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QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNAL CONFLICT

A large N study of developing countries

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Abstract

This thesis examines the effect of quality of government on low-intensity internal conflict, and how this relationship could be conditioned by the extent of ethnic division, in a context of developing and newly industrialised countries. It hypothesises that (H₁) impartial bureaucracy reduces internal conflict, and that (H₂) this effect is diminished in highly ethnically divided societies, and finally test these propositions empirically by using data from the Quality of Government Institute's Expert Survey and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED).

The main analysis suggests that quality of government reduces internal conflict. This is consistent with hypothesis 1 and the theoretical framework, which posits that quality of government reduce internal conflict by diminishing the opportunity space for the conflict, by preventing the onset of grievances between societal groups, and finally by making political commitments more credible.

The robustness checks call the initial findings into question. The main takeaway with regard to H₁ is that the results depend on how "conflict" is measured. When conflict is measured as *riots and protests*, the results are inconclusive.

The results are inconclusive when it comes to how ethnic division affects the relationship between quality of government and internal conflict. In general, the analysis points in neither direction. However, in one model, the data suggests that it is in ethnically divided societies that quality of government significantly reduces violence against civilians – contrary to what was expected.

Future research should make an effort to improve data on QoG and conflict.

Keywords: quality of government, impartiality, institutional trust, governance, good governance, political institutions, administration, bureaucracy, internal conflict, new wars, riots, protests, demonstrations, security, peace, corruption, rule of law, political science.

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1. Introduction

In 2003:295, Knack said: “Not only does governance matter, but research contributing to our understanding of governance matters”. This is certainly true today when a substantial amount of the world’s population lives in, or is driven away from, countries affected by some sort of internal conflict, ranging from abduction and persecution to full scale civil war. States do not go to war with one another as often as they did before. Instead, *intrastate* conflict is the type of conflict that most likely is endured by the world’s populaces today.

Knowing this, scholars have begun to investigate whether political institutions or “governance” in general have an impact on internal conflict. Needless to say, a better understanding of the causal effects of different political institutions and ultimately, the drivers of peace and conflict, has an immense relevance for policy-makers and a potential to make real-life changes for millions of people.

This thesis makes two contributions to previous research. First, by introducing a type of internal conflict which is normally not considered in the literature – low intensity internal conflict – it makes an important empirical contribution. Second, by using the concept of quality of government as independent variable, it makes a theoretical contribution. The closest concept used so far in conflict research is “state capacity”. It receives critique however from various directions for being conceptually weak, among other things. The thesis finally investigates how the relationship between quality of government and internal conflict is affected by ethnically divided societies.

As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, governmental institutions, i.e., bureaucracies, have a potential to affect internal conflict by shrinking the conflict’s opportunity space, by helping to resolve grievances between conflicting groups in society and finally by making political actors’ commitments more credible –which in turn would make conflict a less attractive alternative for potential dissidents.

The analysis initially points towards promising effects of quality of government on internal conflict but the latter part of the analysis nuances the image somewhat. In any case, this thesis is an interesting contribution to the exploration of the causal effects, and possible importance, of impartial governmental organisations.

I start the thesis by reviewing and identifying points of improvements in the previous literatures of conflict, state capacity and ethnicity. I thereafter proceed to the theoretical framework and explain the concept of quality of government and its essential part:

impartiality. I also provide three sets of mechanisms by which quality of government could plausibly affect internal conflict: opportunity space, grievances and commitment problems.

The second half of the thesis is devoted to presentation of the data and methods and finally the main analysis with its robustness checks. I round up by giving suggestions on how future research could help move the frontier forward in this field of research.

2. What is known about institutions and internal conflict

I will now position this thesis in the academic literature by briefly reviewing a few areas that are relevant for quality of government and internal conflict. I will consider the literatures of *conflict*, *political institutions*, *state capacity*, *quality of government* and finally the *ethnic context*.

2.1 (Internal) conflicts

Although there are some critics (e.g., Newman, 2004), many scholars now recognise or subscribe to the term *new wars*. The term suggests that there is a noticeable difference in the ways conflicts occurred or were conducted decades ago compared with today. Whereas conflict and war previously were something clearly discernible, for instance by the involvement of two professional or conscripted armies, official states as combatants and a distinct battlefield, new conflicts tend to be characterised by a diluted distinction between wartime and peacetime, state failure and a blur of the previously clear division between civilians and combatants (Benziman, 2017). These new conflicts seem to go on forever and have no clear start nor end. They also tend to involve non-state actors – and civilians are deliberately targeted to a greater extent than before (see Newman, 2004 for a complete comment on new wars).

Although the amount of civil war activity was not historically unique in the 1990s, it was first after the end of the Cold War that both the UN and academia identified these new wars as a prominent issue for the future and subsequently launched a wave of research to investigate it (Mundy, 2011). Today, when looking the numbers, we see that internal conflict is by far more common and recurrent than interstate conflict (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Ray and Esteban, 2017) and around thirty percent of the world's population inhabit countries that are touched by conflict in some way (Fearon, 2011).

Both the short and long-term consequences that follow violent conflict are also well-documented today. Internal conflict rather quickly entails refugee flows and forced migration, as well as demolished infrastructure and capital flight (Gates, Hegre, Mogleiv Nygård and Strand, 2012). It is one of the major obstacles to subsequent economic development (Fearon, 2011) and has clear detrimental effects on development indicators such as poverty reduction, hunger reduction, child mortality reduction and access to potable water or primary education (Gates et al., 2012). When taking a longer perspective, intrastate conflict has substantial impact on civilian suffering that amounts to at least the same level of misery as during the conflict itself (Ghobarah, Huth and Russett, 2003).

The quantitative research that explicitly focuses on political institutions' effects on internal conflict has so far been focused on *state capacity* and *civil war* (examples are Fearon, 2011; Besley and Persson, 2010; Thies, 2010). Some studies have tried to use different concepts, for instance Hegre and Nygård (2012) that use a broader version of quality of government, but the point to be made is that current research is focused on civil war and often disregards other types of conflict. This is a matter raised by Ray and Esteban (2017) as they remind us that there are many different types of conflicts in the world. We may potentially be missing out on empirical results and interesting patterns in the literature because the conflicts at hand do not reach a certain threshold number of hundreds or thousands of deaths (defining civil war involves many dimensions and many issues are problematic, see Mundy 2011 for a review).

Various forms of organised unrest and active discontent do not always or necessarily lead to high numbers of fatalities, but they can still have long-lasting consequences for social tension. In the long run, their cost may even exceed those coming directly from civil war (Ray and Esteban, 2017). In this view, we might think of coups, imprisonment on political grounds and demonstrations – and a recent example that springs to mind are the huge demonstrations and the violence that accompanied them before, during and after the illegal referendum in Catalonia on 1 October 2017 (Jones and Burgen, 2017). This incident did not produce high fatality rates and would therefore have been missed by previous research – despite the fact that it can be argued that this was a substantial manifestation of social tensions and therefore worth being taken into consideration.

Understanding the drivers of civil war is an important task that should not be discredited but it is my opinion that the road to civil war is both long and crooked. It is not unimaginable that other types of violence manifest themselves long before a conflict

escalates to the point of civil war. To address this shortcoming in the literature, this thesis will measure internal conflict differently from civil war. I will be looking at sorts of *low intensity conflict*, such as riots and protests, and violence against civilians.

2.2 The institutional turn

Before advancing any further, it is important that the reader keep two things in mind: the definition of *institutions* and the political system's *input* and *output* sides.

When it comes to institutions, there is a never-ending debate on its definition (Hodgson, 2006). One of the more important issues is whether there is a separation between institutions and organisations. A prominent definition is the one of North (1991:97):

Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights).

By this definition, institutions are *the rules of the game*. North (2005) also explicitly says that while institutions are the rules of the game, organisations are the players – thus separating the two of them. Other scholars posit instead that organisations are a *kind* of institution and that no categorical separation should be made between them (Hodgson, 2006:8). The important thing to remember is that by saying “institutions”, some scholars may refer to the rules of the game, while others may refer to an organisation. This thesis adheres to the second definition of institutions as I am interested in political organisations and bureaucracies.

As for the political system, based on the work of Easton (1957), this can be viewed as having an input and an output side (with a black box in the middle). The input side concerns policy creation and aspects like elections, constitution-writing and state institution building. The output side regards policy *implementation* and *provision* of services for the citizens.

In the mid-1990s, something which can be described as an institutional turn began when researchers in political economy started to ask themselves whether institutions (as rules of the game) cause long-term growth (Dellepiane-Avellaneda, 2010:198). It is increasingly recognised today that institutions and politics are central for economic growth (Dellepiane-Avellaneda, 2010:197; Rodrik, Subramanian and Trebbi, 2004; Gaygisiz, 2013). This emphasis on institutions subsequently spread from economics to other fields in the

social sciences (political science for instance) and it was picked up by the aid community, under the name of “good governance” (Nanda, 2006).

With regard to internal conflict, a more recent development in the literature has been a shift away from focusing on institutions on the input side of the political system – to the output side. The input side – democracy in general or political systems such as parliamentarism or presidentialism – has already been connected to economic development (Lipset, 1959; Kormendi and Meguire, 1985) and conflict (e.g., de Nardo, 1985) and it is still being researched (Reynal-Querol, 2005). The results have however been mixed. For example, the international aid community has been determined for quite some time to create Western-style democratic regimes in developing and post-war countries as a remedy against renewed conflict. But unfortunately, these democratic reconstruction models have produced poor results and conflict has often reoccurred (Ottaway, 2003; Call and Cook, 2003).

For reasons like this, scholars are beginning to ask themselves whether institutions the output side of the political system may be more relevant than democratisation itself for a sustainable peace in developing countries (Brinkerhoff, 2011:143). Many of these newer studies focus on “governance” related to the state, but excluding non-state actors, for example NGOs, and they often make use of dependent variables that may fall under a general umbrella of *state capacity*.

2.3 State capacity and quality of government (QoG)

As with many concepts, there is no consensus over what *state capacity* is (Hegre, and Nygård, 2015) but Mann (1984) has given a definition that is widely used in the literature. Mann defines state capacity in terms of what he calls *infrastructural power*:

The capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm (Mann, 1984:189).

[It] denotes the power of the state to penetrate and centrally co-ordinate the activities of civil society through its own infrastructure (Mann (1984:190).

At a general level, state capacity thus translates into the ability to “get things done”. In a similar way, Migdal (cited in Lindvall and Teorell, 2016:5) describes state capacity as “the ability of state leaders to use the agencies of the state to get people in the society to do what they want them to do”. When talking about state capacity, we thus find ourselves, at least in part, on the output side of the political system where decisions are to be implemented by governmental bureaucracies and other organisations.

Several studies find that the risk for internal conflict diminishes when state capacity increases. Walter (2015) maintains that it is political factors that strongly affect whether peace emerges or war restarts. Civil wars are more likely to repeat themselves in weakly institutionalised settings (looking at how open the political environment is and the restraints on the executives). Similarly, Fearon and Laitin (2003) reach the conclusion that civil wars occur more often in countries with financially, organisationally and politically weak central governments and weak states. They state: “What matters is whether active rebels can hide from government forces and whether economic opportunities are so poor that the life of a rebel is attractive” (Fearon and Laitin, 2003:28). Finally, Fearon (2011) claims to be the first to use several governance indicators (the Worldwide Governance Indicators, the International Country Risk Guide, and the World Bank’s Country Policy Institutional Assessment) as a measurement of the quality of a country’s governance. He finds that good governance is associated with less conflict (fewer civil war onsets).

Certainly, many studies find that higher state capacity decreases the risk of internal conflict. There is however not yet a consensus in the literature. There are examples, for instance Thies (2010), that contrarily do not find any effect of state capacity on civil war. There is also research that points towards an opposite causal direction – that conflict mainly affects state capacity (Sobek, 2010).

Another point of weakness to bring up is the fact that the state capacity literature has issues with the definitions and the outcomes it tries to investigate. Lee and Zhang (2016:130) write:

Scholars continue to disagree about the role of state capacity in explaining civil war [...] Part of this problem stems from the difficulty in specifying conceptually clear definitions of state capacity and the inability to arbitrate between competing state capacity mechanisms.

In practice, this means that the literature on state capacity is impaired by definitions and theories that are teleological and functionalistic (Lindvall and Teorell, 2017). Studies sometimes equate state capacity to the outcomes that the study itself is investigating, for example that states that *achieve* large tax extractions *are* high capacity states – compared to conceiving the phenomenon as if the capacity of the state *enables* it to extract a lot of taxes.

The same critique can be put forward for the governance literature in general (Glaeser, La Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes and Shleifer, 2004; Dellepiane-Avellaneda, 2010:202). On the most troublesome occasions, it is pointed out, “good” governance or high institutional capacity is taken to mean “anything that is good for either the economy or the citizens”,

definitions that are tautological and eventually do not mean anything (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008).

To address these aforementioned issues, this thesis will step away from “state capacity” and instead use another concept situated on the output side of the political system that focuses on governmental bureaucracy, namely, *quality of government*, QoG.

Quality of government will be more closely defined in the theoretical section 3.1 but essentially, whereas state capacity refers to the *extent* to which states exercise power in the first place, quality of government refers to *how* state power is exercised (Lindvall and Teorell (2017). Quality of government thus involves procedural norms and constraints.

Quantitative research that explicitly uses the concept of quality of government is hard to find. Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016) are the exception. They show that there are mostly case studies on this subject and proceed to investigate local institutional quality and the incidence of violence from organised armed groups. Their outcome variable is *conflicts with at least 25 battle deaths per year* and they find that local institutional quality, as perceived by citizens, matter for local conflict. They measure QoG as: *trust in local politicians, local police and courts; perceived police corruption and political corruption; performance rating of local politicians* and finally *community meeting attendance*. Admittedly, Wig and Forø Tollefsen have moved away from the otherwise prevalent use of civil war as outcome, but they still do not consider other types of conflict than the most brutal ones (originating from armed groups).

Hegre and Nygård (2015) also ask whether well governed countries are better suited to avoid internal conflict. They, too, try to move away from the concept of state capacity and include “informal governance” in what they define as “quality of governance”. Their informal governance includes: *bureaucratic quality, the rule of law, corruption, economic policies, military involvement in politics, political exclusion and repression*. By formal institutions, they mean “de jure institutions that ensure that the executive branch of government is elected by a majority or plurality of the population” (ibid:990), which basically means democracy. Hegre and Nygård find that high quality governance reduces the risk of renewed civil war. However, they purposely, use a very wide concept of quality of governance that includes both institutions as the rules of the game and institutions as organisations – thus factors from both sides of the political system.

My opinion is that it is more pertinent for our understanding of political institutions causal effects on internal conflict if we separate the institutions from the input and output sides of the political system instead of doing a cocktail of “governance” in which we put

everything. In any case, Hegre and Nygård try to analyse whether their formal or informal institutions matters most. They conclude that the informal governance might be more important than the formal one, while adding that their analysis is somewhat inconclusive. They end by saying that *any* improvement of the governance indicators in either formal or informal institutions decrease the risk of conflict recurrence and is therefore desired. This might sound reassuring but several scholars have found that an amelioration of democracy (formal institution according to Hegre and Nygård) is not unconditionally positive (see e.g., Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates and Gleditsch, 2001:33). Indeed, most conflicts seem to occur in semi-democracies where polities move from being dictatorships towards democracy. The assertion that improving just about any institution is desirable may therefore be more complex when other research is considered.

