

Electoral Violence and Democratization in West Africa

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1 Introduction

With the introduction of multiparty elections in many Sub-Saharan African states in the 1990s came hope that this “third wave” of democratization would bring a real, lasting departure from the ills of the authoritarian political systems that emerged following decolonization. And yet, violence now plagues the majority of election cycles on the continent.¹ This phenomenon is not unique to democracies in Africa: the United States, England and Wales, and France all experienced electoral violence but were also ultimately successful at reducing that violence and consolidating.² Other European countries in the interwar period, Germany and Italy being the exemplars, saw violent elections accompany the collapse of democracy.

While in recent years we have developed a better understanding of what causes electoral violence in Africa, our knowledge of its effects on broader political outcomes of interest remains limited. Moreover, though academic and policy circles have emphasized how to best mitigate violence during elections, few demonstrate concern for how violence prevention strategies affect prospects for substantive democratization. We need theory linking electoral violence, strategies for prevention, and democracy if we hope to understand which African countries are likely to find themselves on the path of Great Britain, and which are instead inching closer to the fate of the Weimar Republic.

With these problems in mind, this dissertation seeks to answer two important questions. *First*, what are the effects of electoral violence on prospects for democratization in Sub-

1. Data collected by Straus and Taylor (2012) show that only 41% of elections in Sub-Saharan Africa from 1990-2008 experienced no violence.

2. On the United States, see Hofstadter and Wallace (1970); on Great Britain, see Wasserman and Jaggard (2006); on France, see Quantin (1998).

Saharan Africa? More specifically, when does electoral violence hinder or reverse progress made toward the liberal and majoritarian ideals of democracy? That is, when does election violence reinforce the power of the executive over the legislative and judiciary, blocking the decentralization of power and restricting horizontal accountability? And when does violence around elections instead threaten majority rule, fracturing political parties and weakening vertical accountability? *Second*, when do policies meant to reduce electoral violence have similar effects? In other words, when do strategies for ensuring peaceful elections backfire, harming the prospects for deeper democratization? Both questions are crucial to understanding when burgeoning democracies can successfully escape from situations wherein electoral violence is a possibility without threatening democratization.

I argue that, within the context of strong presidential systems characterized by widespread patronage, and assuming that electoral violence is successful at impacting turnout or vote choice, the effects of electoral violence on democratization depend primarily on who the perpetrators are. When incumbents are the sole perpetrators of pre-election and election day violence, this increases their chances of retaining power, further entrenching illiberal democracy as the legislature remains subservient to the executive, and key judiciary posts continue to be filled with judges deferent to the presidency. The majoritarian dimension also suffers as vertical accountability is weakened, especially when the incumbent relies on non-party agents to commit the violence. When the opposition also commits violence prior to and during the election, the effect on majoritarianism is similar, as both parties depend less on real accountability to voters, particularly when both mobilize outside actors to fight for them. However, in this case the liberal dimension of democracy might actually benefit, as violence helps the opposition earn seats in the legislature where they can provide some check on the power of the executive. The effects of post-election violence vary, though unless that violence spirals into civil war, the effects will be similar to those emerging when both parties commit pre-election violence.

Moreover, these effects are also mediated by violence prevention strategies. At the most

basic level, reducing election violence eliminates one illicit pathway to electoral success that both incumbents and opposition actors can utilize, leaving only bribery and fraud—two strategies in which the incumbent typically has the advantage. By eliminating violence, the likelihood of incumbent victory increases and, in turn, so does the likelihood that illiberal democracy will be further entrenched. When election management bodies are filled by the incumbent, even seemingly neutral rulings can disproportionately aid the his/her party. Diplomatic solutions to post-conflict violence can threaten the majoritarian dimension of democracy, as rewarding the most violent actors with a seat at the bargaining table risks creating a system in which political power is allocated not on the basis of accountability to the most voters, but on the basis of effective violent intimidation.

