

Go with the Flow: How Rivalry and Refugee Movements Impact Repression

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Abstract

When does an influx of refugees lead the host state to engage in repression? Does the presence of an international rivalry influence this? In this study, we unify literature on interstate rivalries, refugee flows, and preemptive repression to examine when and how massive influxes of refugees lead host governments to engage in increased levels of repression against the incoming refugees and the domestic population as a whole. We focus on refugee flows as a possible source of threat perception and argue that host states do not perceive threats equally from all incoming populations. We argue that the threat posed by refugee influxes is mitigated when those refugees are fleeing a state whose host is a rival. Put simply, *where the refugees come from matters*. We test our assertions on a global sample of dyadic pairs of states from 1961 to 2006 and find support for our argument.

Word Count: 8870

The number of forcibly displaced people worldwide continues to steadily increase every year due to conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Sudan, and elsewhere (Amnesty International 2017 Global Trends). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) lists Turkey, Lebanon, Iran, Pakistan, Ethiopia, and Jordan as currently hosting the largest refugee populations (2016).¹ The geographic concentration of the largest refugee populations should come as no surprise given that some of the most intense and long-lasting conflicts are in neighboring states. The link between conflict and refugees is clear—conflict creates refugees—but a related link exists between international rivalry and conflict. Interstate rivalries are likely to lead to elevated tensions and ultimately a conflict between them (Hensel 1996; Senese and Vasquez 2008; Vasquez and Henehan 2001; Vasquez 2009).²

In this study, we unify literature on interstate rivalries, refugee flows, and preemptive repression to examine when and how massive influxes of refugees lead host governments to engage in increased (or decreased) levels of repression against the incoming refugees and the domestic population as a whole. Previous studies have argued that the presence of international rivalry can lead hosts to accept large numbers of refugees from their rival (Jackson and Atkinson 2019; Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019). Others have argued that neighboring states, fearing externalities from civil conflicts like civil war spreading into their own country, engage in preemptive repression against their domestic population to prevent dissent from turning into

¹ Within the context of this paper, we utilize the UNHCR's definition of a refugee, which is "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion" (2017).

² We define interstate rivalry as "relationships in which states have singled out other states as distinctive competitors and enemies posing some actual or potential military threat" (Colaresi et al. 2008, pg. 26). Essentially, states that are rivals share a strong adversarial relationship due to a disagreement over a contentious issue(s) that has endured over an extended period of time (Colaresi et al. 2008; Diehl and Goertz 2000; Vasquez 2009).

rebellion (Danneman and Ritter 2014). Incoming refugees represent one externality of civil war and host states may perceive a threat from refugees that could bring weapons, grievances, and violent ideologies into the host state (Danneman and Ritter 2014; Salehyan 2011; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006).

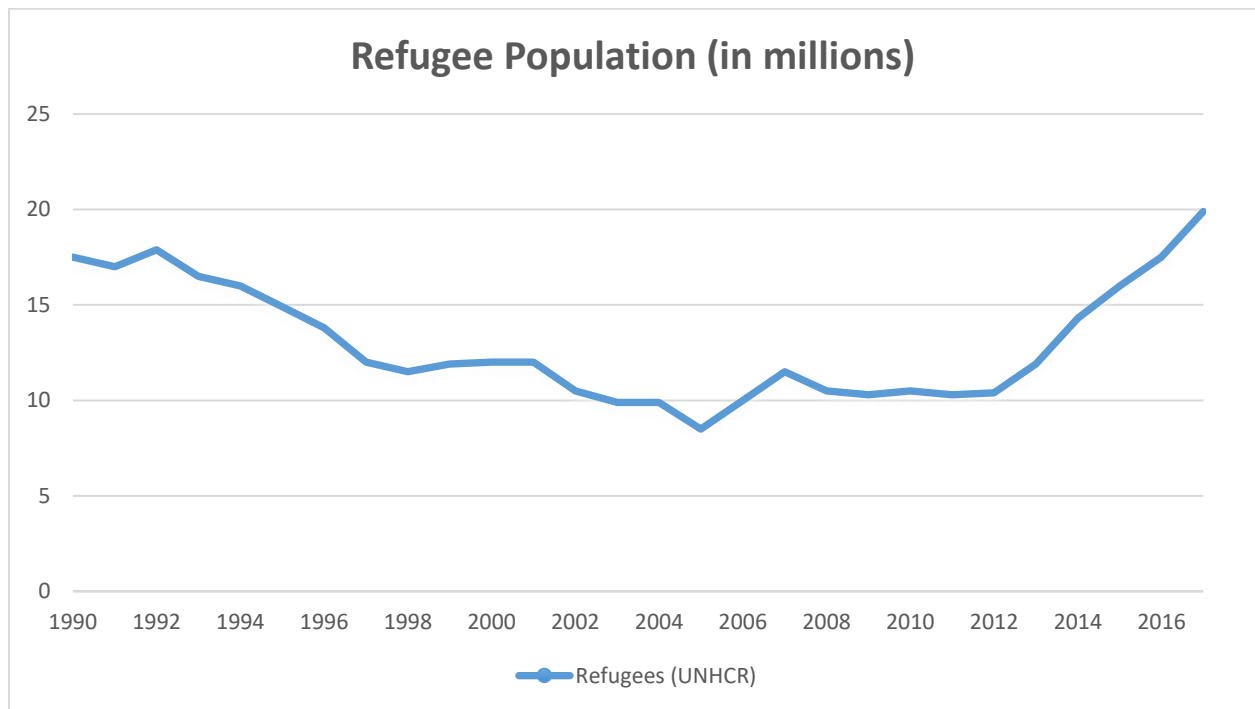


Figure 1: Total Global Refugee Population³

We focus on refugee flows as a possible source of threat perception and argue that host states do not perceive threats equally from all incoming populations. While states generally do perceive a threat from civil conflict diffusing into their borders, the threat posed by refugee influxes is mitigated when those refugees are fleeing the regime of which the host is a rival. Put simply, *where the refugees come from matters*. When refugees entering a state are from a regime that is the host state's rival, we argue that they are likely not seen as threatening to the host regime and