To recapitulate. In order to avoid various issues with previous research involving state capacity, this thesis will use the concept of quality of government. This involves institutions “as organisations” on the output side of the political system. The thesis will also focus on only the output side of the political system instead of combining factors from the two sides.

2.4 Ethnicity and conflict

I have until now situated this thesis in the literature that deals with political institutions and internal conflict. This, however, might not be sufficient for us to get a good understanding of the drivers of internal conflict. In essence, quality of government cannot be expected to explain everything when it comes to internal conflict in a polity. Indeed, contextual factors might be just as important. One of these contextual factors is ethnicity, or more specifically ethnic divisions (there are many variants of these divisions in the literature, e.g., ethnic fractionalisation or ethnic domination).

The ethnicity literature investigates ethnicity’s effects on, for instance, economic growth or peace. In the internal conflict research, ethnic divisions are thought to be one of the main drivers for civil war (Ray and Esteban, 2017). One of the reasons for this would be that ethnic identity is based on fundamental elements that are hard to change, such as language, race and religion. This may render democracy difficult if it entails ethnic political parties and ethnic voting (Østby, 2008:147; Horowitz, 2014).

The ethnicity research on internal conflicts is so far straggling and pointing in many directions. Already in the 90s, scholars began to see that national boundaries matter less and less in the world’s conflicts (Cohen, 1997:607) but despite this, it remains rather unexplored how the effects of institutional designs are conditioned by contextual factors

such as a society's ethnic composition (Ansorg, Haass and Strasheim, 2013:21). Additionally, a lot of research have looked at only the input side of the political system. Cohen (1997) finds for example that proportional institutions outperform majoritarianism in ethnic conflict management – and Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010) find that large ethnic groups that are excluded from state power (or underrepresented in government) are substantially more likely to challenge the incumbents by violent means.

There is no unanimity in the civil war research on the effects of ethnic divisions. Many studies find no relationship between ethnic fractionalisation, ethnic conflict, and civil wars (Montalvo and Reynal-Querol, 2005). Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and Fearon and Laitin (2003), for example, find that political institutions are more important than ethnic divisions for explaining civil war. Other studies are however not so quick to rule out ethnic division's importance (e.g., Cederman, et al., 2010; Fearon, 2011; Brinkerhoff, 2011; Ray and Esteban, 2017). In short, this leaves the literature inconclusive.

This thesis will take on the subject by empirically estimating the interactive effect of ethnic division on the quality of government. There is some research that suggests that ethnic divisions affect government institutions themselves. La Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes, Shleifer and Vishny (1999), for example, conclude that ethnic diversity leads to corruption and lower government performance. Furthermore, on an adjacent subject, Brinkerhoff (2011) points to the potential conflict-mitigating effects that institutions (as organisations) might have when it comes to service delivery in society to citizens, but also adds that the beneficial effects often are mediated by prior and contemporary patterns of ethnic relations, among other things.

In fact, Ansorg et al. (2013:23) strongly advice the academic society to begin exploring the interactions between different contextual factors, for example ethnic, religious or ideological divisions, and political institutions. In this view, Tajima (2009:IV), in a study on order and violence in authoritarian breakdowns, remarks that

the broader lesson is that order is not simply a function of how closely the state approaches Leviathan but rather **the way society interacts with the state** and how it responds. (I emphasise.)

There seems to be almost no previous research that focuses on this combination of QoG, ethnic division and internal conflict other than civil war. The relationship between institutions in general and ethnic conflict has, furthermore, been quite underresearched

with regard to large-N analyses (Saideman, Lanoue, Campenni, and Stanton, 2002:105). Easterly's study (2001) comes somewhat close in the meaning that institutions' effects on conflict is investigated and also interacted with ethnic diversity. The finding is that there is a significant interaction effect between governance and ethnic diversity and that this alters whether ethnic conflict is destructive or contained. However, Easterly uses a rather economic conception of governance, e.g., *freedom from expropriation* and *freedom of repudiation of contracts* – all of which are quite far from quality of governance that this thesis will be using.

Moreover, Easterly uses *ethnic fractionalisation* as a measurement for ethnic division. Some scholars have come to the conclusion that this variable is less suitable for operationalising ethnic divisions in research assessing societal effects on internal conflict (Østby, 2008). Accordingly, this might be the reason for which scholars on ethnicity and conflict reach contradicting results so far. Instead, it is argued that *polarisation* is a much more pertinent measurement (Montalvo and Reynal-Querol, 2005; Østby, 2008).

This thesis will therefore make use of the concept of ethnic polarisation. While ethnic fractionalisation relates to the number of ethnic groups in a country, polarisation refers to the number of large groups. It is a measurement of horizontal inequality between groups, rather than between individuals. A country with high levels of ethnic fractionalisation need not, at the same time, score high on an index of polarisation, which on the contrary might be very low.

2.5 Summary

As a recapitulation, I remind that I have tried to synthesise three different literatures: internal conflict, institutions (specifically state capacity and QoG) and finally ethnic division in the context of internal conflict.

The focus on new wars has led to an upsurge of literature on state capacity or governance's effects on civil war. Other types of conflicts can nonetheless be just as important to consider. Despite this, they are often overlooked. Low intensity, internal conflict will be the focus in this thesis.

Political institutions on the output side of the political system, conceptualised as state capacity, has mainly been found to decrease the risk of civil war but the definition or

measurement of state capacity itself raises critiques of conceptual vagueness and a functionalistic slant. Quality of government may solve this and will be used instead.

The literature on the relationship between ethnic divisions and civil war is inconclusive. Some scholars nonetheless stress the importance of context for political institutions and internal conflict. Previous results might depend on the measurement of ethnic divisions – ethnic polarisation could be a better measurement than ethnic fractionalisation, in this view.

This thesis will thus answer the following research questions:

- How does quality of government affect low-intensity, internal conflict?
- How is this relationship affected by levels of ethnic division?

3. Theoretical framework for QoG and internal conflict

Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016) have reviewed the literature and explain that the theoretical arguments for how political institutions may matter for internal conflict can be sorted into three categories (Blattman and Miguel, 2010, mention something similar).

First, institutions may check the greed of actors or groups of actors and thereby *shrink the opportunity space* of the conflict; second, institutions may alleviate *grievances* between groups which otherwise could lead to discontent and engender unrest; finally, institutions may help solve *commitment problems*.

Importantly, Østby (2008:145) points out that the “greed-or-grievance” debate should not be depicted in “either-or” terms. This would be a too simplistic way to understand the inherently complex drivers and dynamics of internal conflict. This view is supported by Walter (2015:1247) who underlines that the mechanisms are likely to be multifold. We must remind ourselves that there are probably several factors at play at the same time.

This section provides a brief explanation of each category and shows how it is thought that political institutions reduce internal conflict. I will begin with a presentation of the central concept of *quality of government*.

3.1 The concept of quality of government

In 2008, Rothstein and Teorell published a theory of *quality of government* that seeks to settle what they see as problematic previous definitions of governance that are too broad, functionalistic or only deal with corruption. They propose that the central ingredient in quality of government be the norm of *impartiality* in the exercise of political power. It is based on the idea that democratic, political equality on the input side of the political system (that deals with the access to public authority) must be complemented with equality on the output side (that deals with the exercise of public authority). The definition of *impartiality* that Rothstein and Teorell use is:

When implementing laws and policies, government officials shall not take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008:170).

Rothstein and Teorell point out that quality of governance does not imply rules on how governmental organisations should look like, nor what content policies should have, but QoG is a procedural norm. What matters is that a “state ought to treat equally those who deserve equally” (Kurer cited in Rothstein and Teorell, 2008:171) and impartiality should, above all, be a feature of the actions and activities of public civil servants, politicians, judges, and so on.

For this theory, impartiality is the most important factor but Rothstein and Teorell also point out that QoG has a relationship with other things in political system, namely, corruption, rule of law, effectivity/efficiency and democracy itself.

As for corruption, impartiality implies the absence of corruption *but the reverse is not necessarily true* (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008:171). More precisely, it is possible for a polity to have zero corruption and yet have partial exercise of public power (for instance clientelism, patronage and favouritism). QoG is thus something more than merely an absence of corruption.

Regarding rule of law, the procedural impartiality that constitutes quality of government already incorporates rule of law (in practice, impartiality, necessitate a set of rules that determine conventional conduct and it needs to be consistently applied to everyone). But, like with corruption, QoG is *something more* than just rule of law. Impartiality also applies to other domains than those governed directly by law – e.g., when public officials implement policy (ibid:182).

Turning to effectivity, in contrast to for example state capacity, *effectiveness* and *efficiency* of public institutions are secondary to impartiality. Certainly, effectiveness and

efficiency could be expected to be part of quality of government – it would be strange to claim that a polity has high quality of government if close to no services are delivered, to high costs. But, for theoretical and normative underpinnings, impartiality always come before utility (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008:182).

Finally, democracy. Rothstein and Teorell argue along the lines that democracy might be a necessary condition for QoG, but it is certainly not sufficient. Democracy cannot guarantee either impartial decision-making or policy content. The tyranny of the majority is an obvious case in this view. On the other hand, it is plausible that democracy is helpful to quality of government because impartiality on the output side of the political system might follow easier if a polity already applies the principles of political equality (impartiality, so to speak) on the input side, for instance equal access to power through free and fair elections.

In short, quality of government's central feature is impartiality. The absence of corruption, the presence of rule of law, the effectivity and democracy are all secondary to impartiality. We will now turn to the theoretical relationship between QoG and internal conflict by overviewing the three main strands in this research: *opportunity space*, *grievances* and *commitment problems*.

3.2 Opportunity space

The first set of theoretical arguments regards the *opportunity space* of internal conflicts. This interpretation focuses on different conditions that either *facilitate* a conflict's eruption or contrastively impedes it (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003) and political institutions are among these factors. One of the arguments that speak for the importance of the conflict's opportunity space is for example that, given the right conditions, it seems that insurgencies can break out even though the polity is democratic in character (e.g., gives civil rights to its citizens). Furthermore, small numbers of insurgents might survive for a long time despite the fact that the government has a large state apparatus at its disposal (Fearon and Laitin, 2003) and thereby should be able to repress the insurgency fast.

On the one hand are factors that are thought to make conflict easier to sustain, for instance when countries have commodity exports that can be extorted and the money used for financing insurgencies, or when there is widespread poverty that make (mostly) men more prone to join private militias, e.g., because unemployment leaves the men with a lot of free time and the lack of money may drive them to criminality.

On the other hand, we have conditions that are thought to shrink the opportunity space for conflict. Secondary schooling is, for example, expected to raise costs of rebel recruitment. In this view, impartial political institutions are a factor that raise the opportunity costs. Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016:32) argue that “local institutions are opportunity structures that affect the costs and benefits of resorting to violence.” They explain that high quality institutions may make conflict more costly because they, for instance, would make the police force more efficient and the justice system stronger. Corrupt public servants, on the other hand, can be manipulated, coerced or bought by dissident groups which may fuel the conflict.

However, these arguments seem more suitable for *state capacity* than for quality of government. Indeed, Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016:32) envisage quality institutions as a “constituent element” in state capacity. The corruption or efficiency of the police force and the judicial system may certainly play a part in raising opportunity costs. Public institutions, such as the police, will thereby be more able to prevent actors from for example entering a locality. But ability (to deter) is, as we have seen above in section 2.3, an issue of state capacity rather than impartiality and quality of government.

This channel of preventing conflict, furthermore, seems less suitable in explaining why a conflict occurs in the first place (as opposed to a reoccurring conflict) because it is assumed that there already are insurgents and rebel groups “out there”, calculating costs and benefits – but where did these come from in the first place?

3.3 Grievances

The second set of arguments that connects political institutions to internal conflict concerns *grievances*. What is accentuated here is that political institutions may affect internal conflict by alleviating (or causing) relative deprivation between groups. Hegre and Nygård (2015) point out that even rising objective inequalities might be *perceived* as acceptable and thus be no cause of strife – but once they *are* perceived as an issue, problems of internal conflict might soon follow. This may especially be true if dissident groups or individuals see the government (with its bureaucracies) as the source of the discrepancy between the expectation of what the people should have and what they are getting.

Disputes between groups of people may be organised around several factors, such as social class, ethnic origin, religion or simply by geographical region and they may have their origins in economic or political inequalities (Murshed, 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004).

As far as economics is concerned, there can be a matter of systematic discrimination which often has a colonial past. Examples are *asset inequality*, *unequal land distribution* and a *discriminatory fiscal dimension* that, through public spending or unjust taxing, ignores or disadvantages some groups in society (Murshed, 2002:390). On the more political side, there can be a *lack of political rights* or *unequal access to benefits* that come from political patronage, e.g., jobs and appointments.

The connection between political institutions and internal conflict, in the light of grievances, is quite straight forward. If the state is failing, through its governmental bureaucracies, to provide the same public goods to everyone (thus impartially), civil conflict might follow – not least because it would be a rational reaction to protest against inequalities. Indeed, Murshed (2002) points to the importance of a functioning social contract (one in which everyone benefits from public goods, for example state security). Disagreements between groups *per se* need not be a cause for conflict (disagreements are not necessarily violent) but if one group is left out from enjoying certain public goods or prevented from fulfilling expectations that another group can fulfil, this could quickly be perceived as unjust and problematic by the group that is left out. Conflict may thereafter be the outcome of rational decisions to settle injustices. Murshed (2002:388) brings up the Rwandan genocide as a (particularly) violent example – the genocide was planned well in advance and had clearly set objectives during the conflict – conflicts can thus be rational rather than irrational, which many claim to be the case.

Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016) mention that institutional quality may have a *direct* as well as an *indirect* effect on grievances. A direct effect is for example when certain African rebels claim that unjust political institutions are the main reasons and motives for taking up arms (Meredith cited in Wig and Forø Tollefsen, 2016). It may also be a matter of partial service delivery that disadvantages a specific geographical or administrative region in which an ethnic group resides.

A more indirect effect is mentioned by Le Billon (2003). Poor governance and corruption possibly interrupts and skews local investments and expenditures in public goods (ibid:417). This might for example affect public programmes, infrastructure and education. A discriminative public programme (or the absence of one altogether) may or may not cause troubles today but it could in the long run deprive certain groups of opportunities and better socioeconomic conditions, thereby raising inequalities. Worsened grievances between groups, caused by governmental organisations, could thereafter lead to open conflict.

This channel seems more suitable than the opportunity space for my understanding of quality of government and internal conflict. In order for bureaucracies to succeed in addressing grievances instead of causing them, they must ensure that they are non-biased in their implementation of public policy, that is, they need to be impartial. This way, quality of government may plausibly have an independent effect on internal conflict. Let us now proceed to the last set of explanations of internal conflict.

3.4 Commitment problems

The third and last set of arguments regards *commitment problems* between different groups in a polity as well as between the citizens and the state (Hartzell and Hoddie, 2003; Walter, 2015; Lapuente and Rothstein, 2014).

The central issue in commitment problems is that actors or groups may be unable to credibly commit themselves to following through on political promises, settlements or even threats (Powell, 2012). These issues apply even for actors with good intentions (Kirschner, 2010). The adversary in a political issue does not trust its opponent and instead weighs different aspects against each other, for instance: the future shifts in the distribution of power between groups, the incentives to not commit to the promises and the cost of the outcomes for both entering a settlement or not entering it (Austvoll Nome, 2013; Kirschner, 2010). After these judgements, the actor possibly either enter political negotiations or resorts to violence. Political institutions enter the equation because they may facilitate the former or aggravate the latter outcome.