Before further unpacking my arguments, I define the central concepts of this project. First, I stand with a growing body of scholarship in contending that electoral violence is a unique form of political violence. Electoral violence is defined by its timing, as well as by the actors involved and their intentions. To constitute electoral violence, violence must occur in one of three periods: the pre-election phase, which begins when attention shifts from quotidian politics to the election itself; the election day(s); and the post-election period, or “the period leading up to the inauguration of the newly elected body” (Höglund 2009, 416). In part because it can be difficult to determine the beginning of the pre-election phase, it is also useful to define electoral violence in terms of the actors involved and their objectives. The state, non-state allies, and the opposition can all commit electoral violence, and their motives can be either intra-systemic, that is “seeking to win or maintain power within the context of the democratic political system,” or anti-systemic, i.e. “seek[ing] to overthrow the status quo order” (Staniland 2014, 108). Finally, electoral violence can be committed by unaligned actors, those “local actors opportunistically using violence to pursue their parochial interests in the context of electoral politics” (108). I focus on intra-systemic violence by incumbents, their allies, and the opposition in all three electoral periods (though my hypotheses treat the pre-election period and election day together).

Because democratization is a broad and multifaceted concept, my argument hones in on two dimensions of democracy, liberal and majoritarian, which I posit are central to explaining prospects for further democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa. The liberal dimension of democracy emphasizes checks and balances, multiple veto points, and highlights the importance of “multiple, independent, and decentralized” institutions, also paying attention to the strength and independence of the judiciary (Coppedge et al. 2011, 253-254). This conception is of particular interest in many Sub-Saharan African states where patrimonialism combines with a strong presidency, resulting in highly illiberal democratic systems. The majoritarian dimension instead emphasizes majority rule, with a focus on centralization and strong parties (254). These dimensions correspond to the two primary axes on which conflict over democratization centers in many modern democracies: horizontal accountability (liberal) and vertical accountability (majoritarian).³

Of notable absence here is the electoral dimension of democracy, that procedural notion which highlights competitive, free and fair elections as a mechanism for selecting government leadership. I focus on the more substantive dimensions outlined above, because when elections are violent this is, by definition, a strike against free and fair elections. As such, to argue that electoral violence harms electoral democracy is obvious and even tautological. Moreover, while most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa now conduct relatively competitive elections,⁴ we know less about how democracy can be deepened in Africa. I suggest that electoral violence and strategies to prevent it have important implications for a more substantive understanding of democratization.

While there are a host of policies and strategies that both domestic and international actors have relied on to mitigate election violence,⁵ I focus on two: election management and administration; and preventive diplomacy. The first is primarily the domain of domestic actors, and it is widely accepted that effective election management bodies are critical to

3. On the tension between these two conceptions, see Slater (2013).

4. Competitive elections are defined by Hyde and Marinov (2012, 192) as those in which “opposition is allowed, multiple parties are legal, and more than one candidate competes.”

5. For a summary of the main categories of electoral violence prevention, see Claes (2016, 9-17).

ensuring free and fair elections. The second involves both domestic and international actors, and is more controversial, though is still exercised in important cases of election violence.

I approach my questions at two levels of analysis, the national and the individual. To simplify, I restrict my hypotheses to the modal African democracy today, an illiberal regime wherein power is concentrated in a strong presidency, and clientelism is widespread.⁶ I also assume that utilizing electoral violence is an effective strategy for improving a party's electoral prospects. I argue that at both levels of analysis, it is the characteristics of the perpetrator that matter most for determining the direct effect of electoral violence on democracy.

Consider first when incumbents (and possibly their agents) are the sole perpetrators of pre-election and election day violence. This increases the chances of an incumbent victory, allowing that party to solidify its hold on power in both the executive and legislative. This ensures both that it maintains a substantial advantage in patronage resources, and allows the president to make appointments (e.g. in the courts) to keep the other branches of government weak and supportive of the executive. In this case, the effect on liberalism is negative, as the likelihood increases that an already illiberal democracy will be entrenched. The effect on majoritarianism is also negative. For one, the use of violence is always a strike against majoritarian democracy as it weakens vertical accountability. Moreover, this type of violence can also further threaten the majoritarian dimension of democracy if the violence is carried out not by the government, but by pro-government agents, such as armed wings of political parties or militias. While this may help incumbents win reelection, privatizing violence can backfire, empowering such groups to that point that they can no longer be controlled by the incumbent party.⁷ Increasing the political power of these groups is a serious blow to majoritarianism, as such actors are unaccountable to the incumbent's constituency, and represent parochial interests, not those of the majority.