³ Data for this graph comes from the UNHCR Global Trend Reports and covers all refugees under the UNHCR's mandate: (<https://www.unhcr.org/search?comid=56b079c44&&cid=49aea93aba&tags=globaltrends>)

the receiving government is therefore less likely to increase its levels of repression within its own borders. This may be due to the fact that the host state can be seen as a potential ally or place of refuge for the refugees. This dynamic may also prevent host states from increasing their repression against their own citizens, since they do not fear that the refugees pose a risk of fomenting rebellion within their borders. However, when the host state is a friend or ally, of the sending state, the refugees may carry their grievances against the host as well; as the host may be seen as an enabler of the government attacking or threatening the refugees.

In a quantitative assessment of our argument, we find strong support for our theory. This study has important implications for the academic study of the impact of interstate relationships on refugee flows, and our findings can also impact the policy community concerned with refugee populations. In the remainder of this paper, we begin with a brief review of the literature that has explored refugee flows, rivalry, and repression. Following that, we introduce our theory, which outlines the causal effect of rivalry on refugee flows and subsequent levels of repression. We then introduce our research design and subsequent analysis of the testable implications of our theory via quantitative analysis. We conclude with a discussion of our findings and a summary of the potential implications our research may have on the academic and policy communities.

Refugee Flows and International Relations

States from which individuals are fleeing often consider the act of sending refugees to be costly—governments generally do not want to produce refugees, even if the government engages in repression and severe violence.⁴ When governments are fighting against rebels, their ability to target and pursue these rebels is limited to within their borders, as attacking rebels across an

⁴ There are exceptions to this. See, e.g., some cases of governments intentionally creating refugee influxes into a neighboring state as a strategy of cost imposition (Greenhill 2010).

international boundary violates another state's territorial sovereignty and carries the risk of triggering a serious international conflict (Salehyan 2008). If members of rebel groups conceal themselves among a refugee population and begin to travel back and forth across the border, their ability to impose costs on their government increases, so states embroiled in conflict do not want to surrender bargaining power to rebel groups by letting them operate transnationally (Bapat 2007; Salehyan 2011). Also, if governments do not want other states to interfere in their domestic conflict, they may want to avoid producing refugees as a strategy of containing negative externalities from the conflict that may incentivize other states or international organizations to become involved.

Consumers of political news will be aware that host states are often hesitant to accept large numbers of refugees because a variety of costs may be associated with them, including strains on welfare systems, domestic unpopularity, and the possibility of conflict spreading into the host's borders (Choi and Salehyan 2013; Loescher 1992; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). Costs from domestic political backlash in response to refugee influxes can be severe and varied, stemming from nativism and frustration with the likelihood that the refugees will be dependent upon the state in the foreseeable future. Refugees can be seen as taking resources that could have otherwise gone towards its citizens but instead are being diverted to newcomers. Since these resources are diverted away from those that had been receiving them, it increases the likelihood that the groups who perceive that the resources are being taken from them will have new grievances against the government and will withdraw their support, leaving the government more susceptible to attempts to remove them from office, as their winning coalition will not be as stable with the loss of former supporters (Collier 2013; McCarty 2013).

Aside from social welfare strains and cultural/demographic tensions, costs from hosting refugees can also come from security concerns. Often, citizens fear that mass migration into their country can lead to domestic terrorist attacks (BBC Independent.com), a fear that has been repeatedly aroused by President Trump (Trump 2016a, 2016b; Washingtonpost.com). Governments involved in civil wars or counter-insurgency campaigns are often willing to attack rebels across international boundaries (Maoz and San-Akca 2012); if rebel group members are believed to be part of the refugee population in a host state, this may induce an attack by the sender on the host's soil (Salehyan 2008). If refugees are not afforded sufficient economic assistance and opportunity in the host, they may turn to black markets and illicit activities, increasing crime, domestic tensions, and possibly violence among the domestic population (Fisk 2018). Furthermore, in cases where the incoming refugee population is ethnic kin to an ethnic minority within a host's borders, the government may anticipate that the refugees will exacerbate grievances among the ethnic population in the host, triggering an increased risk of civil conflict (Cederman et al. 2013; Ostby 2008). Indeed, refugees have been proposed as a mechanism explaining the geographic diffusion of civil war by scholars arguing that refugee flows provide a means for the spread of arms, money, and grievances across borders (Danneman and Ritter 2014; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006).

The international political asylum and refugee system is clearly political. Sending states and potential hosts must consider the domestic opinion, demographic, financial, and/or security implications of mass forced migration, and the international community is increasingly affected by refugee populations. Aside from the state-centric concerns, the diplomatic relationship between the sending state and the potential host also matters. States are hesitant to accept refugees from their allies since this may strain their relationship, and states are generally more willing to accept

large numbers of refugees when they are fleeing a political rival of the host regime (Jackson and Atkinson 2019; Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019). Central to our argument is that once refugees are within a host's borders, host states consider which country the refugees fled from when assessing the potential threat posed by the refugees. The refugees' state of origin plays an important role in whether the government responds to the influx of refugees with preemptive repression.