Some scholars posit that commitment problems are among the most prominent reasons for explaining internal conflict (Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Svensson, 2007). Walter (2015), points to the importance of political and legal institutions in helping incumbent elites to credibly commit themselves. Any political settlement is expected to depend on whether the parties trust each other and whether they consider that the reforms that are put forward will be both implemented and upheld in the future. Hartzell and Hoddie (2003), furthermore, underline that adversaries in a post-conflict setting are asked to make political concessions and enter into agreements in an environment rife with suspicion and scepticism. Key issues often regard the safety and future, both short and long-term, of all the groups in the conflict. The control over the state's governmental institutions, like public bureaucracy, is connected to this because no group wants to let another use the power of the state, through its organisations, to secure what was not won during the conflict. This situation, where public administration is substantively connected

to politics and ethnicity through patron–client networks (thus different groups in society), is no news in some parts of the world. It is a widespread phenomenon in for example Africa (Berman, 2004) and it can play a big role in citizens everyday life.

This theory on credible commitment, however, rests on at least three assumptions that Walter (2015) brings up. First, all parties of the conflict must prefer settlement to conflict. Second, the majority of the citizens in the polity must also have an interest in compromising. This is not necessarily the case. Think for example of the peace process in Colombia 2016 where a (albeit thin) majority voted “no” in the referendum for a peace settlement with the guerrilla (Miroff, 2016). This should be especially true if a minority group demands big political concessions. Third, there must be no outside “patron” with interests in keeping the conflict going. This patron could simply be a neighbouring country but also a minority’s “homeland” situated further away.

The channel of credible commitments could be especially pertinent when we consider quality of government. Lapuente and Rothstein (2014) found that the separation of politics and administration, “the degree to which politicians control bureaucratic careers” (Boräng, Cornell, Grimes and Schuster, 2017:10), could explain why, in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Spain fell into civil war while Sweden, faced with a similar situation, managed to peacefully solve the conflict. Sweden had created a meritocratic and autonomous bureaucracy that prevented politicians, in an impartial way, from offering public offices to their supporters (among other things). Spain, contrarily, had a patronage-based administration intimately linked to politics that let politicians appoint and promote state officials and thus gain control of the bureaucracy. In the Spanish case, the incumbents could not make credible commitments that they would not use state power to discriminate against the opposition in terms of depriving them of protection (by law) or by stripping them of employment, and so on. In other words, administrations in Spain did not adhere to the principle of procedural impartiality, which constitutes quality of government.

This is paramount for the propensity of internal conflict because in the case where the administration is politicised, in order to keep their jobs, political appointees and public administrators supportive of the incumbents have strong incentives for keeping their party in power and there will be high pressures to survive *at any costs* (Lapuente and Rothstein, 2014:1425). Office-holders have incentives to do everything to maximise their monopoly of public offices in different administrations because more control is always better for them and their party. For the same reasons, we should expect clientelism, favouritism and indeed clear violations of civil liberties.

This might not be an unreasonable expectation. The politicisation of governmental administrations has been shown to have consequences also in other fields. For instance, it is connected to the production of policy knowledge and politicians' ability to make credible public goods promises in elections (Boräng, Cornell, Grimes and Schuster, 2014). Anderson and Tverdova (2003) have furthermore found that those that support the incumbents are more likely to be beneficiaries of goods handed out by corrupt public officials.

To conclude, commitment problems seem to constitute one of the more pertinent explanations for connecting quality of government to internal conflict. It could for instance plausibly explain why different ethnic groups may clash if one ethnic group controls the public administration while other ones are at its mercy.

3.4.1 *First expectation*

In the theoretical discussion in section 3, I have put forward a definition of *quality of government* followed by three sets of theoretical arguments that in the literature explain how institutions on the output side of the political system can be linked to internal conflict. The first set focuses on how institutions may shrink the opportunity space of the conflict; the second set indicates how institutions may help solve grievances between societal groups; the third set posits that institutions may affect whether political actors can credibly commit to political settlements –which could eventually lead to conflict.

We can thus render the following expectation, which I will test in the analysis:

H₁: Higher quality of government decreases internal conflict.

3.5 Ethnic division's interaction with quality of government

There are a few reasons for which ethnic divisions are worth taken into consideration when we assess quality of government's effect on internal conflict. There is much research that links ethnic divisions of some kind to the grievances and commitment problems that I have just described above.

In general, societies tend to divide along multiple lines, one of which is ethnicity (Blattman and Miguel, 2010). More specifically however, political and economic power may also be distributed according to these societal divisions (Horowitz, 1993; McCauley, 2016). This means in practice that grievances, opportunity problems, and commitment problems also often fall along ethnic lines (Denny and Walter, 2014). Even when the core problems are in essence unrelated to ethnicity, (e.g. economic inequality

may be the “real problem”), the conflict may take an “ethnic shape” because involved actors perceive ethnicity to be a distinguishable divider that can be used to tell one group from another (Kirschner, 2010; Ray and Esteban, 2017).

Ethnicity may be intimately linked to conflict. There are studies indicating that ethnic alliances have advantages over class alliances when it comes to conflict mobilisation (Esteban and Ray, 2008) and ethnic allegiances are an especially strong factor in civil wars (Kaufmann 1996). In fact, if a civil war begins, it is more likely to have been started by an ethnic group than any other kind of group, the reason being that ethnic groups are more likely to have grievances against the state (Cederman et al., 2010; Denny and Walter, 2014).

Several arguments are advanced by scholars why ethnicity is such an important factor. For one, ethnic nationalism is viewed as one the leading sources of group cohesion (Murshed, 2002; Blattman and Miguel, 2010). Ethnic groups also tend to live together for various reasons and share both language and customs so if there is a perceived injustice, these groups mobilise support relatively easy. Furthermore, ethnic identity is less elastic than other types of identities (Denny and Walter, 2014). It is thus hard to go from thinking and feeling in terms of “we, the ethnic group” to “we, everyone in the country”. The consequences of fixed identities could be particularly noticeable in those cases where one ethnic group is likely to go from being a minority to a majority in relation to another ethnic group. Because of changing demographics, one group will lose relative power and this may create commitment problems. The soon-to-be minority may hesitate on whether it is included in the considerations of the majority and instead resort non-pacific solutions.

This argument is, however, dependent on how identifiable people are with a particular ethnic group. It also depends on the history between groups and whether atrocities have been committed before (Kirschner, 2010). When bringing in public bureaucracies in this context, Saideman et al (2002:107) comment that there is often a fear that even a relatively neutral government will fall into the hands of one ethnic group which can later dominate other groups. This points to the importance of impartial government organisations, such as bureaucracy.

We can infer ethnicity’s importance to quality of government because QoG operates in a context where ethnicity is intertwined with many, if not most, aspects of political and social life (Berman et al., 2004; Boone, 2014; Eifert et al., 2010; Posner, 2005). With respect to the observation that political and economic power may be distributed along ethnic lines, we would expect the presence of ethnic political parties along with ethnic voting (an assertion supported by Berman et al., 2004; Boone, 2014; Eifert et al., 2010; Horowitz, 2014;

Posner, 2005). The possible link between ethnic parties and quality of government becomes evident when we consider the large literature on party patronage. Party patronage (the ability of political parties to appoint individuals to positions in the public and semi-public sector) is widespread in the world and remains an important electoral resource (Kopecky et al., 2016). This has been shown not least in Latin America where the distribution networks for most government services involve links between political parties, national legislators and public bureaucracies (Barbara, 1994). On the one hand, bureaucracies play a big part for the patron because employment and appointments in the organisation are used as a political resource by parties, executives and legislators. On the other hand, because appointments are made on the basis of loyalty instead of merit, party patronage has consequences for the bureaucracy's ability to produce relevant output.

In a situation where the political power has been distributed along ethnic lines, I assume that there are strong incentives for the winning ethnic party to reward its voters. Governmental and semi-public organisations would be one instrument to achieve this, through appointments, patronage jobs, allocations and service-delivery. This development would clearly be to the disadvantage of quality of government.

This idea that ethnicity may interact with political institutions is present in the literature in way or another. Schneider and Wiesehomeier (2008:186) write:

Our argument [...] builds on the assumption that dominant cleavages within a country mitigate the possible effects that political rules exert on the political competition within a society.

Schneider and Wiesehomeier envisage institutions as “rules of the game” but I find it plausible that the same applies for public bureaucracy, especially when considering research like Kyriacou (2013) that finds that socio-economic inequalities between ethnic groups affects governance. Some of the reasons would be that members from the less wealthy group engage in corruption due to perceived illegitimate rules. Public officials may also misallocate resources without being held accountable as long as they redistribute some to the less wealthy.

Other research suggests that the level of ethnic heterogeneity in a society has consequences for how the state apparatus perform and what kind of policies that are produced (La Porta et al., 1999). In heterogenous societies, it is not uncommon that the ethnic group that wins power in elections shapes policies to expropriate and restrict the freedom of the ethnic losers. They may also limit the availability of public goods to certain groups in order to weaken the opposition (ibid). This basically translates to “partiality” and

once again indicates that the principle of impartiality might be more difficult to uphold in ethnically divided polities.

In theory, impartial government should lead to no ethnic favouritism. Ahlerup, Thushyanthan and Bigsten (2016:56), in a study of impartiality's effect on economic growth, state that:

It is plausible that an impartial government is also rational and efficient in terms of policy choice. An impartial approach to government may also be associated with secure property rights and equality of opportunity, that is, also no ethnic favouritism.

However, we saw from La Porta et al. that heterogenous societies produce policies that do not favour the opposition. It would thus seem that we have two opposing forces, in this view. One that draws towards partiality and another towards impartiality.

3.5.1 *Second expectation*

In section 3.5, I have linked ethnic division to quality of government. Ethnic divisions are consequential for internal conflict as they may increase the opportunity space, escalate grievances and constrain political actors to credibly commit to peaceful resolution. Ethnic divisions can be tied more distinctly to quality of government through ethnic parties and ethnic voting – which, through party patronage, may be associated with a weaker state apparatus and discriminative policies towards the political opposition. We therefore expect the following:

H₂: More ethnic division reduces quality of government's effect on internal conflict.

4. Data and methods

To test my hypotheses, I will use data on institutional quality, internal conflict and ethnic division; the unit of analysis will be *countries*. This data is collected from several sources, the most important ones being the *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data*, ACLED, (Raleigh et al., 2010), *The QoG Expert Survey* (Dahlström et al., 2015), *The QoG Standard Dataset 2017* (Teorell et al., 2017) and finally Montalvo and Reynal-Querol's (2005) *Ethnic polarisation index*. I refer the reader to appendix A for a more complete overview and explanation of all the variables used in this thesis. Appendix C presents descriptive statistics.

I will use OLS regression and different models, some of which will include an interaction effect between quality of government and ethnic division. A main issue with

this data is a low number of observations. The number drops rapidly when several variables are put in the same model. The variables measuring quality of government and conflict are those that primarily limit the analysis in this view. At the same time, there are not many alternatives available and that is why I have chosen to go ahead with the analysis. Because of the low number of valid observations, close to 30, I have been forced to choose my control variables with great care, based on previous research. The data on conflict is from 2017 and the rest from between 2012 and 2016.

4.1 Predictor: quality of government

To measure quality of government, I will rely on data from the QoG Expert Survey (Dahlström et al., 2015) which focuses on the organisational design of public bureaucracies and bureaucratic behaviour. I will use variable *q2_a* that measures the extent of [meritocratic recruitment](#) to public bureaucracy in countries around the globe. More specifically, the survey question was formulated in the following manner:

When recruiting public sector employees, the skills and merits of the applicants decide who gets the job.

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with this statement on a 7-point scale, where higher number stands for more meritocratic bureaucracy. Given the fact that meritocratic bureaucracy has been found to be correlated with lower corruption (Dahlstrom et al., 2012; Evans and Rauch, 1999), this measurement is an adequate proxy for impartiality.

In the robustness check, I use an alternative measurement for quality of government, namely, the International Country Risk Guide's [Indicator of Quality of Government](#). This variable combines measurements of corruption, law and order and bureaucratic quality. Even though, strictly speaking, this variable is not a measurement of impartiality alone, it is still a widely used variable in the literature for measuring governmental quality (e.g., Campos et al., 2017; Salnikova, 2015; Svallfors, 2013).

4.2 Outcome variable: low-intensity, internal conflict

Internal conflict will be measured in two ways. I will use [violence against civilians](#) (which includes shootings, torture, rape, mutilation, kidnapping and disappearances) and [riots and protests](#) (riots are violent demonstrations, involving spontaneous action by unorganised, unaffiliated members of society), both coming from *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project*, ACLED (Raleigh et al., 2010). ACLED has conflict data on Africa, South Asia, South East Asia and the Middle East and in practice this means data on developing or in

rare cases newly industrialised countries. Using two dependent variables will act as a robustness check for quality of government's effects. These variables are however count data. It is therefore possible that a given country has more conflict simply because the population is larger. If we do not address this, the results would be skewed towards more conflict in more populated countries. I therefore divide the count data by the country's population and get [violence against civilians per capita](#) and [riots and protests per capita](#).

These variables are, finally, transformed using natural logarithm in order to address the linearity assumption for OLS regressions.

4.3 Interaction variable: ethnic division

The data for measuring ethnic division comes from Montalvo and Reynal-Querol (2005). Their "RQ index", [ethnic polarisation](#), is my primary measurement of ethnic division.

Some scholars have pointed out that conflicts such as civil war are group conflicts, not conflicts between individuals, and that we therefore should look at polarisation (inequality between groups) instead of inequality between individuals (Østby, 2008:144). Montalvo and Reynal-Querol join this group of scholars and indicate that some countries are highly fractionalised without having large amount of conflicts. In fact, a highly fractionalised country can score very low on polarisation.

The polarisation index measures the distance of ethnic groups from the bipolar case. If we have three ethnic groups in a given country and merge two of them into a common group (leaving us with only two groups), polarisation will increase. This index thus captures the idea that a large minority is the worst possible scenario. The rationale behind this is that ethnic groups in a highly fractionalised country may have greater coordination problems which should diminish the likelihood for conflict. A large minority, however, should find it easier to mobilise and coordinate and consequently increase its relative power.

I will use [ethnic fractionalisation](#) (Alesina et al., 2003) as a robustness check, as this is one of the most widely used measures of ethnic division in the literature (Reynal-Querol, 2005).

4.4 Control variables

Based on previous research, I identify several control variables to include in the analysis to avoid bias in the estimates. As mentioned in section 2.1, a lot of previous research on internal conflict has focused on civil war. Many of the control variables are therefore also linked to civil war. This does not, however, always prevent them from being useful in other

contexts and other types of conflicts. Urbanisation and youth bulges are for example often connected to “social conflict” in the literature which not necessarily means civil war but rather, it can imply all sorts of acts of violence (e.g., violent robbery or murder), resulting from socioeconomic conditions that drive citizens to despair. In the same view, low state reach, which is thought to be a consequence of large and rugged countries, should certainly imply problems for the government to control rebel groups, but it should in a similar manner imply problems for the national police to prevent for example kidnappings and rape.

Hegre and Sambanis did a sensitivity analysis in 2006 of no less than 88 different variables on the onset of civil war and found some variables to perform more consistent than others. These variables are: *large population, low per capita income, low rates of economic growth, recent political instability, inconsistent democratic institutions, countries with small militaries, countries with rough terrain* and finally *countries located in war-prone regions*. In my main models, I will include measurements of some of these variables. I will then, as a robustness check, switch some of them.