6. For more on this configuration of power and its pervasiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa, see van de Walle (2003).

7. On this dynamic, see Staniland (2014, 109-110).

When the opposition also participates in pre-election and election day violence,⁸ this increases the chance that the opposition will win, since that is one domain in which they are not seriously disadvantaged vis-à-vis the incumbent party. Thus, even if it cannot win the presidency, the opposition can increase its presence in the legislature. The effect on liberalism is moderately positive: compared to the baseline, a stronger opposition in the legislature improves the chances of constraining executive action and moderating appointments to the judiciary. The majoritarian dimension suffers, however, in that both the incumbent and opposition parties are less accountable to their constituents, particularly when either (or both) mobilize private actors to conduct violent activities.

Finally, the effects of post-election violence are less clear, and depend both on who perpetrates the violence, as well as on the dynamics of that violence. If such violence spirals into civil war, the effect on democracy depends on the outcome of that conflict. If instead the violence results in violent redistricting, a situation in which post-election violence is intended to shore up control of certain constituencies, either through killing voters or forcing them to relocate. This type of violence can be conceptualized as very early pre-election violence for the next round of elections, and thus the predicted effects on democracy will correspond with the hypotheses above, depending on which actors engaged in forced displacement. Finally, I address the possibility of a negotiated settlement ending post-election violence below, when I present hypotheses about the effects of violence prevention strategies on democracy.

As for individuals' attitudes toward the liberal and majoritarian dimensions of democracy, and how those attitudes are shaped by election violence, I again hypothesize that the effects of election violence depend primarily on the characteristics of the perpetrator. When incumbents and their parties or agents are responsible for electoral violence, individuals are more likely to feel less optimistic about democracy, but also more in favor of liberalization, preferring greater constraints on the executive, even if this comes at the expense of less vertical accountability. This should be particularly likely in neo-patrimonial African states with

8. According to data from Straus and Taylor (2012), the opposition is almost never the sole perpetrator of violence around elections.

strong presidencies, as pro-incumbent violence will be blamed on the system which favors and protects the incumbent. When the opposition also participates in violence, citizens will feel more generally disconnected from both parties, thus favoring changes that improve the majoritarian dimension of democracy. Finally, while the opposition is rarely the sole perpetrator of violence at the national level, individuals may only experience intimidation by opposition actors. In such cases, these individuals are likely to favor reforms that strengthen the powers of the executive to reduce violence, and thus may be more sympathetic to further illiberalization.

The effects of violence are also mediated by violence prevention strategies, which themselves can negatively impact either dimension of democracy. First, election management bodies, often touted as the best mechanism for achieving the electoral ideal, can hinder democratization if weakly institutionalized by promoting the entrenchment of illiberal features of democracy. As the key arbiters in electoral disputes, these bodies hold the primary responsibility for ensuring free and fair elections in many places, primarily by developing strategies to reduce fraud and violence. However, when their independence is in question (as many have key positions appointed by the executive branch), even seemingly neutral rulings by electoral management bodies can backfire. The electoral advantage of the incumbent in clientelist systems means that violence is often one of the best strategies for opposition parties to increase their power in the government, and eliminating that strategy leaves only vote-buying and fraud. As these are both domains in which the incumbent is greatly advantaged, the result is an incumbent victory which further entrenches illiberal democracy.

Second, consider diplomatic arrangements to end post-election violence, often the result of escalation following opposition protests contending that the election was rigged by the incumbent. When such deals award political power to the losers, this risks creating a moral hazard problem, generating perverse incentives for future elections which encourage violence and weaken democracy.⁹ Not only do the losers know that they can mitigate losses in the

9. A similar warning is issued by Kuperman (2008) with regard to emerging norms of humanitarian intervention.

next election by resorting to violence after results are announced; other groups, who could not previously compete in the elections, are incentivized to contest the next election, and to mobilize violence in doing so in hopes of receiving a seat at the negotiating table. In either case, vertical accountability suffers, as a system is created in which political power is awarded not to parties or individuals who best represent their constituents, but instead to those who are the most effective at threatening and implementing violence during and after the election.