Before delving into our theoretical expectations, a brief discussion on where refugees go, and the presence of potential selection issues needs to be addressed. Selection issues can impact this process in two ways. First, the level of agency refugees have in choosing their destination, and second, the ability of states to control refugee flows across their borders. Although refugees are forced to flee their homes, leaving them with minimal agency regarding that decision, they do have some preferences about where they go. All things equal, it seems obvious that refugees would prefer states without conflict, those that have strong economies, secure institutions, as well as low costs of entry and integration. However, in reality, the majority of refugees (approximately 80-90%) find themselves in neighboring states or in the same geographic region (Moore and Shellman 2007, 813; Rügger and Bohnet 2018, 67; UNHCR 2014). Outside of geographic proximity, the largest determinant of refugee destinations are cultural factors (Moore and Shellman 2007; Rügger and Bohnet 2018). Essentially, "trans-border ethnic linkages" serve as the primary determination of refugee population movements (Rügger and Bohnet 2018). Rügger and Bohnet (2018) have created the Ethnicity of Refugees Dataset for understanding refugee flight patterns, and in their research, they discuss their "ethno-political pull model with spatio-temporal features." This model illustrates, first, how refugees seek asylum in states that are as close as possible to their ethnic group's home territory as it allows them to return home once it is safe to do so, and allows them to maintain communication and ties to their home and relatives (Crisp and Jacobsen 1998, 29;

Rügger and Bohnet 2018). Others, however, remain at border areas near their state because they are unable to travel any further (Rügger and Bohnet 2018; Schmeidl 1997, 296). Second, refugees are naturally attracted to neighboring states whose populations share cultural and ethnic similarities (Rügger and Bohnet 2018). Similarities between host populations and the refugees themselves assist with and decrease the costs of integrating and living in their new host state. Finally, refugees often travel the same route as previous migration or refugee flows (Rügger and Bohnet 2018). This is due to the previous creation of border-crossing networks and information flows between sending and receiving states (Rügger and Bohnet 2018). While it may be intuitive to believe that refugees will seek out states that have institutions in place to protect them or with enhanced economic opportunity, the reality is that this is not always the case. As Moore and Shellman (2007, 831) discuss, “we found little support for the hypotheses that institutions that protect freedoms and economic opportunities play roles in destination choices.” Similarly, when focusing on ethnic refugee groups, Rügger and Bohnet (2018), also fail to find evidence that refugees are attracted to political or economic factors. Put simply, refugees are often forced to flee to nearby states where they share cultural characteristics with the local population and where others like them have traveled before.

States that find themselves as the primary destination of refugee flows are also often unable to stem these refugee flows into their border areas. International laws against refoulment explicitly disallow states to force refugees to return to the homes they fled. Furthermore, these states often lack the resources to control entire swaths of border to where they may not even be able to stem refugee flows even if they wanted to. Other states and international organizations may also provide resources and financial incentives for these states to provide refuge to refugee populations to prevent additional population movements. Quite simply, states often find themselves hosting

many refugees simply due to geography, as international law obligates countries to protect asylum seekers with a legitimate fear of persecution, leaving contiguous states more or less involuntarily hosts to refugee populations (Betts 2011).

Repression and the Expectation of Conflict

A robust literature on state violence shows that governments use repression in response to a perceived threat from domestic opposition (see, e.g., Davenport 1995, 2007; Haschke 2011; Poe 2004). Repression may come in many forms, including restrictions on free expression, the use of imprisonment or physical harm to prevent political opposition, torture, and extrajudicial killing. Governments' scale of repression use can vary in response to current or anticipated events; competitive elections can trigger an increase in repression (Levitsky and Way 2010). In cases of ongoing civil wars, especially those that threaten the survival of the regime, the government may respond with severe forms of repression such as indiscriminate violence and even mass killing (Barry, Clay and Flynn 2013; Blanton and Blanton 2007; Harff 2003; Krain 1997; Lebovic and Voeten 2009; Mason and Krane 1989).

Governments may also increase their use of repression when they anticipate an increase in opposition/rebel group activity, or an increased risk of civil conflict. For example, when a civil war is occurring in a neighboring states, governments tend to be wary of the possibility of conflict diffusing into their borders (Forsberg 2016; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). If a government believes that grievances among its population may be aroused, possibly to the point of violence, by the neighboring conflict, then it may respond with *preemptive repression*, cracking down on the local population to defuse mobilization and signal to them that the costs of rebellion are high (Danneman and Ritter 2014). Alternatively, the government may anticipate that anniversaries of meaningful historical occurrences, highly visible meetings by regime officials (or international

summits), and similarly popular events are dangerously conducive to overcoming the collective action problem of rebellion (Truex 2019). The government may therefore use preemptive repression leading up to these “focal events” (Truex 2019, 1033) to prevent them from escalating into large-scale protests or violence.

However, we anticipate a caveat in the (preemptive) repression argument: the incentive for states to engage in preemptive repression when responding to mass refugee influxes should be mitigated when the refugees are fleeing from a rival of the host state. When civil wars occur, actors in neighboring and nearby states take cues. Individuals observing a fruitful revolution may decide that violence is a better option for them as well (Buhaug and Gleditsch 2008; Gurr 1993). Violent groups in the neighboring states may learn new, more effective tactics and may use the turmoil to expand their recruitment networks and improve their strength (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). Crucially, governments may anticipate all this and attempt to increase costs of political dissent, hoping to minimize the utility of rebellion (Danneman and Ritter 2014).

While the causal pathways of civil conflict diffusion are not yet fully understood, refugee flows have consistently been proposed as one mechanism. Large, rapid refugee flows can be conducive to increased networking for mobilization, arms sales, and grievance flows, causing the seeds of one country’s conflicts to sprout across other borders (Salehyan 2011; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). States are well aware of the security dangers of taking in large numbers of refugees; refugee camps, despite being ostensibly a good option for host states due to the U.N. assistance that comes with it, are reliably sites of violence and rebel recruitment (Betts 2011; Fisk 2016, 2018). This explains why when refugees pour into a country in large numbers, hosts tend to respond to this as a security issue by increasing repression (Wright and Moorthy 2018).