I refer to appendix B for a complete overview of the control variables and their relationship with internal conflict. Appendix D explains data transformation that was done for some of the measures. The remainder of this section shortly presents each control variable.

Economic development. Numerous studies link economic development or growth to civil war (Conor Devitt and Tol, 2012; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Henderson, 2000; Holtermann, 2012; Krause and Suzuki, 2005), I therefore include [L GDP per capita](#) to control for this. The variable is transformed by natural logarithm to make it more normally distributed.

Past conflict. In order to take the conflictual context into account, I will include [violent conflicts in 2016](#). Today, reoccurring civil wars are a bigger problem than completely new ones (Collier and Sambanis, 2002; Uzonyi and Hanania, 2017; Walter, 2015). Past conflict might influence whether new ones occur because people have the previous conflict fresh in mind.

Political stability. Studies furthermore point to political stability’s role in keeping society integrated and upholding state legitimacy. This has been found to be a relevant predictor of civil war. Indeed, political instability increases the probability of civil war onset (Alesina et al., 1996; Bjorvatn and Reza Farzanegan, 2015; Diouma Bah, 2014; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Maoz, 1992; O’Rourke, 2017; Pervez Memon et al., 2011; Schumacher, 2013).

To control for this, I include [years without major political change](#) in my models. This variable is Polity IV's *persist* variable (Marshall, Gurr and Jagers, 2017) which counts the years a polity has persisted without a change in polity components such as "openness of executive recruitment" and "executive constraints".

Inconsistent democratic institutions. Regarding political regimes, the highest frequency of internal conflicts is observed in semi-democracies. A regime's political structure constrains or facilitates the political behaviour of its inhabitants. This may affect opportunities for either peaceful or violent collective action (Ellingsen and Gleditsch, 1997; Hegre et al., 2001; Muller and Weede, 1990; Vreeland, 2008). I will control for this by introducing [polity is an anocracy](#) which is based on Marshall, Gurr and Jagers' (2017) *polity* variable. I categorise countries in a similar way as Buhaug (2006), which means that anocracies are regimes that score from -5 to 5 on the polity scale. These countries are given the value 1. All other countries are given the value 0.

Large countries. Country size is another factor that has been found relevant for explaining internal conflict (Buhaug, 2006; Bleaney and Dimico, 2011; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Possible reasons are that large countries have difficulties in projecting power over long distances or that governance becomes more difficult because of the extra layers of authority that is needed to control the population in large countries. I include a control for this, [L Land area](#), which is a natural logarithm.

Rough terrain. Continuing the geographical track, the disposition of the terrain may also matter. Rugged or mountainous terrain are significant for the onset and duration of civil war in several studies (Bleaney and Dimico, 2011; Buhaug, Gates and Lujala, 2009; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Jimenez-Ayora and Ulubaşoğlu, 2015). Just as with country size, the terrain may make it difficult for the state to project its power. This type of terrain can serve as a sanctuary for dissident groups and as a base for revenue raising. This type of terrain is also linked to difficulties in creating polities in which cooperation is facilitated. [Terrain ruggedness index](#) is included to check for this (Nunn and Puga, 2012).

Natural resources. High-value natural resources (e.g., oil and gemstones) are associated with many armed conflicts and secessionist movements and this is often denoted as a "conflict curse". Between 40 and 60 percent of today's intrastate conflicts can be linked to natural resources (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Buhaug, Gates and Lujala, 2009; Rustad and Binningsbø, 2010; Rustad and Binningsbø, 2012; Lujala and Rustad, 2012). The

resources might be the motivation itself for the conflict, but they may also constitute funding that increases the opportunity for conflict through purchases of weapons and recruitment. Some models include [oil rents](#) (World Bank, 2016) to control for this.

Young population. As for as demography is concerned, this can be linked to social conflict via a phenomenon called youth bulges. I measure this by the share of [young males in population](#). Looking at the civil conflicts (causing 25 deaths or more) from the seventies until the turn of the century, 80 percent of these occurred in countries in which at least 60 percent of the population is below the age of 30. When compared to countries that have a mature population structure, studies observe that the countries having a very young structure are three times more likely to experience civil conflict (Ginges, 2005; Karakaya, 2015; Leahy et al., 2012; Marcus, Islam and Moloney, 2008; Rivera, 2010; Urdal, 2006). Developing countries often undergo a demographic transformation that increases the proportion of youths. This connects to social conflict because the fast growth rate in the working-age population often exacerbates unemployment and worsens the social-economic status. This, in turn, may incentivise young people to join conflictful movements.

Urbanisation. Finally, urban conflict in global Southern cities is of increasing concern to scholars. Urban centres represent critical arenas in which violent conflict occurs. This is linked to the urbanisation of poverty, inadequate infrastructure and governance (Büscher, 2018; Beall, Goodfellow and Rodgers, 2013; Hinds, 2014; Lombard, 2012; Maninger, 2000). Urbanisation entails competition over access to resources and civic conflict is often associated with inherent urban qualities such as population density, diversity and compressed inequality – often in combination with ethnic strife. I will control for this by including an [agglomeration index](#), which is a measure of urbanisation.

5. Analysis

The analysis is organised in two larger sections. One in which low intensive, internal conflict is measured as violence against civilians and another in which it is measured as riots and protests. In each section, I comment on the regression’s diagnostics for the sake of compliance with the OLS assumptions and I thereafter present the results of numerous models. Appendices E and F show detailed information about the regression diagnostics.

We shall begin the analysis by looking at figures 5.1 to 5.4 below. As can be seen in the first two figures, there is linearity between the independent and dependent variables, although the relationship is clearly weaker when QoG is measured by [meritocratic recruitment](#). Regarding riots and protests (figure 5.3 and 5.4), it is hard to discern a linear relationship when QoG is measured as [meritocratic recruitment](#). The relationship that do exist is extremely low (0.020) and furthermore goes in the opposite direction as far as hypothesis 1 is concerned. However, when looking at figure 5.4 where QoG is measured by ICRG’s index, a linear relationship is discernible and it runs in the predicted direction, although 4 cases to the upper right obviously affect the fitted line which at the moment is nearly horizontal.

Figure 5.1 Linearity check
Meritocratic recruitment vs L violence against civilians

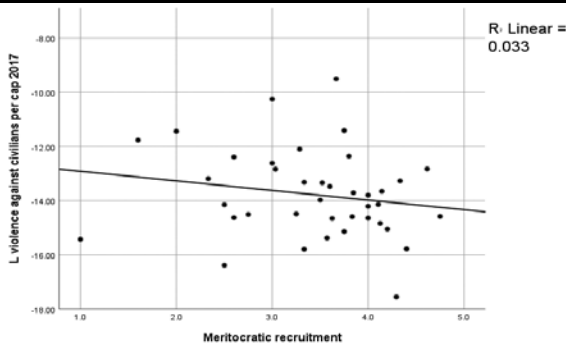


Figure 5.2 Linearity check
ICRG QoG vs L violence against civilians

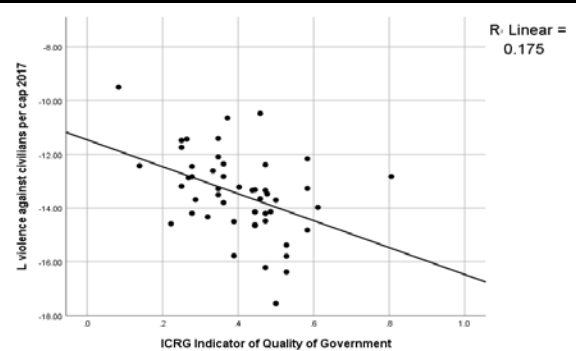


Figure 5.3 Linearity check
Meritocratic recruitment vs L riots and protests

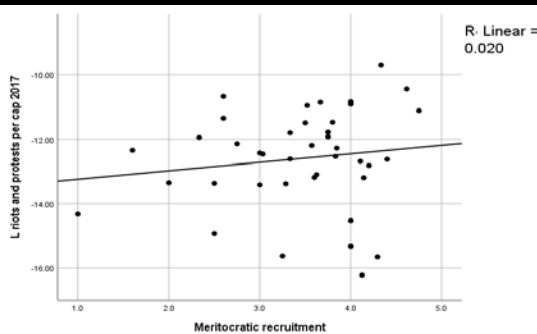
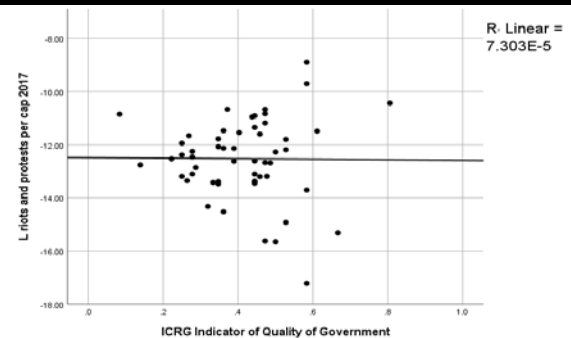


Figure 5.4 Linearity check
ICRG QoG vs L riots and protests



5.1 Part 1: Violence against civilians

Regression diagnostics

As far as the OLS assumptions are concerned, some are met with more ease than others. As can be seen in appendix E, collinearity poses no problems. No variable has a Pearson's R close to the threshold for high correlation, 0.8 (Field, 2013:325) and the VIF values are only high when the interaction term is included in the model, which is normal.

Most problematic is the assumption of normal distribution of errors. In large samples this is not a problem thanks to the central limit theorem but due to my small N, this is an issue. The P-P plot (figure E.4) suggests that there is a deviation from normality too far from what might be deemed acceptable – and this despite having taken measures to minimise this problem, for example taking the natural logarithm of variables with long tails. On the other hand, both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the Shapiro-Wilk tests indicate that the errors *are* normally distributed. Field (2013) state that in small samples, it is tricky to establish whether there is normality one way or another so after having taken measures to try to address this issue, as well as having the support of the Shapiro-Wilk test, I allow this issue to pass.

Figure E.3 in appendix E furthermore indicates that the residuals are not homoscedastic. The solution to this is to include a model with robust standard errors (model 8 to 10).

Finally, quite a few Cook's D values are high and thus suggest that they are more influential than is preferable. Since it is not obvious what to do with outliers, I will content myself with including models 9 and 10 that have the most influential outliers removed: Indonesia, Israel and Somalia. In any case, I cannot remove all observations with high Cook's D values since there would be below 20 cases left for the regressions.

Let us now turn to the regression results. Please note that two asterisks denote the 0.05 level of significance ($p \leq 0.05$), and one asterisk denotes the 0.1 level of significance ($p \leq 0.1$).

Model results

Table 5.1 presents models 1 to 10 which includes a first set of control variables. The last models have robust standard errors.

Table 5.1 Multiple OLS Meritocratic recruitment DV: "L violence against civilians per capita"

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
							Interaction	Robust standard errors	Outliers removed & robust st. errors	Outliers removed & robust st. errors
Meritocratic recruitment	-.709** (.345)	-.724** (.352)	-.700* (.350)	-.842** (.352)	-.822** (.376)	-.845** (.379)	-.037 (1.437)	-.845** (.346)	-.670*** (.257)	.317 (.763)
Ethnic Polarisation		-.449 (1.165)	-.429 (1.158)	-.860 (1.158)	-.847 (1.181)	-.790 (1.190)	3.686 (7.764)	-.790 (.881)	-.815 (.790)	4.597 (3.826)
Interaction Merit. recr. & Ethn. polar.							-1.308 (2.241)			-1.577 (1.139)
L GDP per Capita			-.264 (.226)	-.394 (.234)	-.397 (.239)	-.474* (.258)	-.504* (.266)	-.474 (.330)	-.159 (.204)	-.198 (.197)
Years without major political change				.060 (.037)	.061 (.038)	.066 (.039)	.072* (.041)	.066** (.0298)	.004 (.044)	.011 (.044)
L Land area					.042 (.238)	.108 (.253)	.155 (.268)	.108 (.256)	.192 (.152)	.260* (.149)
Percentage of young males in population						-.404 (.493)	-.409 (.499)	-.404 (.633)	.290 (.549)	.263 (.581)
Constant	-11.226*** (1.251)	-10.926*** (1.488)	-9.086*** (2.160)	-7.840** (2.238)	-8.432* (4.064)	-4.993 (5.854)	-8.162 (8.040)	-4.993 (6.162)	-14.989** (5.573)	-18.795*** (5.731)
R ²	.120	.124	.164	.235	.236	.256	.266	-	-	-
N	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	30	30

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01. The significance value for meritocratic recruitment in model 3 is 0.055.

The first thing to notice is that the R² value starts at .120 in model 1 and finishes at .266 in model 7. It's normal that the values increase since more variables are included in the models. Model 7 thus accounts for 27 % of the variation in *L violence against civilians per capita*. Following Falk and Miller (1992) who consider R² values greater than .10 to be adequate, I deem these models' R² values to be satisfactory.

The second thing to notice is that although almost all control variables are insignificant, *meritocratic recruitment* remains significant in all models but those including the interaction variable (in model 3 at the 90% level). Since there is heteroscedasticity in the residuals, model 8 to 10 are of special interest. Even when using robust standard errors in model 8, the coefficient of *meritocratic recruitment* (-.845) remains significant and negative. This is a good indication for hypothesis 1 which expected a negative sign. Since the dependent variable is a natural logarithm, it is difficult to interpret the coefficient right from the table. But by applying the formula $100(e^{\beta_1} - 1)$, we get the change in *percent* in Y. In other words, one unit's change on the 7-point scale of *meritocratic recruitment* (model 8) results in a 57 % decrease in *violence against civilians per capita*. In the robustness check 1 (see appendix G) where *ethnic polarisation* is replaced with *ethnic fractionalisation*, there is no major changes in the coefficients for *meritocratic recruitment*. One control, *L GDP per Capita*, also becomes significant in some models.

To sum up, the data provide support for H₁ and the effect of quality of government appears be quite substantial when controlling for economic development, political stability, country size and population youth. Quality of government, by helping to address

commitment problems and grievances, may thus have a real impact on the levels of violence in a given development country.

However, there are some caveats with this analysis. All but two control variables, *years without major political change* and *L GDP per Capita* (in some models) are insignificant and the same goes for whole model when ANOVA (not reported) is checked. The N is also relatively very low. The possible issues with some OLS assumptions, warrant some caution when interpreting the results, especially when talking about confidence intervals, significance and the generalisability of the sample.

Outliers and interaction effects

When the influential outliers are removed, the effect of *meritocratic recruitment* decreases a little bit but remains significant, which again, speaks to the first hypothesis' advantage but on the other hand, it is hard to justify such manipulations of the data, especially if no considerable changes can be seen. The only substantial adjustment that we observe when the outliers are removed is found in model 10. When the interaction variable is added, the coefficient of *meritocratic recruitment* (.317) changes sign. This would normally be worrisome but since the coefficient is insignificant and has a huge standard error (.763), I remain assured as to the previous interpretation of the coefficients of *meritocratic recruitment*.

Hypothesis 2 receives no support. In models 7 and 10, using robust standard errors, the coefficients for both *meritocratic recruitment* and *ethnic polarisation* become or stay insignificant when the interaction variable is added. The interaction term itself is also insignificant. Simply put, this data does not support hypothesis 2 which expected less effect from quality of government in highly polarised societies.