Finally, it should be noted that the net effect on democracy and prospects for further democratization will vary, depending on how both the liberal and majoritarian dimensions are affected. In some cases, movement on the quality of democracy caused by some of these electoral violence and strategies to suppress it may result in “democratic careening,” wherein losses on one dimension are made up on the other.(See \textcite {slater2013}.) In many cases, however, the end result is simply a net loss for democracy, wherein one or both types of accountability suffer without improvement on either. Such shifts are the most dangerous, as they constitute a true weakening of democracy.

2 Literature Review

This dissertation contributes both to the burgeoning literature on electoral violence and that on democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa. Violent elections in Sub-Saharan Africa spawned a new research program on electoral violence as a distinct phenomenon. However, while much work has been done to explain this unique type of violence, little research has yet examined the effect of this phenomenon on political outcomes of interest. The focus on elections has left other aspects of democracy in the lurch. At the same time, a large body of literature seeks to explain various hindrances to deeper democratization in Africa. While these studies capture some of the most important features of multiparty politics on the continent, violence has remained a recurring feature of democratizing systems in Sub-Saharan Africa. As such, this

dissertation seeks to integrate the study of violence into broader approaches to explaining democratic outcomes in Africa.

Existing research that examines the effects of electoral violence mostly focuses on its effectiveness in comparison to other illicit electoral strategies. Such research can be sorted into two camps. First, a growing body of formal work assumes electoral violence can be effective, and asks when it is most likely to be implemented as a strategy for winning elections. Basing his work in models of negative campaigning, Chaturvedi (2005) argues that the development of specialists in violence incentivizes violent over ideological campaigning. Robinson and Torvik (2009) find that because swing voters get leverage from their position, allowing them to extract greater rents from parties in exchange for votes, electoral violence can be a cost-effective tool for suppressing swing voters. Finally, Collier and Vicente (2012) model a democracy in which parties select between violence, vote-buying, and fraud as a means to ensure electoral victory. They find, in general, that electoral violence is an effective strategy when a party is weak, and thus has little to lose by alienating base supporters since they don't have a strong base to begin with.

The second approach to studying the effectiveness of electoral violence seeks to empirically test the assumptions of the formal literature to determine whether violence even exerts its purported effects on turnout or vote choice in the first place. Bratton (2008) represents perhaps the best attempt at answering this question. Analyzing Afrobarometer data, he finds that while voter intimidation did not successfully sway vote choice in the 2007 Nigerian election, it was effective at reducing intention to turnout on election day, even when exposure to threats occurred as early as the 2003 elections. Burchard (2015, 123-145) also utilizes Afrobarometer data to test the effect of fear of electoral intimidation on voter turnout. She finds heterogeneous effects, though the general finding is negative: fear of violence reduces turnout.

Some research has taken the much needed first step toward connecting electoral violence to broader political questions. First, in addition to turnout, Burchard (2015, 147-165) asks

whether different types of electoral violence affect democratic attitudes. Again utilizing Afrobarometer data, she finds that fear of electoral violence reduces the likelihood that an individual will believe their country is a democracy, that they will be satisfied with democracy, and that they will prefer democracy to non-democracy. Gutierrez-Romero (2014), with a nationally representative survey of Kenyans prior to and after the infamous 2007 post-election violence, finds the opposite after matching respondents on their estimated risk of exposure to violence. Exposure to election violence, directly or indirectly, did not change respondents' answers to questions about satisfaction with democracy or about whether Kenya should change its method for choosing its leaders. Rather than being disheartening, such divergent findings demonstrate the necessity for more explicit theorizing about how electoral violence is likely to affect democracy.

A new volume edited by Claes (2016) takes a similar approach to many policy-oriented reports on violence prevention strategies, asking the crucial first question: which policies actually succeed at mitigating violence? The authors find that state-led initiatives, such as security-sector engagement and election management and administration, were most effective, whereas civil society initiatives were not. While the findings are a valuable place to start, the use of only five case studies limits confidence in the external validity of the findings, and though the volume purportedly selected cases with similar risk profiles for violence, the method for doing so is informal and underspecified. Other work focused specifically on election observers asks whether they are effective at stopping violence and fraud, cautioning about the possibility of spatial (Ichino and Schündeln 2012) and temporal (Daxecker 2014) spillover effects. Finally, Bekoe (2012) asks whether post-election agreements in Togo and Zanzibar were effective at reducing electoral violence, finding that building trustworthy institutions must be built to ensure these agreements maintain the peace.