Central to our argument is that the decision to use preemptive repression in response to refugee flows is conditioned by the refugees' state of origin. More specifically, when refugees are fleeing from an interstate rival of the host state, the host will refrain from increasing repression because it is less likely to see the refugees as a threat. This variation in threat perception comes from the antagonistic diplomatic relationship between the sender and the host. Research has shown that interstate rivals are more willing to accept each other's refugees in high numbers as a way of imposing costs on their rival (Jackson and Atkinson 2019; Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019).⁵ Hosts see a net benefit in hosting their rival's refugees because of the unique payoffs that the rivalry assigns to refugee hosts, but also due to the decreased risk associated with the refugees. Part of the logic for refugee admission by rivals is that the refugees are not likely to be a security threat since *they hold grievances against the host state's enemy*. From the refugees' point of view, a regime friendly to their government would make a poor host, since that country will not want to upset their ally by protecting their refugees (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019). On the other hand, a country that is an enemy of their government will likely take them in and will not be perceived as an enabler or ally of the regime that is trying to kill them. And while the refugees will be "carrying grievances"—one of the dangers associated with refugee flows—those grievances will be against the host state's enemy and is therefore not threatening to the host. In actuality, the very fact that a rivalry exists between the host and sender may create some affinity between the refugee population and the host, as they have an enemy in common, a fact that is highly salient in the shadow of an ongoing war.

⁵ Rivals use refugee admission to impose costs of various forms onto their rival. For example, accepting your rival's citizens sends a signal that your regime is superior even in the eyes of your enemy's own citizens (Jackson and Atkinson 2019) and that your opponent cannot guarantee their citizens' security (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2019, 144).

The relationship between the refugees and the host government is therefore conditioned by the presence of rivalry. Rival states of the sending country make for attractive hosts for the refugee populations and are willing to take on the burden. Refugees make for attractive guests because admitting them imposes costs on a rival state, and they are not likely a security concern since their grievances are against an enemy that the host also opposes. Because their grievances are held against the host's enemy, they are not likely to translate into mobilization against the host, and are thus not likely to lead to civil conflict in the host. The domestic public opinion costs of hosting refugees are lessened in the context of rivalry, as accepting refugees can be seen approvingly by the domestic audience as a way of undermining the enemy regime.⁶

To the extent that refugees play a role in triggering an increase in repression in nearby countries, the factors that drive this process are less likely to be present when the refugees come from a rival. The refugees are less likely to view the host unfavorably, less likely to turn their grievances into mobilization against the host, and more likely to be seen as a benefit in the eyes of the host regime. Accordingly, there is less reason for the host to increase repression when a rival's refugees pour into their borders, since the threat normally posed by refugees should not be perceived toward this specific population.

Hypothesis 1: States hosting refugees originating from a rival will have lower levels of overall repression, relative to states hosting refugees from a non-rival state regardless of the size of the flow of refugees.

⁶ For example, President Eisenhower highlighted the despotic conditions of fascist and Soviet countries and immorality of their regimes as he was making a speech announcing that the U.S. would accept hundreds of thousands of new refugees from those countries (American Presidency Project).

Note that the logic of preemptive repression holds whether the government targets the domestic or the refugee population. When scholars argue that a civil conflict can trigger repression next door, they are arguing that repression increases *against the entire population*, not just against the incoming refugee population. The host government wants to signal to the entire population that rebellion would be too costly here, even if it looks attractive over there. This is why studies of preemptive repression examine country-wide levels of repression, rather than repression specifically against refugees or some other subset of the population (Danneman and Ritter 2014; Truex 2019).

Yet the logic of preemptive repression applies to refugee populations as well—if the government sees refugee flows as a threat to its domestic security, it makes sense that it would repress the refugees directly to increase the costs of rebellion and cut their mobilization efforts short. If the host does not see the refugees as a threat (if they come from a rival state), they are less likely to repress the refugees directly. Unfortunately, data on violence specifically involving refugees has until recently been scarce, preventing a quantitative assessment of this argument.⁷

Fortunately, the new POSVAR data (Gineste and Savun 2019) allow us to test this proposition and evaluate our main argument more thoroughly. These data record all incidents of refugee-related violence in all countries from 1996-2015, allowing us to examine levels of violence against refugees.⁸ For this hypothesis, the theoretical motivation, logic, and expectation is the same, but we restrict the victim population to refugees to examine how governments respond to refugee populations directly:

⁷ See Fisk (2018) for a notable exception in which she examines one-sided violence against refugees in camps, although her data are temporally and spatially limited.

⁸ The authors collect data on all violence including refugees, and from these data we leverage incidences of government attacks against refugees.

Hypothesis 2: States hosting refugees originating from a rival will have lower levels of government violence against refugees, relative to states hosting refugees from a non-rival state regardless of the size of the flow of refugees.

Research Design

We test our argument on a global sample of dyadic pairs of states over the period 1961 – 2006 based on the availability of our refugee data. The unit of analysis for our study is the directed dyad-year, which allows us to examine the flow of states from one state to the other and vice-versa separately. Each cross-section consists of two states, a potential sender and a potential receiver.

Dependent Variable

As our primary measure of repression, we employ the Latent Human Rights Protection Scores introduced by Schnakenberg and Fariss (2014) and Fariss (2014). This measure provides a comprehensive measure of repression that accounts for both violations of individuals' physical integrity rights as well as measures of political empowerment, including freedom of speech, assembly, movement, religion, and workers' rights, and political participation. This dataset provides repression scores for the period from 1949 – 2013. Since this measure is continuous, we use ordinary least squares regression (OLS) to obtain estimates of the association between repression and our independent variables.

As our secondary measure of repression in the receiving state, we use the Physical Integrity Rights Index from the CIRI Human Rights Data Project (Cingranelli, Richards, and Clay 2014). This measure is an additive index based on the levels of torture, extrajudicial killing, political imprisonment, and disappearance reported within a state. For ease of interpretation, we invert the CIRI index so that higher values of our dependent variable indicate higher levels of repression.

This data covers the period from 1981-2011. Since this variable has a total of 9 possible values, we treat it as continuous.

