption globally, but future data collection efforts will help to test the generalizability of the argument.

From a practical, policy perspective our findings are ambiguous. We should certainly hope that regimes behave less repressively toward their citizens, but for obvious reasons, we cannot advise weak civilian control over security forces. Instead, we would argue for greater professionalization of the security forces, including training in human rights and the nonlethal use of force, to prevent atrocities from occurring. To the extent that all regimes use some force against dissidents, containing such violence depends on a high degree of internal discipline, sensitivity to human rights and civil liberties, and the use of de-escalatory tactics.

Authors' Note

Replication data are available at https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/salehyan.

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Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. We use the term "military factionalism" as a shorthand for divisions between the ruling elite and the state security forces. Security forces include the military, police, secret services, and other coercive institutions of the state. However, a large share of

repression is conducted directly by the military. For this reason, we use the term military factionalism to refer broadly to infighting among the security apparatus of the state.

2. Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) is available online at www.scaddata.org. These data were previously referred to as the Social Conflict in Africa Database; the name change reflects expanded geographic coverage. However, we focus exclusively on sub-Saharan and North Africa for the purposes of this article.
3. Also see Fariss (2014, 301-4) for a discussion of standards-based and event-based human rights data.
4. Moving beyond statistical significance, Hill and Jones (2014) indicate that few state-level variables help to improve the predictive accuracy of statistical models beyond base specifications including democracy and ongoing armed conflict.
5. We note here that insurgencies may be more likely to emerge from rural areas and be threatening to the state, but the types of events included in our data, described below, exclude insurgent attacks. That civil conflicts—armed incompatibilities between the state and nonstate armed actors—involve the use of repression against nonstate actors is inherent to the definition of the concept (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015).
6. Alpha Camara and Antony Sguazzin. "Guinea Coup Leaders Name President, Governing Council." *Bloomberg News.* December 24, 2008.
7. In the Online Appendix, we explicitly look at ethnic relations and the occurrence of factional fighting within the military (Table A3). We demonstrate the ethnic fractionalization, ethnic horizontal inequality, and the size of the leader's ethnic group are all significantly related to intragovernmental fighting, whereas intraregime violence is not strongly correlated with coups.
8. These two mechanisms are observationally equivalent. Internal government orders are frequently not made public or are classified material, and therefore, we cannot distinguish between the two.
9. Ritter (2014) makes the somewhat different claim: leaders who are more secure in office are less likely to repress, while we argue that insecure leaders are less likely to do so. However, her measure of executive political survival does not focus explicitly on the probability of military defections.
10. We note that there may be reporting bias in the data, with greater media coverage of events in cities versus rural areas (Weidmann 2016). Small, nonlethal events in urban areas may have a greater likelihood of being observed by journalists than similar events elsewhere. However, in observing repression, this bias should work against a significant finding for our urban dummy variable. If only more impactful, larger events in the countryside make it into news reports, and these are more likely to be repressed, then reporting bias should inflate rural repression. For an extended discussion of reporting bias in SCAD, see Hendrix and Salehyan (2015).
11. SCAD contains a fourteen-part coding scheme for the issues underlying the contentious event. We use this information to construct our measure of issue type. Political issues: one (elections) and ten (human rights and democracy); economic issues: two (economy and jobs), three (food, water, and subsistence), and twelve (economic resources/assets);

ethnic/religious: five (ethnic discrimination and ethnic issues) and six (religious discrimination and religious issues). See the SCAD codebook or Salehyan et al. (2012) for details.

12. These overlaps are relatively uncommon ($\sim$2 percent of events).
13. While these events include some coups and attempted coups, the empirical overlap with existing coup data (Powell and Thyne 2011) is relatively weak: the count of past successful coups and count of past instances of military factionalism are only weakly positively correlated ($r = 0.35$). Moreover, history of past coups is not strongly correlated with any included measures of ethnic diversity used as robustness checks (ethnic fractionalization, $r = .06$; horizontal ethnic inequality, $r = .18$; leader's ethnic group percentage of population, $r = -.06$), whereas military factionalism is correlated with all three (negatively or positively, depending on the measure) at $r > .4$.
14. We take a count of news stories not containing the words protest, riot, strike, violence, or attack (the key words used to identify SCAD events) in a particular year and divide this figure into quartiles. Nonconflict reporting gives us an estimate of the total amount of media effort devoted to a particular country/year.
15. Calculations of predicted probabilities and marginal effects are based on model 1.
16. The values of ethnic/religious and past military factionalism for which the effects are statistically significant account for either 51 percent (two-tailed, $p < .05$) or 52 percent (two-tailed, $p < .1$) of observations in the sample.
17. The distinction between zero past factionalism and any past factionalism represents a logical break in the data: subsequent *t*-tests for the reported variables were not significant when stratifying between countries with low past factionalism (1 to 4) and high past factionalism (5 to 10).
18. All country-year covariates drop from the fixed effects specification, including past factionalism.
19. For an extended discussion of the relationship between measures of ethnic diversity, inequality, and exclusion, see the Online Appendix, section 3, Table A3.
20. Ivory Coast's leaders (1990–2009) were Félix Houphouët-Boigny, whose ethnic group (Baule) makes up 20 percent of Ivory Coast's population, Henri Konan Bédié (Baule, 20 percent), Robert Guéï (Kru, 18 percent), and Laurent Gbagbo (Kru, 18 percent). DRC's were Mobutu Sese Seko (Ngbandi, 2 percent) and Laurent and Joseph Kabila (Luba Shaba, 5 percent).

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