While these are all valuable contributions to our understanding of what works in reducing the propensity for election violence, their findings need to be assessed against the effect of these policies on democratization before states and the international community jump at

implementing any strategy that reduces violence. Ensuring that voters can participate in elections free from intimidation or harm is an important immediate goal, but scholars and policymakers have largely failed to consider the impact of violence prevention strategies on the liberal and majoritarian dimensions of democracy. If we are to understand the prospects for more substantive democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa, then we need a theory of how violence prevention policies affect these other facets of democracy.

This dissertation also contributes to a broader research program on the development and functioning of democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Debates in this literature typically center on how democracy is affected by ethnicity (Posner 2005), patronage (Bratton and van de Walle 1994; van de Walle 2003), traditional institutions (Baldwin 2013, 2016), and religion (McClendon and Riedl 2015). While all have been shown to be crucial contributors to democratic practice, notably absent is the study of how violence, common to elections in even the most consolidated African democracies, affects vertical and horizontal accountability. Incorporating violence into this repertoire is important in its own rights, as it is nearly as common to African elections as many of the aforementioned factors. Even more importantly, the use of violence may interact in interesting ways with these other variables. For example, if electoral violence and strategies to prevent it can harm substantive dimensions of democracy, this significantly problematizes the prominent argument of Lindberg (2006) that the self-reinforcing nature of elections implies that repeated elections improve democracy, regardless of their electoral quality. While this dissertation will not seek to pit electoral violence against other explanations for variation in democratization in Africa, it does take an important step in incorporating a previously ignored feature of multiparty politics across much of the continent.

3 Methodology and Research Design

This dissertation involves three distinct stages. First, I evaluate existing explanations for the causes of electoral violence. While not the focus of the dissertation, this first stage is critical, since many of the factors contributing to electoral violence are also likely correlated with democratic consolidation. In the second stage, I draw on both cross-national analysis as well as interviews and surveys conducted in Ghana to test my arguments linking electoral violence to measures of the liberal and majoritarian dimensions of democracy. In the final phase, I draw on case study evidence to evaluate the effects of several violence prevention strategies on democratic quality.

The purpose of the first stage of the dissertation, in which I test existing explanations for the causes of electoral violence, is to improve confidence in the inferences drawn in later stages regarding my own theory. Existing research suggests that institutional constraints (Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski 2014), the revelation of fraud by international election monitors (Daxecker 2012), majoritarian electoral rules in neo-patrimonial regimes (Fjelde and Höglund 2016), competition in illiberal regimes (Salehyan and Linebarger 2015), and incumbent eligibility for reelection to the presidency (Taylor, Pevehouse, and Straus, n.d.) all contribute to variation in electoral violence. Some of these factors are certainly also correlated with the quality of democracy. Ignoring these potentially confounding variables in later stages would bias any estimates of the effects of election violence on democracy, reducing confidence in the validity of the causal inferences I draw.

Existing cross-national data on electoral violence is limited, and much existing research tests theoretical claims on general violent event data, using arbitrary cut-offs around national-level elections to code which general civil violence events constitute electoral violence.¹⁰ While more careful recoding of some datasets—such as the Social Conflict in Africa Dataset,

10. For a prime example, see Goldsmith (2015), who relies on the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) with arbitrary election cycles defined as 61 days (45 days prior to election day and 15 days after), 121 days (90 days prior and 30 after), and 181 days (135 days prior and 45 after).

that provides descriptions of the events and actors involved,¹¹—might allow for the production of more reliable data on electoral violence, the ideal approach would be to code violence directly linked to the election cycle. Ursula Daxecker is in the process of doing just this, but her data on violent events directly related to elections is not yet available. Straus and Taylor (2012) have taken the next best step in this direction, coding all elections in Sub-Saharan Africa from 1990-2008 on a four point scale, from no violence to highly violent. Because the purpose is to find the most robust explanations for electoral violence which may confound estimates in the later stages of the dissertation, I will remain open to different approaches to measurement in this stage.