Robustness checks

I will now turn to a series of robustness checks. In order to allow for a sufficient number of degrees of freedom, I have to restrict the number of maximum variables in analysis, using a rule of thumb "5–6 observations per variable". I was unable in the main analysis to include as many control variables as I wanted to. I will therefore run a few models in which I change controls. These will be run without interaction effects. Finally, I will substitute *meritocratic recruitment* with ICRG's *Indicator of Quality of Government*. The results are presented in tables 5.2 and 5.3.

Table 5.2 Meritocratic recruitment and change of controls DV: "L violence against civilians per capita"

	Model 11	Model 12	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18	Model 19	Model 20
					Robust standard errors					Robust standard errors
Meritocratic recruitment	-.724** (.352)	-.700* (.350)	-.717* (.366)	-.563 (.399)	-.563* (.311)	-.700* (.350)	-.748** (.361)	-.561 (.418)	-.638 (.491)	-.638* (.344)
Ethnic Polarisation	-.449 (1.165)	-.429 (1.158)	-.484 (1.210)	-.311 (1.224)	-.311 (1.030)	-.429 (1.158)	-.313 (1.182)	-.234 (1.189)	-.226 (1.210)	-.226 (.701)
L GDP per Capita		-.264 (.226)	-.265 (.230)	-.260 (.230)	-.260 (.304)	-.264 (.226)	-.029 (.417)	-.103 (.426)	-.117 (.436)	-.117 (.534)
Ruggedness			.053 (.262)	.017 (.265)	.017 (.161)					
At least one conflict in 2016				.553 (.571)	.553 (.495)					
Agglomeration index							-.015 (.023)	-.017 (.023)	-.016 (.024)	-.016 (.018)
Oil rents (% of GDP)								.035 (.039)	.030 (.042)	.030 (.0299)
Polity is an anocracy									-.202 (.643)	-.202 (.471)
Constant	-10.926*** (1.488)	-9.086*** (2.160)	-9.049*** (2.205)	-9.952*** (2.396)	-9.952*** (2.304)	-9.086*** (2.160)	-10.060*** (2.617)	-10.285*** (2.638)	-9.802*** (3.093)	-9.802*** (2.805)
R ²	.124	.164	.165	.193	–	.164	.177	.201	.204	–
N	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01. Meritocratic recruitment has p=0.055 in model 12 and 16; p=0.060 in model 13; p=0.070 for model 15.

In table 5.2, we observe lower R² values compared to previous models. Model 14 has an R² of .193 and model 18 an R² of .201. Both values are less than model 5’s R² of .236 (table 5.1) despite the fact that all models have the same number of variables and the same cases. This means that when I start substituting the control variables in the main regression table 5.1, the models explain less variation in *L violence against civilians per capita*.

As in table 5.1, all control variables are insignificant in table 5.2 but more importantly, *meritocratic recruitment* drops its significance too in some models when the original controls are replaced (see for example models 14, 18 and 19). This is certainly worth noting, but when robust standard errors are used in models 15 and 20, the coefficients are still significant at the 90 % confidence level (p ≤ 0.1) for *meritocratic recruitment*.

These results mean that the original relationship we observed in table 5.1, which was promising for the first hypothesis, is to some degree dependent on which variables that were controlled for. The original results are therefore to some extent put into question and this demand caution in the interpretation and certainly when it comes drawing conclusions and generalising from the sample to the population.

What nonetheless still speaks in favour to the original interpretation which gave support to hypothesis 1 is that all coefficients of *meritocratic recruitment* in models 1 through 9 and 11 through 20 are negative, as expected. In model 15 for example, the coefficient is -.563 which means when controlling for economic development, rugged terrain and

previous conflict, each unit’s increase of [meritocratic recruitment](#) renders a 43 percent’s decrease in [violence against civilians per capita](#).

In short, the results in table 5.2 require us to be a bit more conservative in our interpretation and conclusion.

As a final robustness check, I measure quality of government by [ICRG QoG](#)’s index. The results are presented in table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Multiple OLS with ICRG QoG. DV: “L violence against civilians per capita”

	<u>Model 21</u>	<u>Model 22</u>	<u>Model 23</u>	<u>Model 24</u>	<u>Model 25</u>	<u>Model 26</u>	<u>Model 27</u>	<u>Model 28</u>
							Interaction	Robust standard errors
ICRG Indicator of Quality of Government	-5.432** (2.024)	-5.421** (2.051)	-5.719** (2.639)	-7.276*** (2.554)	-7.694*** (2.673)	-7.669*** (2.739)	4.868 (6.980)	-7.669*** (2.887)
Ethnic Polarisation		-.615 (1.150)	-.619 (1.173)	-1.195 (1.122)	-1.272 (1.143)	-1.248 (1.183)	8.427 (5.127)	-1.248 (.792)
Interaction ICRG QoG & Ethn. polar.							-21.930* (11.343)	
L GDP per Capita			.054 (.290)	-.019 (.272)	.008 (.278)	-.006 (.304)	-.016 (.287)	-.006 (.265)
Years without major political change				.079** (.036)	.075* (.037)	.075* (.038)	.079** (.036)	.075** (.027)
L Land area					-.156 (.251)	-.141 (.282)	-.083 (.268)	-.141 (.282)
Percentage of young males in population						-.062 (.495)	-.043 (.467)	-.062 (.555)
Constant	-11.435*** (.884)	-11.103*** (1.089)	-11.376*** (1.842)	-10.479*** (1.761)	-8.424** (3.748)	-7.976 (5.245)	-14.358** (5.946)	-7.976* (4.554)
R ²	.211	.219	.220	.352	.363	.363	.460	–
N	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01.

Table 5.3 is identical to table 5.1 as far as the control variables are concerned. The only difference is that [meritocratic recruitment](#) is replaced by [ICRG QoG](#). It should be noted that the N has dropped to 29 due to [ICRG QoG](#) not having values on all the cases that [meritocratic recruitment](#) does but the R² of the full models (model 26 and 27) is higher than those in the main regression in table 5.1. Model 27 explains 46 percent of the variation in [L violence against civilians per capita](#) while model 7 (table 5.1) explains 26 percent.

A change from previous models is that one control variable, [years without major political change](#) is significant along with [ICRG QoG](#). In all models but model 27, the coefficient of [ICRG QoG](#) is negative and significant, often on a higher level of significance than in previous models (p-value ≤ 0.01). This also gives support to hypothesis 1, namely that higher quality of government decreases low intensity, internal conflict.

A major difference in table 5.3 compared to 5.1 is the size of the coefficients. In model 8, [meritocratic recruitment](#) had a coefficient of -.845** – in model 28 however, [ICRG QoG](#)

has a coefficient of -7.669^{***} . Again, using the formula $100(e^{B1}-1)$, this means that when ICRG QoG increases by one unit, violence against civilians per capita decreases by 99 percent. This effect might seem extraordinary, but we get these results because ICRG QoG is an index that runs from 0 to 1. What we see here is thus the coefficient for when we move from a country with the worst quality of government (value 0) to a country with the best (on this scale) quality of government (value 1). Nonetheless, the effect is in my view remarkable and strongly suggests that quality of government is something worth paying attention to in internal violence prone countries.

As far as hypothesis 2 is concerned, we see in table 5.3 that the interaction term is significant on the $p \leq 0.1$ -level in model 27 and thereby becomes of interest. The second hypothesis expected that more ethnic division reduces quality of government's effect on internal conflict. To investigate this further we turn to the margins plot in figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5 Average Marginal effects of ICRG QoG with 95 % CIs

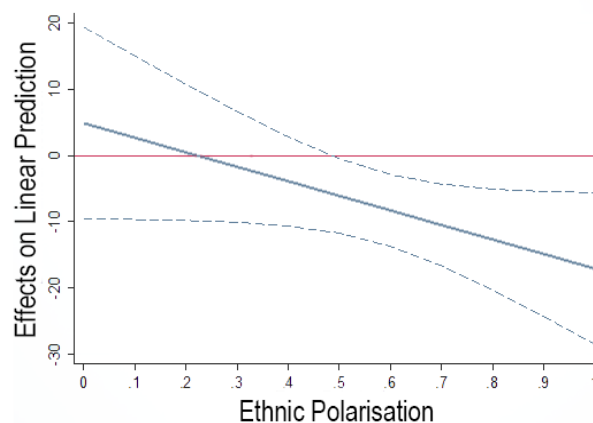


Figure 5.5 depicts how the average marginal effect of ICRG QoG on the outcome variable is conditioned by ethnic polarisation, together with the confidence interval. At the value .5 on the X-axis, the effect line together with the whole confidence interval is below 0. This means that we can say with certainty that when ethnic polarisation has a value of 0.5 and over, the utility of ICRG QoG increases. In other words, it is in rather highly polarised societies that QoG significantly **reduces** violence against civilians. These are countries like South Africa, Malawi, Sri Lanka and Jordan.

As with the main analysis in table 5.1, this data does not support hypothesis 2. The hypothesis expected less effect from ICRG QoG as polarisation increases but it turns out to be the other way around. This means that even when using ICRG QoG as a different

measurement for QoG, one that includes not only bureaucratic quality but also corruption and law and order, the data cannot support hypothesis 2. It would also have been preferable if ICRG QoG itself and ethnic polarisation were significant in model 27 (not only the interaction effect). Instead, they have quite large standard errors.

Summary

In general, the data suggests that hypothesis 1 (that higher quality of government decreases internal conflict) receive support. This support is nonetheless to a certain degree dependent of what is controlled for in the model. The robustness check for the independent variable also suggests that hypothesis 1 receive support. Hypothesis 2 (that more ethnic division reduces quality of government's effect on internal conflict) does not receive support in neither the main analysis, nor the robustness check.

As far as trust in the analysis is concerned, we must be cautious with drawing too big conclusions since the data contains a relatively low number of observations. This is especially true since different controls affect the coefficient of the independent variable somewhat. The low N prevents the inclusion of an adequate number of controls in the same model and this is something that substantially limits the analysis and the conclusions that can be drawn from it.

5.2 Part 2: Riots and protests

The second part of the analysis changes the outcome variable from *L violence against civilians per capita* to *L riots and protests per capita* and is also thought of as a robustness check for the previous analysis. The following models will follow the same pattern as before, using the same sets of controls.

Regression diagnostics

Appendix F shows the regression diagnostics for model 35, that is, the full model of table 5.4. I should briefly mention that, again, there are possible influential outliers and issues with normality of errors and heteroscedasticity. The heteroscedasticity is however not as bad as in previous models (table 5.1). In any case, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests deem the residuals as normally distributed on this occasion too. When the outliers are removed, the issue of normality of errors disappears completely. The OLS assumptions are however not the main issue with these models. We remember **figure 5.3**

that showed a very weak *positive* relationship between [meritocratic recruitment](#) and [L riots and protests per capita](#). This goes against hypothesis 1 from the beginning and a further analysis should not be needed. I have despite this included table 5.4 and I will briefly comment on it before moving on to the alternative measurement of quality of government which is the reason for including [L riots and protests per capita](#) in the analysis.

Model results

Table 5.4 is basically the same regressions as in the first main regression table (5.1) but with [L riots and protests capita](#) as outcome variable.

Table 5.4 Multiple OLS with Meritocratic recruitment DV: "L riots and protests per capita"										
	Model 29	Model 30	Model 31	Model 32	Model 33	Model 34	Model 35	Model 36	Model 37	Model 38
							Interaction	Robust standard errors	Outliers removed & robust st. errors	Outliers removed & robust st. errors
Meritocratic recruitment	.112 (.367)	.158 (.366)	.144 (.373)	.213 (.388)	.182 (.414)	.189 (.422)	.980 (1.606)	.189 (.343)	.015 (.2857)	-.687 (1.0844)
Ethnic Polarisation		1.513 (1.216)	1.490 (1.235)	1.700 (1.279)	1.682 (1.302)	1.655 (1.327)	6.035 (8.683)	1.655* (.963)	1.764*** (.6831)	-1.910 (4.9571)
Interaction Merit. recr. & Ethn. polar.							-1.280 (2.507)			1.106 (1.4972)
L GDP per Capita			.083 (.217)	.178 (.256)	.183 (.261)	.215 (.288)	.186 (.297)	.215 (.261)	.139 (.2382)	.144 (.2357)
Years without major political change				-.025 (.034)	-.027 (.036)	-.027 (.037)	-.022 (.039)	-.027 (.039)	.024 (.0287)	.022 (.0281)
L Land area					-.065 (.263)	-.090 (.282)	-.045 (.300)	-.090 (.385)	-.285 (.2570)	-.301 (.2589)
Young males in population						.151 (.540)	.146 (.547)	.151 (.535)	.055 (.4232)	.029 (.4140)
Constant	-12.992*** (1.336)	-13.994*** (1.550)	-14.542*** (2.131)	-15.406*** (2.460)	-14.484 (4.488)	-15.782** (6.500)	-18.881** (8.960)	-15.782*** (5.459)	-11.602*** (4.4179)	-8.826 (6.5382)
R ²	.003	.050	.055	.071	.074	.076	.085	-	-	-
N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	31	31

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01.

In models 29 through 38, [meritocratic recruitment](#) remains insignificant as do all the controls variables. Only in model 36 and 37 when the outliers Rwanda, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates are removed does [ethnic polarisation](#) become significant and then on a high level (p-value ≤ 0.01). Regarding [meritocratic recruitment](#), it has a positive coefficient in all models but the last one (model 38). When the outliers are removed and robust standard errors are used, it becomes positive – but it also has a huge standard error and it is pointless to draw any conclusions from this.

The main takeaway from these models is that the data cannot give support to either hypothesis 1 or 2. I get the same results when using different controls (see appendix H for this). I will now instead turn to the alternative measurement of quality of government.

Robustness checks

In **figure 5.4** we saw, by eyeballing, that there could plausibly be a *negative* relationship between ICRG QoG and L riots and protests per capita. This is the reason for which L riots and protests per capita still is interesting for this analysis. I will now run a set of regressions in the same manner that I have done previously. Starting with the original set of controls and then replacing them by others. The results are shown in tables 5.5 and 5.6.

Table 5.5 Multiple OLS ICRG QoG DV: "L riots and protests per capita"

	<u>Model 39</u>	<u>Model 40</u>	<u>Model 41</u>	<u>Model 42</u>	<u>Model 43</u>	<u>Model 44</u>	<u>Model 45</u>	<u>Model 46</u>
							Interaction	Robust standard errors
ICRG Indicator of Quality of Government	-.064 (2.034)	-.124 (2.045)	-.870 (2.775)	-.389 (2.906)	-1.519 (2.921)	-1.814 (2.924)	8.058 (7.736)	-1.814 (2.833)
Ethnic Polarisation		1.054 (1.213)	1.034 (1.233)	1.219 (1.280)	1.012 (1.253)	.776 (1.268)	8.414 (5.696)	.776 (.916)
Interaction ICRG QoG & Ethn. polar.							-17.331 (12.611)	
L GDP per Capita			.117 (.289)	.173 (.305)	.242 (.300)	.376 (.324)	.372 (.318)	.376 (.305)
Years without major political change				-.022 (.034)	-.035 (.034)	-.037 (.034)	-.031 (.034)	-.037 (.037)
L Land area					-.427 (.276)	-.563* (.303)	-.515 (.299)	-.563* (.292)
Percentage of young males in population						.560 (.522)	.563 (.512)	.560 (.547)
Constant	-12.496*** (.908)	-13.050*** (1.112)	-13.605*** (1.775)	-14.135*** (1.977)	-8.505** (4.112)	-12.618** (5.611)	-17.611** (6.597)	-12.618** (5.807)
R ²	.000	.027	.033	.049	.135	.177	.242	-
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01.