To assess the effect of refugee intake on the repression of refugees we use the government violence against refugees measure from the Political and Societal Violence by and Against Refugees (POSVAR) (Gineste and Savun 2019). This POSVAR dataset covers all states in our dataset over the period between 1996 and 2015. The government violence against refugees measure ranges from 0 to 3, with 0 suggesting that a state engaged in no violence towards refugees and a 3 suggesting that the state engaged in systematic acts of violence.⁹

Primary Independent Variables

Testing our hypotheses requires measures of refugee flows and rivalry. We measure the number of refugees accepted by the recipient state from the sending state in a given year. Data on refugees come from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This measure includes individuals who flee from other states due to security issues as the result of widespread violence. This excludes individuals displaced within the host state (i.e., internally displaced persons), refugees returning to the host state from another country, and individuals who have migrated to the host state for non-security reasons (e.g. economic migrants). In addition, asylum seekers are excluded as they do not have refugee status within a state.

To measure rivalry, we use the Strategic Rivalry Dataset (Thompson 2001). This data considers two states to be rivals if they meet three conditions: the two states must regard each other as enemies, each must be able to effectively compete with the other, and both must consider the other an actual or potential military threat. We employ a binary indicator of whether two states are considered rivals in a given year.

⁹ The intensity of the violence towards refugees is measured according to the number of victims. A 0= no violence, 1=there are 1-25 victims, 2= 26-99 victims of violence, and 3= 100 or more victims of government violence.

Our theory predicts that there is a conditional relationship between rivalry status and the receiving state's response to incoming refugees. We test this argument by interacting the number of refugees accepted in the receiving state with the rivalry status of the dyad. We find that higher levels of refugee flows are associated with lower respect for human rights in the receiver state when they do not have a rivalry with the sending state. By contrast, we expect there to be a null or weak relationship between the number of accepted refugees and the level of receiver repression when they do have a rivalry with the sending state. To avoid the possibility of simultaneity bias, we lag all independent variables by one year.

Control Variables

We control for dyadic characteristics that may influence refugee flows between two states. Since contiguity is an important determinant of both whether states receive refugees and whether they do so willingly, we control for whether two states have contiguous borders using the Correlates of War (COW) Direct Contiguity Dataset (Stinnett et al. 2002). To account for potential ethnic linkages between the refugees and the host state, we include a binary measure of whether the refugee, we control for ethnic linkages between states using an indicator of whether two states share ethnic kinsman using data from the Transnational Ethnic Kin dataset (Vogt et al. 2015)

We also control for factors that may affect the receiving state's propensity to accept refugees and its level of repression. Civil conflict in the recipient state may influence the level of refugees they accept and the extent to which they engage in repression. We control for whether there is an ongoing civil war in the recipient state using the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's Armed Conflict Dataset (Allansson, Melander, and Themnér 2017; Gleditsch et al. 2002). Since democracies are generally less likely to engage in repression, we control for the regime type of the

receiving state using the Varieties of Democracy (VDEM) polyarchy index. This measure provides a latent score of democracy based on (Coppedge et al. 2017).

A state's economic capacity has been found to affect the extent to which the state engages in repression and its propensity to accept refugees. To control for this, we include the recipient's GDP per capita. We also include the recipient's population, which has been found to influence a state's level of repression (Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999). Data for both GDP per capita and population come from the World Bank.

Empirical Results

To account for unobserved heterogeneity, we estimate models that account for unit effects. Since our primary independent variables and dependent variable both exhibit substantial cross-sectional variation, the use of fixed effects models that eliminate the between-effects of our covariates is undesirable (e.g., Bell and Jones 2015). Subsequently we estimate our models using a simple random effects generalized least squares model with robust standard errors.

In table 1, we present the results of models using the latent human rights measure as the dependent variable. Model 1 presents the baseline model with the number of refugees, rivalry, and all control variables. We find that the number of refugees accepted by a recipient state is associated with a decrease in levels of repression within that state, indicating that states may resort to the use of repression to deter or suppress unrest due to an influx of refugees into their state.

In Model 2 we introduce a multiplicative interaction term between rivalry and refugees. We find that the multiplicative interaction term between rivalry and refugees is significant, indicating that the effect of refugees on repression within the recipient state is contingent on whether or not the refugees come from a rival state or not. To interpret the interaction effect, Figure 1 displays the predicted values of respect for human rights across the range of refugees for both