In the second stage, I test the first part of my own argument, examining the impact of electoral violence itself on the quality of democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. I approach this question at two levels of analysis. First, I test my theory of the effect of electoral violence on various qualities of democracy across countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Data on perpetrators, a central variable in my theory, is available from Straus and Taylor (2012), and can also be retrieved for events coded in the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) and the Social Conflict in Africa Database (SCAD). The Varieties of Democracy Project (V-Dem) has coded a host of measures on the liberal and majoritarian dimensions of democracy, available for 173 countries from 1900 to 2012/14.¹²

For testing my argument linking electoral violence to attitudes, I rely first on cross-national data from the Afrobarometer project.¹³ The survey asks a number of questions regarding attitudes toward democracy, both generally and in regard to specific relationships between the branches of government. The latter should prove useful for capturing variation in attitudes toward the liberal dimension of democracy. I provide a list of potentially relevant questions in the appendix. Unfortunately, systematic data on individuals' exposure to election violence is not available, as the Afrobarometer only asks the following: "During election

11. For more on the coding rules for SCAD, see Salehyan et al. (2012) and Salehyan and Linebarger (2015).

12. For data and coding rules, see www.v-dem.net. For a justification of this approach to measuring democracy, as well as a summary of indicators and concepts, see Coppedge et al. (2011).

13. For full details on Afrobarometer questionnaires, sample, etc., see www.afrobarometer.org.

campaigns in this country, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence? A lot, Somewhat, A little bit, Not at all.” While I can use this question, as do Bratton (2008) and Burchard (2015), reporting bias suggests that the estimated effects on democracy will not be valid. A better strategy would be to determine when substantial violent events occurred during elections, and compare responses of individuals surveyed prior to and after that event. Comparing individuals exposed to the violence (i.e. those interviewed in the region in which it occurred) to those not exposed (individuals from the same region, but interviewed prior to the violence) offers a better strategy for estimating the effects of the violence on attitudes toward democracy. This does restrict the analysis to countries and rounds wherein surveys were conducted in the run-up to elections.

Second, I focus specifically on Ghana, relying on interviews and an original survey to determine the impact of exposure to electoral violence on attitudes toward democracy. Exposure to electoral violence often systematically varies sub-nationally. For example, in Kenya much of the highest levels of electoral violence have been concentrated in the Rift Valley (Boone 2011; Klaus and Mitchell 2015). Assessing the effect of violence at the subnational level poses unique challenges. First, reporting bias remains an issue. One solution is to use event data as a proxy for who was most likely exposed to electoral violence. Even if this is a legitimate estimation strategy, people exposed to violence are often displaced—sometimes intentionally—so caution must be used when evaluating the effect of exposure to electoral violence on democratic attitudes. One cannot assume that the location of an individual at the time of an interview corresponds to his/her location at the time of electoral violence events. If using event data to approximate for exposure to election violence, then surveys must ask where individuals were at the specific time when election violence was occurring. Afrobarometer data cannot account for this problem, which is why the best strategy is to conduct surveys like that of Gutierrez-Romero (2014).

In the final stage of the dissertation, I test the second part of my theory, analyzing the effect of anti-electoral violence policies on democracy. To do so, I carry out comparative

case studies, following the approach in Claes (2016) by selecting countries with similar risk profiles for experiencing electoral violence (which can be estimated from the model in the first stage of the dissertation). I then assess each strategy of violence prevention (electoral management bodies and post-election diplomatic intervention) in turn, comparing democratic outcomes across countries in which the specific policies were implemented and those in which they were not. Case studies are particularly appropriate for assessing the impact of negotiated resolutions to post-electoral violence, as these are more rare, and I will likely not be able to control for alternative explanations simply through case selection. As such, I will rely on process tracing to demonstrate that the moral hazard mechanism I propose is indeed operative following diplomatic resolutions to post-election violence, and that weakly institutionalized election management bodies make decisions that disproportionately disadvantage the opposition. To substantiate these claims, I will seek to obtain original data on violence prevention from NGOs which participate in election monitoring and promoting electoral democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa, including the Carter Center’s Democracy Program and the National Democratic Institute.

This dissertation presents a novel theory linking an understudied phenomenon, electoral violence, to one of the most important processes in comparative politics, democratization. It then tests that theory by combining quantitative analysis of both cross-national and sub-national survey data with comparative case studies. In doing so, it contributes to a growing body of literature seeking to bring the ‘political’ back into the study of ‘political violence’.