The full model (45) explains 24 percent of the variation in L riots and protests per capita which is less than the previous full models (7 and 27). More important, however, is the fact that ICRG QoG’s coefficient has a negative sign throughout all the models (except model 45) but they are all insignificant and has huge standard errors. Using robust standard errors does not help either. The negative coefficients would have given further support to hypothesis 1 but the large standard errors mean that we cannot trust the coefficients and thus not give support to the hypotheses. The same thing applies to hypothesis 2 since the interaction term also is insignificant.

Before proceeding further with commenting on the consequences of these results, let us take a look at table 5.6 which shows the same changes of controls that was used earlier. I remind that the main analysis (tables 5.1 and 5.2) showed that the outcome of the regressions (and the coefficients of meritocratic recruitment) where to a certain degree

altogether, more research is needed to sort out what has been observed in this analysis. Hypothesis 2 has not gained any support at all throughout the whole second part of the analysis.

On a more general level, the second part of the analysis (5.2) calls the results from the first part (5.1) into question. While the first results largely pointed towards giving support to the expectation that better quality of government decreases internal conflict, the latter results cannot corroborate this at all (except for the last model which I just brought up). This suggests that results in studies of internal conflict are highly dependent on how we measure internal conflict. I would say that it also shows that studies of this type need more precised theorising and thought behind what constitutes a conflict and what kind of conflict that is likely or not, to occur in these settings. Additionally, as before, a major disadvantage of the second part of the thesis' analysis is the low N. The results in this thesis should therefore be taken as indications rather than firm facts.

Summary

In the second part of the analysis, the data cannot give overall support to the hypotheses. Only in one single model, using specific controls, does the results point towards what was expected in hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 does not receive any support at all using this data. Caution is warranted when interpreting the overall results in this thesis since they point in opposite directions.

5.3 Issues of endogeneity

Endogeneity can be caused for instance by omitted variables, measurement error in the independent variable or reversed causality. Reversed causality is an issue that still causes uncertainties in the governance and institutions literatures (Dellepiane-Avellaneda, 2010) and when it comes to internal conflict, some observers have pointed to the fact that it often takes a state's resources to commit serious crimes such as genocide (Saideman et al., 2002). Indeed, one's own government is the greatest potential threat in many countries.

Reversed causality in the context of this thesis would mean that it is internal conflict that affects the quality of government (i.e. the principle of impartiality). This idea is not impossible. It is for example easily imaginable that a civil war with strong ethnic undertones or even ethnic cleansing entails consequences in the form of increased discrimination of people by ethnicity in the whole society, including in state bureaucracy.

There are already some studies on the neighbouring concept of state capacity (e.g., Sobek, 2010) that point in this direction of causality. Linke (2013) has furthermore found that local experiences with conflict reduce trust in government. This reduced trust could potentially make bureaucrats more inclined to give partial treatment further down the causality chain. Finally, Wood (2003) has also found that conflict may have a direct impact on institutional developments by creating settings in which particular institutions grow. Wood's example is El Salvador and how the conflict adjusted institutions towards the demands of the conflict instead of the people. However, since I have been interested in low intensity, internal conflict, I consider the risk of reversed causality to be less severe than if we were talking about civil war, although the risk is obviously there.

Unfortunately, there is not much that can be done to address this problem when using cross-sectional data. Other statistical techniques have options like instrumental variable analysis but finding a suitable instrument is a challenging task that hardly can be accomplished within the timeframe of a MA thesis.

An inductive angle to this problem would be to see what other scholars have arrived at. This way, I have an indication of the way of causality, compared to knowing nothing. Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016:39) used matching techniques with a view to address this problem and their verdict is that "this exercise increases our confidence that there is indeed an independent effect of local institutional quality on conflict risk". Additionally, Hegre and Nygård (2015) affronted this problem by using an instrumental variable together with a two-step model and found their models to be only moderately biased. (Their study found a reduced risk of renewed conflict in countries with good governance, conceptualised as factors from both policy-making and implementation.) Since these scholars found the direction of causality to run from QoG to conflict, this at least raises the probability that the same applies for my analysis.

The best effort I can do to reduce bias is to present several sets of robustness test and I believe that I have done that to an adequate extent. This is also what Wig and Forø Tollefsen (2016) suggest when no instrumental variable is available.

Omitted variable bias is also one of issues linked to the OLS assumptions. We are supposed to include *all* relevant variables in the model, otherwise it will be biased. In practise however, it is impossible to fulfil this assumption 100 % – not least because we cannot know which all the relevant variables are beforehand. The amount of available data also limits how many control variables that, practically, can be included in the models. This

is one of the main weaknesses of this analysis. Because of the low N, I cannot include all the relevant variables in one single model. The low N also puts limits on the generalisability of the sample.

5.4 Future research

In 2014, Walter called for future research on what *aspects* of good governance that are important to internal conflict. This thesis has contributed to this call by focusing on the aspect of impartiality in governmental bureaucracies. However, the results, while to some degree pointing towards the importance of impartiality, rest inconclusive in general. This thesis would have benefited greatly from an improvement of the available data and this is an important point for future research in this field.

First, I agree with Ray and Esteban (2017) in their wish for better and more nuanced data on internal conflicts. ACLED has recently added new countries to their dataset and I can only encourage them and other scholars to add more data. A distinction *between* riots and protests would probably have helped this analysis since riots lie closer to the concept of conflict that I am interested in, than do protests (which are of a more peaceful nature). The data for operationalising quality of government could also improve. The QoG Expert Survey contains 129 observations for [meritocratic recruitment](#) and ACLED has around 69 observations for its conflict variables. Unfortunately, these datasets rarely have data on the *same* countries and it was primarily these variables that made the N fall towards 30 in the regressions. Since (violent) internal conflict to a lesser extent is a problem in the developed world but rather, a phenomenon observed in the developing world, improvement of the quality of government data for developing or newly industrialised countries would be of great benefit to this field of research.

A natural next step is finally to do a time-series analysis to estimate quality of government's effect on internal conflict over time – and for that, we certainly need good data.

6. Conclusion

I have in this thesis, by looking at developing and newly industrialised countries, systematically examined the extent to which quality of government affects low-intensity, internal conflict and how this relationship is affected by levels of ethnic division,

There are two main findings. First, the data initially suggests that quality of government reduces internal conflict. This is consistent with hypothesis 1 and the theoretical framework. It is plausible that quality of government, that is, the procedural norm of impartiality, is reducing internal conflict by diminishing the opportunity space for the conflict, by preventing the onset of grievances between societal groups, and finally by making political commitments more credible.

These results are however dependent on how one measures conflict. The aforementioned results are only valid when conflict is measured as *violence against civilians*, which includes shootings, torture, rape, mutilation, kidnapping and disappearances. On the other hand, when conflict is measured as *riots and protests*, which include violent demonstrations and spontaneous action by unorganised, unaffiliated members of society, then the first hypothesis only gains support in one model out of eighteen. This fact nuances the first analysis and warrants caution when drawing conclusions. In short, these results provide an indication that quality of government may be of high relevance for internal conflict but in essence, further research is needed on the topic.

Second, the theoretical framework connects ethnic division to escalating grievances and constrained political actors (with regard to credible commitments). The link between ethnic division and quality of government could be found for instance in ethnic parties and ethnic voting that, in turn, are linked to public bureaucracy through party patronage and discriminative policies. The data is however to a large extent inconclusive as to how the relationship between quality of government and internal conflict is affected by levels of ethnic division, regardless of how one measures ethnic division.

In one model, the data suggests that it is in ethnically polarised societies – those where the levels of divisions are quite substantial (above 0.5 on the index) – that QoG significantly reduces violence against civilians. This single model gives results that are opposite from what was expected and it thereby does not give support to the second hypothesis.

Although this thesis has produced rather inconclusive results, it is worthwhile to mention that the indications that are obtained, namely that quality of government reduces low-intensity, internal conflict, still are consistent with the previous literature. Both the literature using the somewhat neighbouring concept of “state capacity” and the small literature that adopts concepts closer to that of “quality of government” find that this, on average, reduces internal conflict. It must be mentioned however, that these literatures mostly focus on civil wars.

The major weakness of this thesis is the low N. The low number of observations (countries in this case) prevents the inclusion of a substantial amount of control variables in the same model. Because of this, it was not possible to control for everything (in the same model) that previous literature deemed important for internal conflict. As we know, it is important to control for everything relevant in order to get correct coefficients and correct estimations. This is mainly due to a lack of data to measure quality of government and conflict. For future research, I recommend that efforts be made to address this data issue. Given the policy relevance and the high stakes for the millions of people that live in conflict-affected regions and countries, this issue should arguably be one of the priorities for the international research community.

7. Literature

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Appendices

Appendix A – All used variables in the analysis

Table A.1 All used variables in the analysis

Nº	Phenomenon	Measurement	Definition	From dataset	Original source	Data from year	Nº of observations	Comment
1	Quality of government	Meritocratic recruitment (q2_a)	Question: When recruiting public sector employees, the skills and merits of the applicants decide who gets the job.	QoG Expert Survey Data	Dahlström, Teorell, Dahlberg, Hartmann, Lindberg and Nistolskaya (2015).	2015	129	Runs between 1 and 7. Higher values indicate higher quality of government.
2	Quality of government	ICRG Indicator of Quality of Government (icrq_qoq)	The mean value of the ICRG variables: "corruption", "law and order" and "bureaucracy quality".	QoG	ICRG (n.d.).	2013	139	Scaled 0-1. Higher values indicate higher quality of government.
3	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Violence against civilians (viol)	Violent attacks on unarmed civilians. Includes inflicting significant harm (e.g. shooting, torture, rape, mutilation, etc.) or abducting victims (e.g. kidnapping and disappearances).	ACLED	Raleigh, Linke, Hegre and Karlsen (2010).	2017	67	Count data.
4	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Riots and protests (riots)	Riots: violent demonstration, often involving a spontaneous action by unorganized, unaffiliated members of society. Protests: non-violent demonstrations, involving typically unorganized action by members of society.	ACLED	Raleigh, Linke, Hegre and Karlsen (2010).	2017	69	Count data.
5	Population	Population (unna_pop)	De facto population in a country, area or region as of 1 July of the year.	QoG	UN Statistics (2016).	2013	193	
6	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Violence against civilians per capita 2017 (L_viol_cap)	The quotient of number of violence against civilians and population. The variable is then transformed using natural logarithm.	-			66	Becomes continuous data.
7	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Riots and protests per capita 2017 (L_riots_cap)	The quotient of number of riots and population. The variable is then transformed using natural logarithm.	-			67	Becomes continuous data.
8	Ethnic division	Ethnic polarisation (ethpol)	How far the distribution of the ethnic groups is from the bipolar distribution (1/2, 0, 0, ..., 0, 1/2) which represents the highest level of polarisation. The index captures the idea that a large minority is the worst possible situation.	-	Montalvo and Reynal-Querol (2005).	Around 2005	134	Higher values mean more polarisation.
9	Ethnic division	Ethnic fractionalisation (a_ethnic)	The probability that two randomly selected people from a given country will not share a certain characteristic. The definition of ethnicity involves a combination of racial and linguistic characteristics.	QoG	Alesina, Devleeschauwer, Easterly, Kurlat and Wacziarg (2003).	2013	186	Higher values mean more fractionalisation. (Less probability of two persons sharing characteristics.)
10	Low income levels	L GDP per capita (L_unna_gdppc)	GDP per capita (current prices in US dollar). Natural logarithm.	QoG	UN Statistics (2016).	2013	193	
11	Past conflict	Violent conflict in 2016 (confl2016)	Conflict: "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year".	UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset	Allansson, Melander and Themnér (2017); Gleditsch and Ward (1999).	2016	194	Dichotomous. 0 for "no conflict occurred in 2016"; 1 for "at least one conflict occurred in 2016".
12	Political instability	Years without major political change (persist)	The number of years the polity has persisted without a change in any of the six polity component variables: regulation of chief executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, executive constraints (decision rules), regulation of participation, and the competitiveness of participation.	Polity IV	Marshall, Gurr and Jagers (2017).	2016	164	Higher number indicates more political stability because the polity component points have not changed.
13	Inconsistent democratic institutions	Polity is an anocracy (anocracy)	Dummy variable. Indicates whether the polity is an anocracy or not. Based on the Polity variable from Polity IV, where -10 is fully autocratic and +10 is fully democratic.	Polity IV	Marshall, Gurr and Jagers (2017).	2016	165	2 Categories. 1 Anocracy (values -5 to 5) 0 Not anocracy (other values).
14	Country size	L Land area (wdl_area)	In km ² . A country's total area, excluding area under inland water bodies, national claims to continental shelf, and exclusive economic zones. Major rivers and lakes count as inland water bodies. Natural logarithm.	QoG	World Bank (2016).	2013	192	
15	Rugged terrain	Terrain ruggedness index (nunn_rugged)	Average terrain ruggedness of the country's land area. Measured in hundreds of metres of elevation difference.	QoG	Nunn and Puga (2012).	2012	190	Higher values mean more ruggedness.
16	Natural resources	Oil rents (wdl_oilrent)	Oil rents (% of GDP). Oil rents are the difference between the value of crude oil production at world prices and total costs of production.	QoG	World Bank (2016).	2013	188	
17	Population youth	Young males in population (popym2013)	Percentage of the population that is male between 20 and 24 years old.	-	World Bank (n.d.).	2013	182	
18	Urban concentration	Agglomeration index (aggl)	Settlement concentration in %. Based on: population density, the population of a large urban centre (50,000 or more), and travel time to that large urban centre.	-	Uchida and Nelson (2009).	2009	173	High number means high degree of settlement concentration.

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Appendix B – Control variable information

This appendix shows information about the control variables, such as where the support for their use comes from and the relationship to the dependent variable that previous research has found.