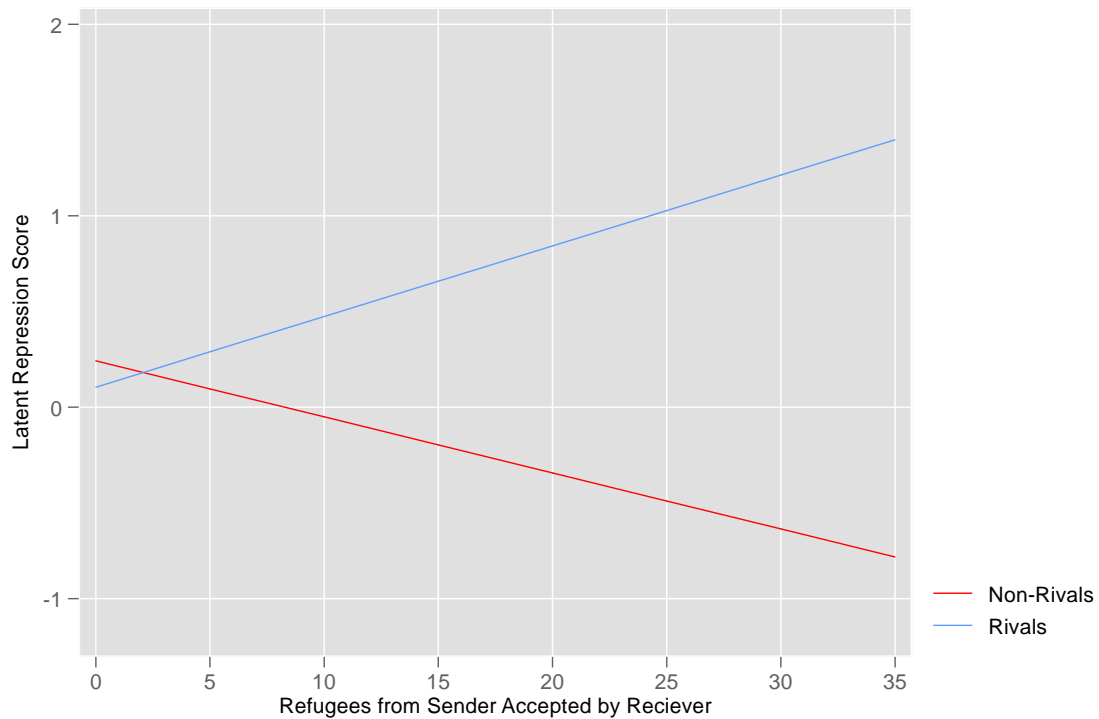
rival and nonrival dyads (all other variables are held constant at their medians). As can be seen, respect for human rights decreases as the number of refugees accepted from a nonrival sender increases. This demonstrates that an influx of refugees from nonrival states is associated with higher levels of repression within the receiving state, both in terms of violent and the suppression of individual empowerment. By contrast, an influx of refugees from a rival state does not have any discernible effect on the level of violent repression within the recipient country, even at very high levels of refugees. This is consistent with our theory, which predicts that refugees from rival states represent a lower threat to the state and therefore do not incentivize the state to engage in repression.

Table 1: Random Effects Linear Regression of Latent Respect for Human Rights (Robust Errors)

	(1)	(2)
Rivalry	-0.113*** (0.016)	-0.124*** (0.016)
Refugees Accepted (hundreds of thousands)	0.011** (0.004)	-0.030*** (0.007)
Refugees Accepted x Rivalry		0.067*** (0.008)
Contiguity	-0.027 (0.022)	-0.026 (0.022)
Transnational Ethnic Kin	-0.171*** (0.017)	-0.170*** (0.017)
Ongoing Civil Conflict	-0.603*** (0.002)	-0.603*** (0.002)
Polyarchy Score	1.439*** (0.004)	1.439*** (0.004)
Ln GDP per Capita	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Ln Population	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)
Constant	-0.417*** (0.004)	-0.417*** (0.004)
Observations	913626	913626
R ²	0.584	0.584

* p<0.10 ** p<0.05 *** p<.01 in a two-tailed test.

Figure 2: Predicted Respect for Human Rights for Rivals and Nonrivals



To ensure our results from Table 1 are robust, we employ the CIRI index as an alternate dependent variable. Table 2 presents the results of our analysis using the CIRI physical integrity rights index as our dependent variable. Model 1 presents the baseline model with the number of refugees, rivalry, and all control variables. As before, we find that the number of refugees accepted by a recipient state is associated with lower levels of respect for physical integrity rights.

Table 2: Random Effects Linear Regression of CIRI Physical Integrity Rights Index (Robust Errors)

	(1)	(2)
Rivalry	-0.291*** (0.054)	-0.318*** (0.054)
Refugees Accepted	-0.013 (0.018)	-0.067*** (0.023)
Rivalry X Refugees Accepted		0.097*** (0.026)
Contiguity	-0.050 (0.045)	-0.047 (0.045)
Transnational Ethnic Kin	-0.073** (0.031)	-0.072** (0.031)
Ongoing Civil Conflict	-1.688*** (0.006)	-1.688*** (0.006)
Polyarchy Score	2.323*** (0.013)	2.322*** (0.013)
Ln GDP per Capita	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Ln Population	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)
Constant	4.099*** (0.009)	4.099*** (0.009)
Observations	599906	599906
R ²	0.472	0.472

* p<0.10 ** p<0.05 *** p<.01 in a two-tailed test.

Model 2 introduces a multiplicative interaction term between rivalry and refugees. As before, we find that the multiplicative interaction term is significant. Figure 3 displays the predicted values of the CIRI index across the range of refugees for both rival and nonrival dyads (all other variables are held constant at their medians). Respect for physical integrity rights decreases as the number of refugees accepted from a nonrival sender increases. This demonstrates that an influx of refugees from nonrival states is associated with higher levels of violent repression, including the use of kidnappings, torture, extrajudicial killings, and political imprisonment, within the receiving state. By contrast, an influx of refugees from a rival state does not have any

discernible effect on the level of violent repression within the recipient country, even at very high levels of refugees.

Figure 3: Predicted CIRI Physical Integrity Rights Index for Rivals and Nonrivals

