

Foreign Occupation and Support for International Cooperation: Evidence from Denmark

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Abstract

A growing literature has investigated how historical experiences of state repression impact later political outcomes. However, whether state-inflicted violence during foreign occupation impacts popular support for international cooperation has received less attention. This article investigates this issue by analysing the Danish referendum to join the European Economic Community (EEC, the forerunner of the EU) in 1972, an organization seen in Denmark as being dominated by Germany. An analysis of Danish municipalities shows that municipalities which experienced more German-inflicted violence during the German occupation of Denmark 1940-1945 had a much higher rate of "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum. This effect seems to have worked through an increase in the support for Danish far-left parties which both had a close association with the Danish resistance movement during the German occupation and actively used anti-German sentiment in their campaign against Danish EEC membership. These results suggest that a history of foreign-inflicted violence can be a substantial hindrance for popular support for international cooperation with previous oppressor countries but also that political parties play an important role in translating historical grievances into contemporary mass political behaviour.

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1 Introduction

State-inflicted violence, including wars and foreign occupations, not only results in deaths, injuries and the destruction and theft of property, it also leaves a substantial mental imprint on people in the localities where the violence is carried out. An imprint which can last long after the actual violence and oppression end. The historical memory of violence and oppression can thus result in long-lasting grievances against the real and perceived perpetrators and their collective in-groups.¹ Sentiments which might have substantial political effects. A new and growing research agenda in political science studies the effect of experience of state-inflicted violence and oppression on later political attitudes and behaviour, including hostility to the real and perceived historical perpetrators of violence and oppression (Rozenas and Zhukov 2019; Rozenas et al. 2017; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017), electoral turnout (Zhukov and Talibova 2018) and electoral support for democracy (Bautista et al. 2018). Apparently, the experience of state-inflicted violence can have substantial implications for public opinion and national politics even decades after the violence and repression actually end.

However, whether popular sentiments brought on by the historical experiences of state-inflicted violence and repression, including those carried out during foreign occupation, can affect international political factors, such as the level of public support for international organizations, has received much less attention. While the British referendum on EU membership in 2016 is increasingly the subject of various pieces of scholarship (Becker et al. 2017; Colantone and Stanig 2018; Fetzer 2019), little modern political science scholarship have analysed the popular decisions to join and further integrating within supranational entities such as the European Union, and the role historical grievances might have played for the outcomes of these referenda.²

This article specifically studies the role played by the experience of foreign-inflicted violence and oppression on support for participation in supranational cooperative entities by studying the effect of violence during the German oc-

¹Sometimes grievances can even be directed against the victims of oppression and violence, see Charnysh and Finkel (2017) and Antoniou et al. (2015).

²An exception is Charnysh (2015) who study the effect of historical anti-Semitism on support for EU membership in Poland. See also Fouka and Voth (2016) for the effects of German WWII massacres on German car sales in Greece during the Greek Euro crisis.

cupation of Denmark 1940-1945 on support for entering the European Economic Community (EEC, the forerunner for the EU) in the Danish referendum of 1972. The EEC was framed by the opponents of Danish membership as a German-dominated entity, and in the campaign against Danish membership, the opponents specifically utilized anti-German rhetoric to argue against Danish membership of the EEC. An analysis of new and detailed data on German-inflicted violence against civilians (the so-called "German Terror") in Danish municipalities during the German occupation does indeed suggest that municipalities which experienced more German Terror had lower support for entering the EEC in the 1972 referendum.

One mechanism behind the effect of previous experiences of German Terror on the lack of support for the EEC seems to have been higher electoral support for far-left parties in areas which saw more violence. The Danish far-left parties, the Danish Communist Party and its socialist successor parties, were both the main political opponents of Danish EEC membership and were closely associated with the Danish resistance movement during the German occupation. A factor which was utilized in the 1972 campaign against Danish EEC membership. The results are robust to controlling for communist electoral support before the German occupation of Denmark, which suggest that the effects are not merely a function of the German terror targeting areas with more far-left supporters. The results are also robust to instrumenting the German Terror. An investigation of Danish EEC/EU referenda after 1972 suggests that the effect of the German Terror on opposition to the EEC/EU was persistent but declined substantially over time.

These results suggest that the experience of foreign-inflicted violence can be a substantial brake on public support for international political entities but also that political parties play a pivotal role in translating historical grievances into resistance towards international cooperation, and that the effect of occupation violence on opposition to international collaboration with former occupiers can change substantially within just one generation. These insights hold substantial implications for future studies of the legacies of violence and scepticism towards international political integration.