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Appendix

Round 5 Afrobarometer questions relating to election violence (most on 4 point scales)

- Q17C: In this country, how free are you: To choose who to vote for without feeling pressured? (Not at all free, Not very free, Somewhat free, Completely free)
- Q27: With regard to the most recent national election in [20xx], which statement is true for you? (You were not registered to vote, You voted in the elections, You decided not to vote, You could not find the polling station, You were prevented from voting, You did not have time to vote, You did not vote because you could not find your name in the voters’ register, Did not vote for some other reason, You were too young to vote)
- Q29A: Thinking about the last national election in [20xx], did you: Attend a campaign meeting or rally?
- Q31(all): There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: (Strongly disapprove, Disapprove, Neither approve nor disapprove, Approve, Strongly approve)
 - A: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?
 - B: The army comes in to govern the country?
 - C: Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything?

- D-ARB: A system governed by Islamic law without elections or political parties?
- Q32: Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?
 - Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.
 - Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.
 - Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.
- Q33: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: It is more important to have a government that can get things done, even if we have no influence over what it does.
 - Statement 2: It is more important for citizens to be able to hold government accountable, even if that means it makes decisions more slowly.
- Q34: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open and honest elections.
 - Statement 2: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should adopt other methods for choosing this country's leaders.
- Q35: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: Political parties create division and confusion; it is therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in the country.
 - Statement 2: Many political parties are needed to make sure that [Ghanaians] have real choices in who governs them.
- Q36: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

- Statement 1: Parliament should ensure that the President explains to it on a regular basis how his government spends taxpayers' money.
- Statement 2: The President should be able to devote his full attention to developing the country rather than wasting time justifying his actions.
- Q37: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: Opposition parties should regularly examine and criticize government policies and actions
 - Statement 2: Opposition parties should concentrate on cooperating with government and helping it develop the country.
- Q39: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: Members of Parliament represent the people; therefore they should make laws for this country, even if the President does not agree.
 - Statement 2: Since the President represents all of us, he should pass laws without worrying about what Parliament thinks.
- Q40: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: Since the President was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.
 - Statement 2: The President must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.
- Q41: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 - Statement 1: The Constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office.
 - Statement 2: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the president can serve.

- Q42: In your opinion how much of a democracy is the country today? (Not a democracy, A democracy, with major problems, A democracy, but with minor problems, A full democracy)
- Q43: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the country? Are you: (the country is not a democracy, Not at all satisfied, Not very satisfied, Fairly Satisfied, Very Satisfied)
- Q43C-ARB: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Democratic systems are not effective at maintaining order and stability? (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
- Q43-ARB: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: people are not prepared for a democratic system? (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
- Q46A: On a scale between 0 and 10, where 0 means completely undemocratic and 10 means completely democratic, where would you place each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say: Our country today?
- Q46B: On a scale between 0 and 10, where 0 means completely undemocratic and 10 means completely democratic, where would you place each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say: Our country ten years ago, in 2001?
- Q46C: On a scale between 0 and 10, where 0 means completely undemocratic and 10 means completely democratic, where would you place each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say: Our country under [insert previous non-democratic regime (i.e. not elected through open multiparty elections) if longer than 10 years ago, e.g. Apartheid, Colonialism, one-party rule under Banda or Kaunda, etc.]?
- Q46D: On a scale between 0 and 10, where 0 means completely undemocratic and 10 means completely democratic, where would you place each of the following, or haven't

you heard enough to say: And on the same scale, where would you want our country to be in the future?

- Q52: In your opinion, how often, in this country:
 - B: Does competition between political parties lead to violent conflict? (Never, Rarely, Often, Always)
 - C: Does the President ignore the courts and laws of the country?
 - D: Are opposition parties or their supporters silenced by the government?
 - E: Does the President ignore parliament and just do what he wants?
- Q54: During election campaigns in this country, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence? (A lot, Somewhat, A little bit, Not at all)
- Q55: How likely do you think it is that powerful people can find out how you voted, even though there is supposed to be a secret ballot in this country? (Not at all likely, Not very likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely)
- Q61F: And during the last national election in [20xx], how often, if ever did a candidate or someone from a political party offer you something, like food or a gift or money, in return for your vote? (Never, Once or twice, A few times, Often)