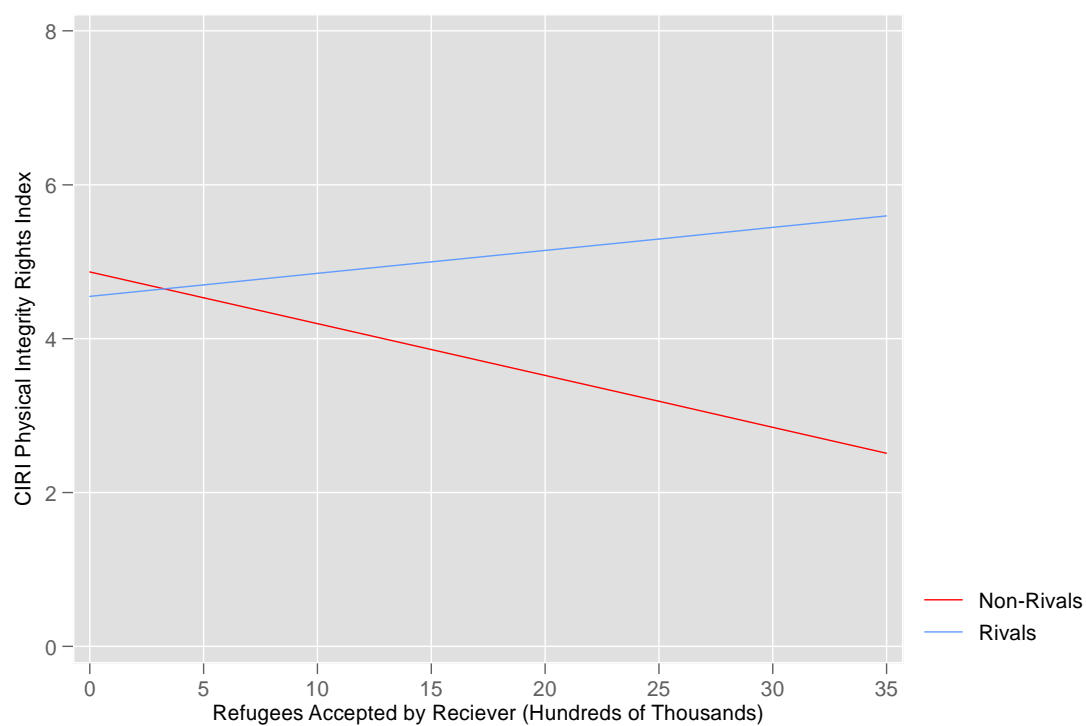


Table 3: Ordered Logistic Regressions on Government Violence Toward Refugees

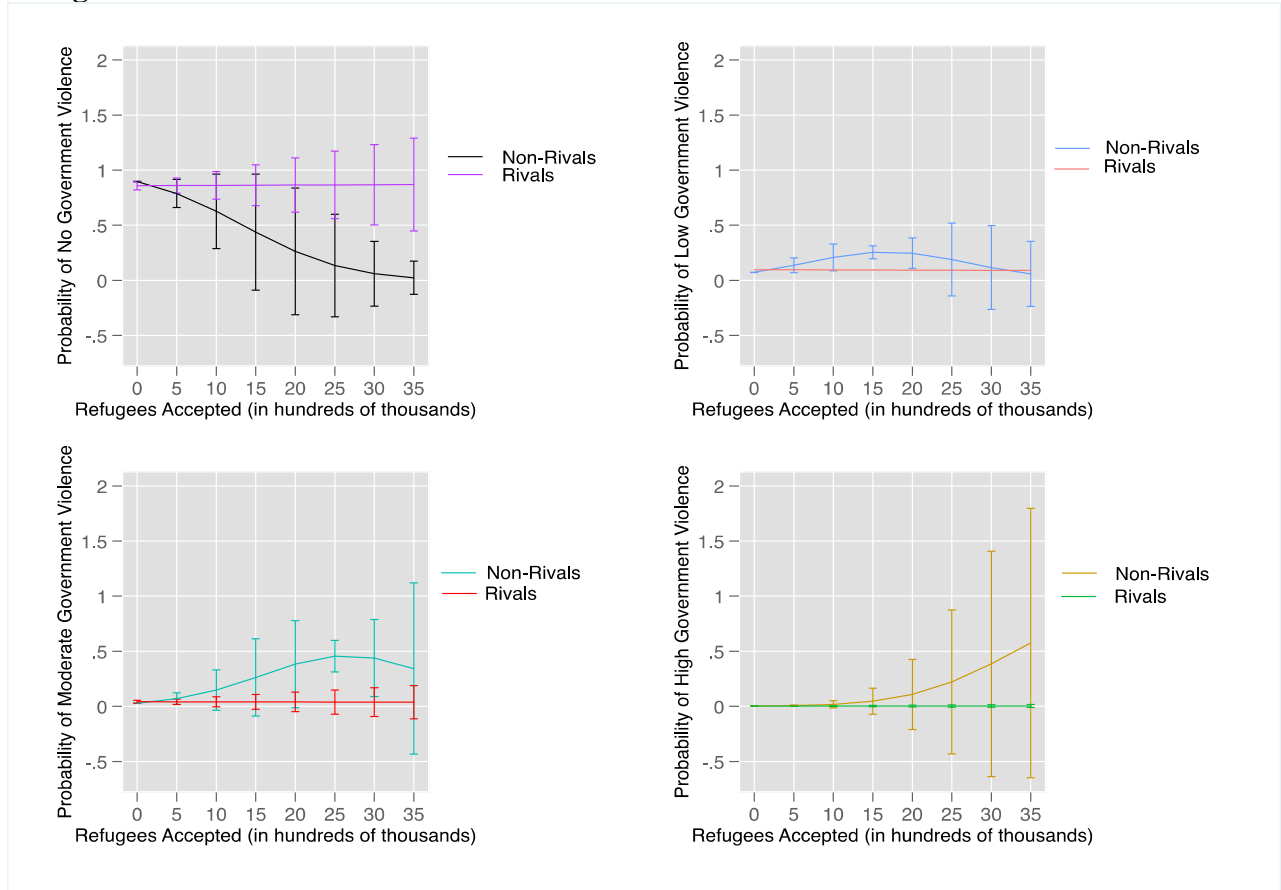
	(1)	(2)
Refugees Accepted	0.046 (0.066)	0.231** (0.109)
Rivalry	0.406** (0.207)	0.478** (0.209)
Rivalry x Refugees		-0.234** (0.115)
Contiguity	-0.010 (0.098)	-0.028 (0.099)
Transnational Ethnic Kin	0.451*** (0.063)	0.449*** (0.063)
Civil Conflict	-0.004 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.023)
Polyarchy	-1.220*** (0.052)	-1.219*** (0.052)
Receiver GDP/PC	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.000*** (0.000)
Receiver Population	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Cut 1	2.313*** (0.029)	2.313*** (0.029)
Cut 2	3.895*** (0.031)	3.896*** (0.031)
Cut 3	6.848*** (0.051)	6.848*** (0.051)
Sigma 2_u	2.534*** (0.048)	2.534*** (0.048)
Observations	322912	322912
Log Likelihood	-115627.73	-115625.59

* p<0.10 ** p<0.05 *** p<.01 in a two-tailed test.