Table B.1 Information on the control variables

Nº	Phenomenon	Measurement	Support for variable found in	Relationship with Y
10	Low income levels	L GDP per capita (L_unna_gdppc)	Conor Devitt and Tol (2012); Fearon and Laitin (2003); Henderson (2000); Holtermann (2012); Krause and Suzuki (2005);	Numerous studies links economic development or growth to civil war. Most civil wars occur in economically low-developed countries. It is in circumstances like these that we find weak states, new states and political instability, all linked to conflict. On the whole, economic development is found to reduce the probability of civil war. Suggested explanations are for example that poverty facilitates rebel recruitment (lower opportunity costs) or that low economic development practically translates to low state capacity and low state reach in the country (again lowering opportunity costs for rebels).
11	Past conflict	Violent conflict in 2016 (conf12016)	Collier and Sambanis (2002); Uzonyi and Hanania (2017); Walter (2015).	There is a large literature on civil war recurrence. There is a higher probability for sustained peace when one side defeats the other in the conflict, however this is not usually the case. Normally, a conflict ends with negotiation and settlement. This means that there is a higher risk for the conflict to start over again. Scholars have noticed that today's civil wars are a problem of reoccurring civil wars. If a country has a history of civil war, the risk of civil war onset is substantially higher. Time-series analyses of institutions' effects on civil war often include lagged variables to address this. The variable used in this thesis is thought to provide context: If there was at least one incident in 2016 where 25 persons or more were killed, this could affect whether conflicts occur in 2017 because people will have the previous conflict fresh in mind.
12	Political instability	Years without major political change (persist)	Alesina, Ozler, Roubini and Swagel (1996); Bjorvatn and Reza Farzanegan (2015); Diouma Bah (2014); Fearon and Laitin (2003); Maoz (1992); O'Rourke (2017); Pervez Memon, Sami Memon, Shaikh and Memon (2011); Schumacher (2013).	Studies have found political stability to be a relevant predictor of civil war. Political instability increases the probability of civil war onset. In this case, political instability, such as regime change, should not be confounded with simply the current regime, which could be an anocracy. Other studies, neighbouring those on civil war, point to the importance of political stability. Political stability has, for example, been found to have an independent effect on war between countries, and those countries that have been targeted for covert regime by the U.S. are shown to be likely to experience civil war in the 10 years following intervention. Studies also point to political stability's role in keeping society integrated and upholding state legitimacy. This, together with the relationship between political stability and trust in politicians, could plausibly affect grievances and above all, the ability for politicians to reasonably commit to political promises, which could make citizens resort to violence instead. On the economic side, political stability is often seen as a prerequisite for the economic development. Countries having high propensity of government collapse experience lower growth than others. Since economic performance also is a relevant predictor of civil war, this makes political stability relevant too, albeit more indirectly. Finally, as far as natural resources are concerned, studies indicate that higher resource rents increase political instability and intensify conflicts. Some of these studies, however, underlines that importance of separating natural resources from political stability for more precision in the analysis. It is possible that the natural resources of a country more specifically increase political instability, which, in turn, increase the propensity for internal conflict – thereby accentuating the role of political stability instead of just natural resources.
13	Inconsistent democratic institutions	Polity is an anocracy (anocracy)	Ellingsen and Gleditsch (1997); Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates and Gleditsch (2001); Muller and Weede (1990); Vreeland (2008).	A regime's political structure constrains or facilitates the political behaviour of its inhabitants by affecting opportunities for either peaceful or violent collective action. The opportunity structures for dissident groups in semi-democracies allow dissidents to organise but, for these groups, nonviolent collective action may be too limited to be effective, so they resort to violence. By far the highest frequency of internal conflicts is observed in semi-democracies, which manifests itself in an inverted U-shaped curve. Furthermore, dictatorships that allow more than one political point of view (multiple parties) practice higher levels of torture than closed dictatorships. To sum up, the transition to democracy is complicated and may be marked by state failure and internal violence.
14	Country size	L Land area (wdl_area)	Buhaug (2006); Bleaney and Dimico (2011); Collier and Hoeffler (2004); Fearon and Laitin (2003).	In many studies, country size is a factor that explains why countries experience internal conflict, e.g., by separatist movements or revolutionaries. Possible reasons are that large countries have difficulties in projecting power over long distances or that the issue of governance becomes more difficult because of the extra layers of authority that is needed to control the population in large countries. Other suggestions are that larger countries have higher numbers of peripheral or marginalised groups, or that ethno-regional heterogeneity is typical of large countries.
15	Rugged terrain	Terrain ruggedness index (nunn_rugged)	Bleaney and Dimico (2011); Buhaug, Gates and Lujala (2009); Fearon and Laitin (2003); Jimenez-Ayora and Ulubaşoğlu (2015)	Rugged or mountainous terrain is significant for the onset and duration of civil wars in several studies. This may be due to difficulties for the state of projecting power in regions with rough terrain. This terrain can serve as a sanctuary for dissident groups and as a base for revenue raising. These geographical elements are also linked to difficulties to form and sustain a successful polity where the constituents can cooperate and exchange effectively by lower transaction costs. Difficulties in cooperating increases the probability for conflict.
16	Natural resources	Oil rents (wdl_oilrent)	Fearon and Laitin (2003); Buhaug, Gates and Lujala (2009); Rustad and Binningsbø (2010); Rustad and Binningsbø (2012); Lujala and Rustad (2012).	High-value natural resources (e.g., oil and gemstones) are associated with dozens of armed conflicts and secessionist movements. From the second World War to our days, between 40 % and 60 % of all intrastate conflicts can be linked to natural resources. These are factors that can account for conflict recurrence and duration. If natural resources are associated with a conflict, the conflict is more likely to relapse, twice as quickly and it will last longer. This might happen through several mechanisms: The resources might be the motivation for conflict. They might also constitute funding that raises the opportunity through purchases and recruitment. They may also aggravate existing conflicts. The conflict in mind tend to be civil war or the like but the resource curse may also entail consequences, through state institutions, that plausibly lead to less intensive types of conflict. For example, resource revenues may end up fuelling a predatory elite through increasing patronage, corruption and rent seeking. When a country is endowed with abundant natural resources, the political power also tends to focus on short-term gains. This may lead to overspending, poor investment and ill-conceived economic policies, exposed to price shocks. All of which may increase inequalities and probabilities of internal conflict.
17	Population youth	Young males in population (popym2013)	Ginges (2005); Karakaya (2015); Leahy, Engelman, Gibb Vogel, Haddock and Preston (2012); Marcus, Islam and Moloney (2008); Rivera (2010); Urdal (2006).	Youth bulges are related to social violence and conflict. Looking at the civil conflicts (causing 25 deaths or more) from the seventies until the turn of the century, 80 percent of these occurred in countries in which at least 60 percent of the population is below the age of 30. When compared to countries that have a mature population structure, studies observe that the countries having a very young structure are three times more likely to experience civil conflict. Developing countries often undergo a demographic transformation that increases the proportion of youths. This connects to conflict because the fast growth rate in the working-age population often exacerbate unemployment and prolong dependency on the parents. The low socioeconomic status of the youth may diminish their self-esteem and fuel frustrations, and this creates large pools of discontented youths in society. These pools (of, plausibly, to a bigger part men) are thought to be more susceptible to recruitment into violent organisations and even rebel or terrorist groups because of their low opportunity costs. Participation in violent organisations could therefore become an instrument for power, prestige and identity that mitigates feelings of helplessness and insecurity.
18	Urban concentration	Agglomeration index (agglo)	Büscher (2018); Beall, Goodfellow and Rodgers (2013); Hinds (2014); Lombard (2012); Maninger (2000).	Urban conflict in global Southern cities is of increasing concern. Urban centres represent critical arenas in which violent conflict occurs. This is linked to the urbanisation of poverty, inadequate infrastructure and governance. Urbanisation entails competition over access to resources and civic conflict is often associated with inherent urban qualities such as density, diversity and compressed inequality – often in combination with ethnic strife.

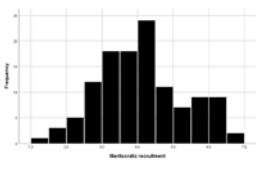
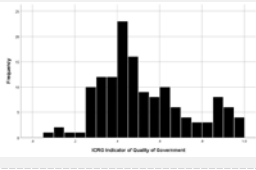
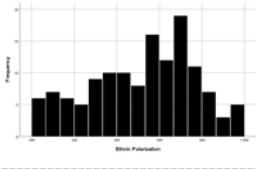
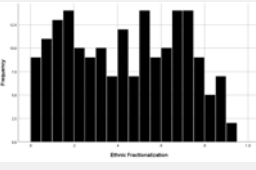
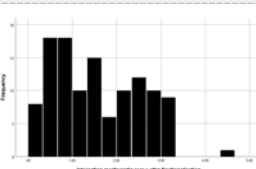
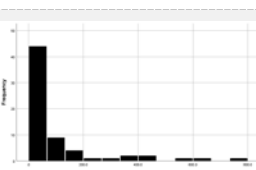
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Appendix C – Descriptive statistics

This appendix shows descriptive statistics for all the variables used in this thesis.

Table C.1 Descriptive statistics of all variables

Nº	Phenomenon	Measurement	Valid N	Mean	Median	Mode	Minimum	Maximum	Histogram
1	Quality of government	Meritocratic recruitment (q2_a)	119	4.05	4		1.0	6.7	
2	Quality of government	ICRG Indicator of Quality of Government (icrg_qog)	139	0.53	0.47		0.1	1.0	
8	Ethnic division	Ethnic polarisation (ethpol)	134	0.52	0.57		0.02	0.995	
9	Ethnic division	Ethnic fractionalisation (a_ethnic)	186	0.44	0.43		0	0.9	
	Interaction	Meritocratic recruitment x ethnic polarisation	89	2.09	2.01		0.05	4.98	
	Interaction	ICRG QoG x ethnic polarisation	111	0.26	0.23		0.01	0.77	
	Interaction	Meritocratic recruitment x ethnic fractionalisation	117	1.58	1.45		0	4.57	
3	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Violence against civilians 2017 (viol)	66	94.85	18		1.0	769	
4	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Riots and protests 2017 (riots)	68	179.88	51.50		0	3570	

Nº	Phenomenon	Measurement	Valid N	Mean	Median	Mode	Minimum	Maximum	Histogram
5	Population	Population (unna_pop)	193	36977528	7817818		9876	1362514304	
6	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Violence against civilians per capita (L_viol_cap)	66	-13.47	-13.55		-17.55	-9.50	
7	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Riots and protests per capita (L_riots_cap)	67	-12.60	-12.46		-17.22	-8.89	
10	Low income levels	L GDP per capita (L_unna_gdppc)	193	8.63	8.70		4.914	12.07	
11	Past conflict	Violent conflict in 2016 (confl2016)	194			0	0	1	
12	Political instability	Years without major political change (persist)	164	20.48	12.00		0	168	
13	Inconsistent democratic institutions	Polyt is an anocracy (anocracy)	165			0	0	1	
14	Country size	L Land area (wdl_area)	192	11.290	11.698		0.693	16.611	
15	Rugged terrain	Terrain ruggedness index (nunn_rugged)	190	1.39	0.96		0.003	6.74	
16	Natural resources	Oil rents (wdl_oilrent)	188	4.81	0.0042		0	57.47	
17	Population youth	Young males in population (popym2013)	182	8.71	8.97		5.11	13.16	
18	Urban concentration	Agglomeration index (agгло)	173	50.74	52		4.7	100	

Appendix D – Data manipulations

On some rare occasions, the data was manipulated in order to increase the number of valid observations. Please, see below which variables that have been affected.

Table D.1 Data manipulations

Nº	Phenomenon	Measurement	How the data was manipulated
1	Quality of government	Meritocratic recruitment (q2_a)	
2	Quality of government	ICRG Indicator of Quality of Government (icrg_qog)	
3	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Violence against civilians (viol)	
4	Low-intensity, internal conflict	Riots and protests (riots)	
5	Population	Population (unna_pop)	
6	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Violence against civilians per capita (l_viol_cap)	
7	Low-intensity, internal conflict	L Riots and protests per capita 2017 (l_riots_cap)	
8	Ethnic division	Ethnic polarisation (ethpol)	
9	Ethnic division	Ethnic fractionalisation (af_ethnic)	
10	Low income levels	L GDP per capita (L_unna_gdppc)	
11	Past conflict	Violent conflict in 2016 (confi2016)	
12	Political instability	Years without major political change (persist)	
13	Inconsistent democratic institutions	Polity is an anocracy (cat_polity)	The Polity variable from POLITY IV is supposed to run from -10 to +10. Some values, however, were originally coded -66 for "cases of foreign interruption", -77 for "cases of "interregnum" and finally -88 for "cases of transition". Because of this, the number of valid cases drops. To prevent this, these values are recoded in the same manner that Coppedge et al. (2017) did for the Varieties of Democracy dataset. -66 is recoded to system missing, -77 is recoded to 0. There were no -88 values to recode.
14	Country size	Land area (wdi_area)	
15	Rugged terrain	Terrain ruggedness index (nunn_rugged)	
16	Natural resources	Oil rents (wdi_oilrent)	As for oils rents (% of GDP), the World Bank data contained a missing value for Somalia. There were no values for the previous years either as reference. The value has however been set to 0.00 with the support of the following sources. Somalia is indeed thought to have a lot of oil resources. However, there seems yet to be no discoveries of this oil (Walls and Kibble, 2012; Efui Ahali and Ackah, 2014). Furthermore, Somalia does not have any oil industry or exports of crude oil as of 2018 according to CIA (n.d.).
17	Population youth	Young males in population (popym2013)	There were no values for 2013 in the World Bank database. The closest value (10.36) is from 2010 and will be used instead.
18	Urban concentration	Agglomeration index (agglo)	

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Appendix E – OLS assumptions for model 7

This appendix presents diagnostics used to check the OLS assumptions of model 7, that is, the full main model of the thesis’ analysis.

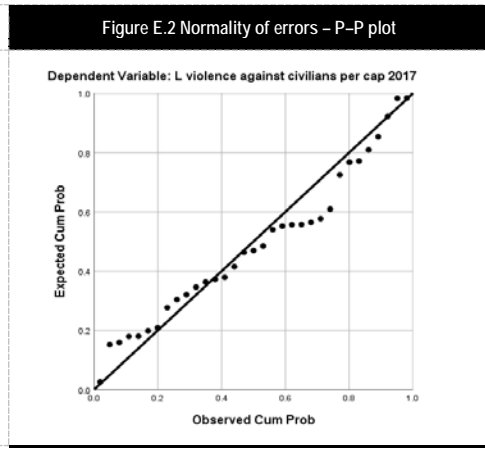
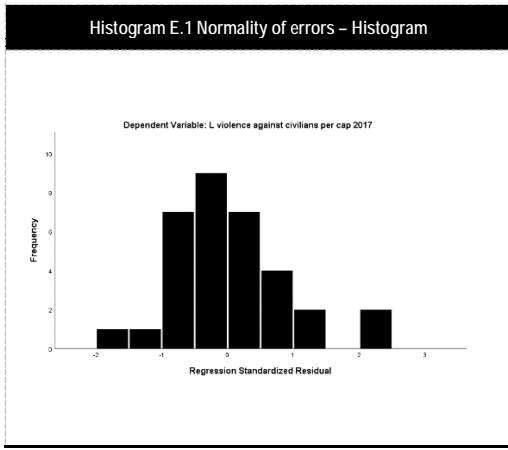
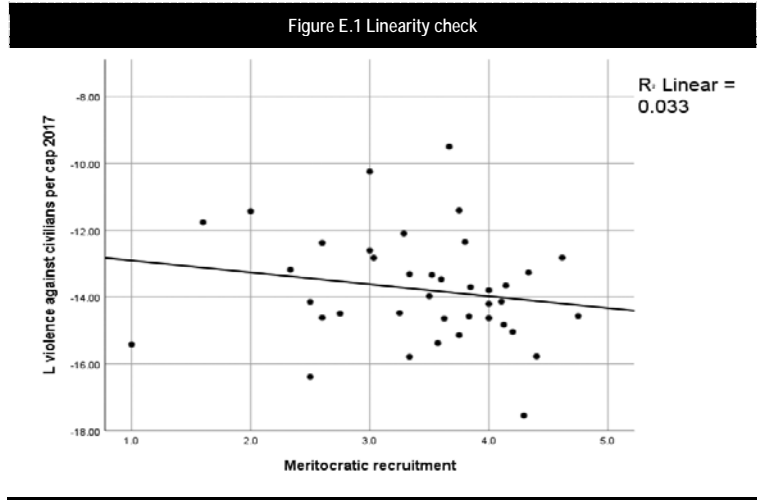


Table E.1 Normality of errors – KS test

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Statistic	df	Sig.
Standardized Residual		.141	33	.955	33	.190