Table 3 presents the results of the models used to analyze Hypothesis 2 regarding government violence perpetrated against refugees. In model 1, we present the results of our baseline models on our ordered measure of government violence against refugees. As can be seen from model 1, rivalry has a positive and statistically significant effect on level of a government's violence directed to refugees. This suggests that when two states are engaged in a rivalry, they are more likely to commit acts of violence toward refugees. In model 1, we also find that the number of refugees that a state accepts does not have a statistically significant effect on the level of

repression. In model 2, we introduce the interaction between the number of refugees from the receiving state and whether or not the two states in a dyad are rivals. As can be seen, the results of this model are in line with the expectations laid out in our theory. Specifically, we find that as the number of refugees flowing into a country increase the likelihood of the government committing acts of violence toward the refugees decrease when those refugees are coming from a rival relative to levels of government violence when those refugees are coming from a non-rival. We also find that when refugees share ethnic kin with the refugees coming from the sending state receiving state governments are more likely to engage in acts of violence directed at the refugee population. In line with previous research, we also find that as states become more democratic and as their GDP per capita increase the governments become less likely to engage in acts of violence against refugee populations. To further analyze the results found in table 1 model 2, we present a graph of the predicted probabilities in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Predicted Probabilities of Various Levels of Government Violence Toward Refugees



In the upper left panel of figure 4, we present the predicted probabilities of the government refraining from violence towards refugee populations. In line with our theory, we find that as the number of refugees increase the probability of a state engaging in no violence toward a refugee population is very high. Specifically, regardless of the size of the refugee inflow, when refugees come from a rival state refugees have about a .95 probability of refraining from violence. On the other hand, when refugees are coming from a non-rival state, as the number of refugees increase, the probability of the receiving state refraining from violence decrease rapidly. When a state receives a flow of two-million refugees there is around a .3 probability that the receiving state will refrain from violence. As the size of the refugee inflow increases to 3 million the probability of a

state refraining from violence towards refugees approaches 0. However, this prediction is not statistically significant and cannot be distinguished from 0.

In the upper right panel, we present the predicted probabilities for a state engaging in low levels of violence toward refugees. As can be seen from the graph, from 0 to 1 million refugees, the probability of low levels of violence towards refugees by the government is roughly the same. At 1.5 million refugees the probability of low levels of government violence peaks at around a .25. Interestingly, as the number of refugees increase, the probabilities begin to decrease. We anticipate that the decrease in predicted probabilities at around this point is due to the fact that after this number of refugees go past this point, governments will engage in higher levels of violence toward refugees. On the other hand, the probability of a rival engaging in low levels of violence remains constant at around .05, regardless of the size of the refugee flow from a rival state.

In the lower left panel, we present the predicted probabilities, for a government engaging in moderate levels of violence toward refugees. As can be seen, from the probability of a state engaging in this level of violence peaks at 2.5 million refugees with a .48 probability of government violence toward refugees. After this point, the probability begins to decrease. We expect this decrease to the fact that at this point states will begin to engage in higher levels of violence. For rivals, the probability of violence is around .05. However, after 1.5 million refugees the confidence intervals cross zero and are therefore indistinguishable from zero.

In the lower right panel, we show the probabilities for high levels of government violence toward refugees. At around 1.5 million refugees, the probability of non-rival states engaging in high levels of violence toward refugees begins to increase, reaching a peak probability of .55 at 3.5 million refugees. It should be noted, that the confidence intervals are quite large and overlap with zero as well as the point estimates for rival states, this is due to the fact that high levels of

violence toward refugees is a relatively rare event. On the other hand, for rival states the probability of engaging in high levels of violence toward refugees remains steady at around .01 regardless of the size of the refugee inflow.

The results reported here are consistent with our theoretical expectations that states are less likely to increase their levels of domestic repression in response to refugee influxes *when those refugees come from a rival of the host state*. Although mass forced migration often comes with costs and security concerns for the hosts, these are offset and alleviated when the refugee population is fleeing from an opponent of the state from which they seek protection. Unfortunately, these data show that the baseline probability of some level of host government violence against refugees is quite high (see figure 4), but they also reveal that rival states are more likely to make safe hosts for the refugees, as they will be less likely to perceive a threat from the refugees and thus less likely to engage in preemptive repression.

Conclusion

Our results support our argument that the treatment of refugees by their host state is impacted by the relations between the host state and the refugees' state of origin. We present two findings that advance the growing literature on refugee flows, interstate relations, and political violence. First, while refugees often endure some level of violence perpetrated by their host state, the probability that their host employs violence against them is lower when the host is a rival of the state of origin. Second, while our analyses confirm existing findings that refugee influxes are associated with the host engaging in preemptive repression (Danneman and Ritter 2014; Truex 2019), we demonstrate that hosts are less likely to repress when the refugees are fleeing the host's rival. We argue that this is explained by variation in leaders' threat perception with respect to the refugees. Generally, massive refugee inflows can come with security concerns wherein potential

hosts fear that refugees may bring conflict into their borders (Forsberg 2016; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006), but these concerns are alleviated when the refugees and the host state both have an enemy in common: the state of origin's regime. In such cases, the refugee population is not perceived as a threat, and the host accordingly does not repress in response to their presence.

Future research concerned with political violence against refugees should further investigate the factors conducive to safe hosts for refugees, as interstate relations are only a part of the explanation. While existing human rights measures are exemplary, they tend to focus more on repression geared towards citizens and not towards refugees. Further analysis capturing the human security of refugees would benefit our understanding of how to maximize the safety of the world's most vulnerable people and could help to inform sound refugee policies.

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