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table E.2 Correlations

	L violence against civilians per cap 2017	Meritocratic recruitment	Ethnic Polarisation	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	Political stability in years	L Land area (sq. km)	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol
Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.346	-.027	-.219	.082	.100	.027	-.209
	Meritocratic recruitment	1.000	-.111	.057	.227	-.339	-.174	.427
	Ethnic Polarisation	-.027	1.000	.008	.189	-.060	.068	.840
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	-.219	.057	1.000	.340	-.002	-.319	.021
	Political stability in years	.082	.227	.189	1.000	-.249	-.057	.305
	L Land area (sq. km)	.100	-.339	-.060	-.249	1.000	.307	-.196
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.027	-.174	.068	-.057	.307	1.000	-.012
	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	-.209	.427	.840	.021	-.196	-.012	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	L violence against civilians per cap 2017	.024	.441	.110	.325	.289	.441	.122
	Meritocratic recruitment	.024	.270	.376	.102	.027	.167	.007
	Ethnic Polarisation	.441	.270	.482	.146	.370	.353	.000
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.110	.376	.482	.027	.495	.035	.454
	Political stability in years	.325	.102	.146	.027	.082	.377	.042
	L Land area (sq. km)	.289	.027	.370	.146	.495	.041	.137
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.441	.167	.353	.035	.377	.041	.474
	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	.122	.007	.000	.454	.137	.474	.000

Figure E.3 The standardised residuals

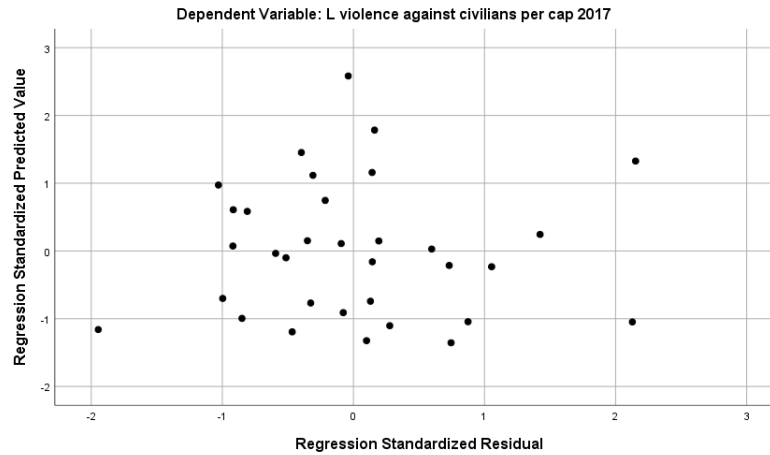


Table E.3 VIF values

Model	Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.988	1.012
3	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.988	1.012
4	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.984	1.016
5	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.988	1.013
6	(Constant)		
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.997	1.004
7	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.923	1.083
8	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.935	1.069
9	(Constant)		
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.880	1.136
10	(Constant)		
	Political stability in years	.797	1.255
11	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.838	1.194
12	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.932	1.073
13	(Constant)		
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.874	1.144
14	(Constant)		
	Political stability in years	.769	1.300
15	(Constant)		
	L Land area (sq. km)	.845	1.184
16	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.833	1.200
17	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.929	1.077
18	(Constant)		
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.759	1.318
19	(Constant)		
	Political stability in years	.751	1.331
20	(Constant)		
	L Land area (sq. km)	.758	1.319
21	(Constant)		
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.776	1.289
22	(Constant)		
	Meritocratic recruitment	.060	16.787
23	(Constant)		
	Ethnic Polarisation	.022	44.652
24	(Constant)		
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.732	1.367
25	(Constant)		
	Political stability in years	.713	1.403
26	(Constant)		
	L Land area (sq. km)	.691	1.448
27	(Constant)		
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.776	1.289
28	(Constant)		
	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	.018	54.332

Table E.4 Cook's Distance

N	Valid	Missing
	33	162
Minimum	.00018	
Maximum	.59135	

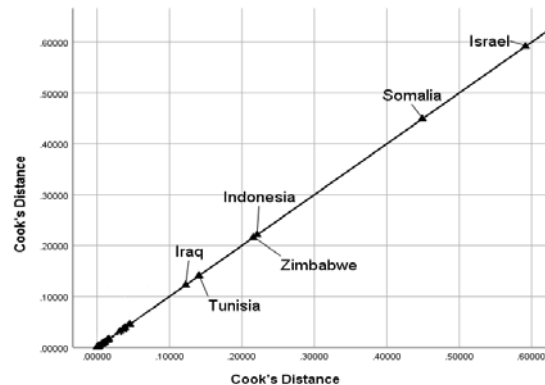
No case has a value above 1 which is one way of determining influential cases. However, using the "4/N" formula (0.1212 in this case), it becomes obvious that some cases might be influential. These cases are:

Kenya	.01370
Bangladesh	.01491
Senegal	.01511
Benin	.01525
Tanzania	.01645
Turkey	.03161
Guinea	.03631
Jordan	.03864
Algeria	.04515
Iraq	.12241
Tunisia	.14064
Zimbabwe	.21549
Indonesia	.22097
Somalia	.44892
Israel	.59135

All these cases cannot be removed for several and obvious reasons, for instance because the number of observations will fall below 20 in the regression. However, a robust standard error's model is run (model 9 in the analysis) that excludes the three cases with largest Cook's D value, in order to see how the coefficients are affected.

This procedure notably affected the normality of the errors to the better. Regarding heteroskedastic errors, the predicted vs actual residual plot also became better.

Figure E.4 Plot of Cook's D to spot influential outliers



Appendix F – OLS assumptions for model 35

This appendix presents diagnostics used to check the OLS assumptions of model 35, that is, the full main model of the thesis’ analysis in table 5.4.

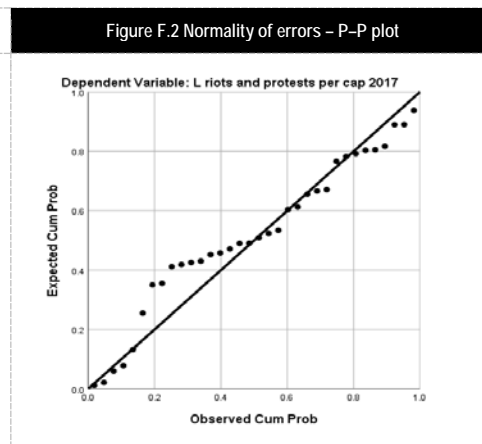
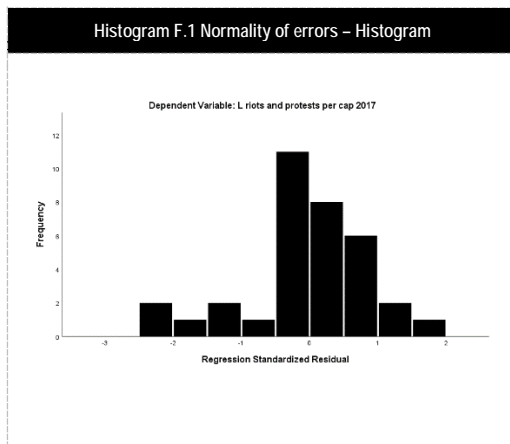
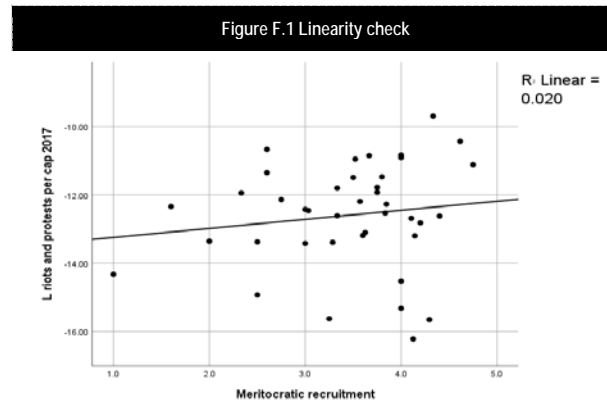


Table F.1 Normality of errors – KS test

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov a		Shapiro-Wilk			
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Standardized Residual	model 30	.166	34	.019	.939	34	.056

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table F.2 Correlations

	L riots and protests per cap 2017	Meritocratic recruitment	Ethnic Polarisation	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	Years without major political change	L Land area (sq. km)	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol
Pearson Correlation	L riots and protests per cap 2017	1.000	.054	.211	.083	-.012	-.058	.000
	Meritocratic recruitment	.054	1.000	-.103	.098	-.351	-.197	.434
	Ethnic Polarisation	.211	-.103	1.000	.038	-.072	.041	.840
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.083	.098	.038	1.000	-.089	-.419	.075
	Years without major political change	-.012	.239	.188	.523	1.000	-.311	-.258
	L Land area (sq. km)	-.058	-.351	-.072	-.089	-.311	1.000	-.215
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.000	-.197	.041	-.419	-.258	.349	1.000
	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	.198	.434	.840	.075	.311	-.215	-.053
Sig. (1-tailed)	L riots and protests per cap 2017	.	.382	.115	.320	.474	.373	.499
	Meritocratic recruitment	.382	.	.282	.291	.087	.021	.131
	Ethnic Polarisation	.115	.282	.	.414	.143	.342	.409
	L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.320	.291	.414	.	.001	.309	.007
	Years without major political change	.474	.087	.143	.001	.	.037	.070
	L Land area (sq. km)	.373	.021	.342	.309	.037	.	.022
	Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.499	.131	.409	.007	.070	.022	.
	Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	.131	.005	.000	.337	.036	.111	.382

Figure F.3 The standardised residuals

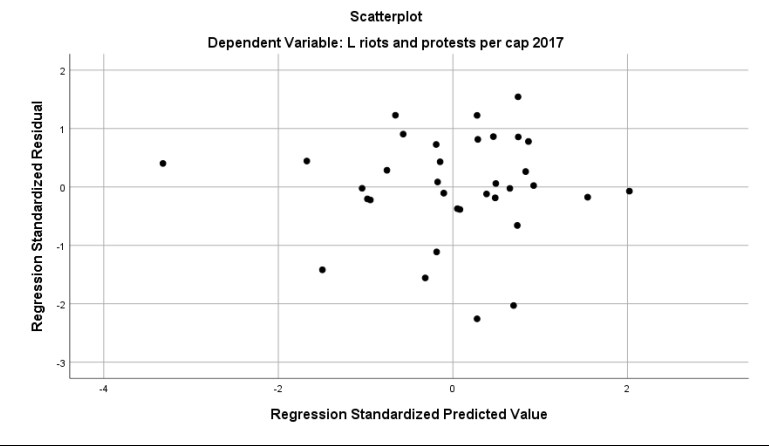


Table F.3 VIF values

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	1.000	1.000
2 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.989	1.011
Ethnic Polarisation	.989	1.011
3 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.979	1.021
Ethnic Polarisation	.987	1.013
L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.988	1.012
4 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.918	1.089
Ethnic Polarisation	.936	1.069
L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.721	1.387
Years without major political change	.655	1.527
5 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.834	1.199
Ethnic Polarisation	.932	1.072
L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.716	1.396
Years without major political change	.617	1.620
L Land area (sq. km)	.814	1.229
6 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.831	1.203
Ethnic Polarisation	.928	1.078
L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.609	1.642
Years without major political change	.615	1.625
L Land area (sq. km)	.731	1.368
Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.716	1.396
7 (Constant)		
Meritocratic recruitment	.059	16.955
Ethnic Polarisation	.022	44.862
L GDP per Capita (Current Prices in US\$)	.587	1.704
Years without major political change	.571	1.752
L Land area (sq. km)	.666	1.502
Percentage of males 20 to 24 yo in population	.716	1.397
Interaction 1 Merit recr & Ethn pol	.018	55.201

Table F.4 Cook's Distance

N	Valid	
	Missing	34
	Minimum	.00002
	Maximum	.54253

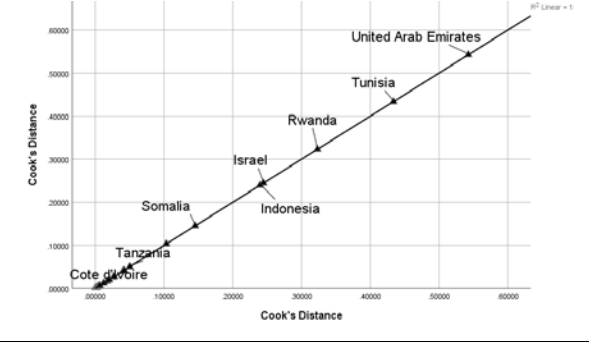
No case has a value above 1 which is one way of determining influential cases. However, using the $4/N$ formula (0.1176 in this case), it becomes obvious that some cases might be influential. These cases are:

Somalia	.14529
Indonesia	.23975
Israel	.24461
Rwanda	.32308
Tunisia	.43364
United Arab Emirates	.54253

All these cases cannot be removed for several and obvious reasons, for instance because the number of observations will fall below a sufficient number in the regression. However, a robust standard error's model is run (model 37 in the analysis) that excludes the three cases with largest Cook's D value, in order to see how the coefficients are affected.

This procedure notably affected the normality of the errors to the better.

Figure F.4 Plot of Cook's D to spot influential outliers



Appendix G – Robustness check 1: Ethnic fractionalisation

This appendix shows OLS regressions, same as in table 5.1 but where [ethnic polarisation](#) has been replaced with [ethnic fractionalisation](#).

Table G.1 Meritocratic recruitment and fractionalisation. DV: "L violence against civilians per capita"

	Model I	Model II	Model III	Model IV	Model V	Model VI	Model VII
Meritocratic recruitment	-.709** (.345)	-.695* (.350)	-.685* (.349)	-.825** (.352)	-.779** (.371)	-.823** (.370)	.476 (1.073)
Ethnic fractionalisation		.592 (1.067)	.021 (1.201)	-.672 (1.251)	-.908 (1.372)	-1.548 (1.462)	6.018 (6.055)
Interaction Merit. recr. & Ethn. fract.							-2.147 (1.668)
L GDP per Capita			-.263 (.255)	-.464 (.280)	-.503 (.296)	-.705** (.339)	-.674* (.336)
Years without major political change				.061 (.039)	.067 (.042)	.084* (.044)	.083* (.043)
L Land area					.117 (.257)	.264 (.283)	.358 (.289)
Percentage of young males in population						-.625 (.522)	-.453 (.532)
Constant	-11.226*** (1.251)	-11.632*** (1.461)	-9.392*** (2.615)	-7.460** (2.830)	-8.718** (3.990)	-2.960 (6.225)	-10.552 (8.521)
R ²	.026	.047	.051	.059	.060	.092	.103
N	33	33	33	33	33	33	33

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01.

Appendix H – Robustness check 2: Different controls

This appendix shows OLS regressions used to check whether [meritocratic recruitment](#) becomes significant with different controls than those in the main regression in section 5.

Table H.1 Meritocratic recruitment and change of controls. DV: "L riots and protests per capita"

	Model VIII	Model IX	Model X	Model XI	Model XII
Meritocratic recruitment	.158 (.366)	.144 (.373)	.138 (.389)	.122 (.433)	1.105 (1.476)
Ethnic Polarisation	1.513 (1.216)	1.490 (1.235)	1.471 (1.287)	1.452 (1.326)	7.011 (8.082)
Interaction Merit. recr. & Ethn. fract.					-1.617 (2.318)
L GDP per Capita		.083 (.217)	.083 (.220)	.082 (.225)	.069 (.228)
Ruggedness			.019 (.279)	.023 (.287)	.014 (.290)
At least one conflict in 2016				-.057 (.617)	-.077 (.624)
Constant	-13.994*** (1.550)	-14.542*** (2.131)	-14.535*** (2.170)	-14.433*** (2.464)	-17.738*** (5.351)
R ²	.050	.055	.055	.055	.072
N	34	34	34	34	34

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≤ 0.01.