The rest of the article has the following structure. It starts by describing the background for the study, including the German violence during the occupation of Denmark 1940-1945 and the Danish referendum on EEC membership

in 1972. Then, the theory for how German-inflicted violence impacts later support for the EEC is laid out. After this, the data and estimation are presented before showing both OLS and instrumental-variable estimations of the effects of German-inflicted violence on opposition to Danish EEC membership. Finally, the article contains an investigation and discussion of the mechanisms behind the results and an investigation of the role played by the German Terror in later Danish EEC/EU referenda as well as a conclusion.

2 German Terror during the occupation of Denmark

On April 9th 1940, Denmark was invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany. The Danish government initially choose to cooperate with the German occupation forces and a coalition government with the support of most Danish parties managed civilian affairs, including policing, in the first three years of the occupation.³ In August 1943, the collaboration between the Danish political system and the German occupation forces broke down, and Germany military and security forces, including the German secret police organizations, the Gestapo and the SD (the SS's intelligence organization), which had previously had a very limited presence in Denmark, now took control of Denmark. The breakdown of collaboration between the Danish political system and the German occupation forces also caused an intensification of the armed resistance to German rule and increased the membership and political breadth of the Danish resistance movement (Olesen 2016) which had previously been dominated by Danish communists and non-mainstream nationalist political actors.

The increased resistance towards the German occupation forces, which included the use of sabotage and the killing of Danish collaborators, eventually made the German forces intensify their repression of Denmark. Beginning in early 1944, German security forces with the aid of Danish collaborators began murdering Danish civilians and carrying out sabotage of Danish civilian facilities in retaliation of the resistance movement's activities. The majority

³After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, the Danish Communist Party was outlawed and several of its members arrested by Danish authorities. Afterwards, many Danish communists became active in the resistance against the German occupation forces.

of these killings and sabotage were carried out by a hit squad with both German and Danish members, which was nick-named "Petergruppen",⁴ and which was under the the command of the leader of the German security forces in Denmark, Otto Bovensiepen (Lundtofte 2003, 164-168). In general, the German security forces and their Danish collaborators seem to have targeted respected citizens and pillars of local communities, such as doctors, lawyers and local employers but also to some extent ordinary citizens,⁵ and carried out sabotage against facilities and institutions such as local businesses, newspapers, public places of entertainment⁶ and even private homes (DFKHD 1954, 190-202) in a process which became known in Denmark as the "German Terror".

In total, over Danish 100 civilians were murdered or otherwise killed by German authorities and Danish collaborators in the German Terror during the occupation, at least 19 people were the subject of attempted murder, while at least 64 people were wounded in bombings and other types of sabotage which also destroyed property amounting to over 84 million current Danish Kroner.⁷ These figures do not include the execution or deportation of members of the Danish resistance movement or the Danish police officers and the other Danish security personnel who were deported to German concentration camps in 1944. These figures thus only consist of one-sided German violence carried out against the Danish civilian population during the occupation. In figure 1, the geographical distribution of German-inflicted terror incidents can be seen.

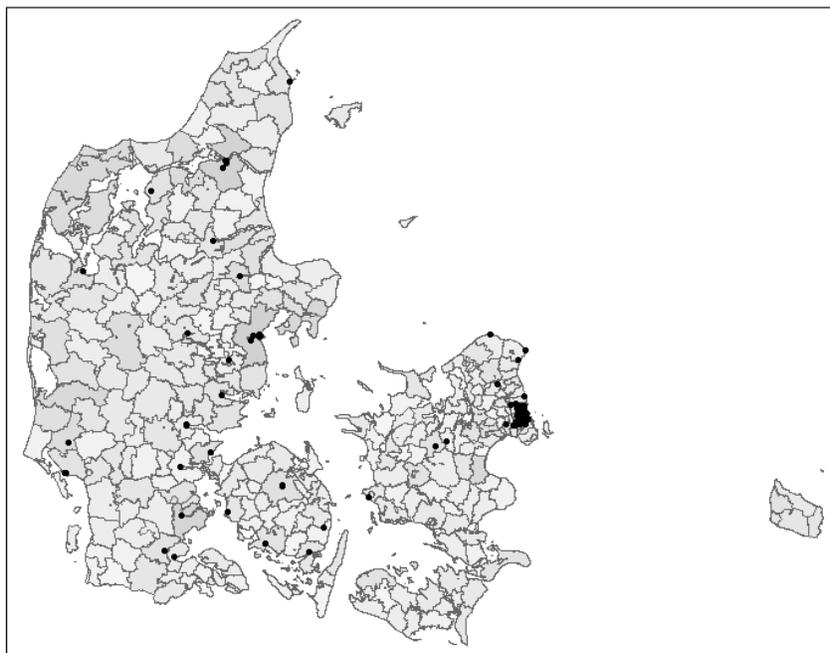
⁴Literally "The Peter Group" named after the code name "Peter Schaefer" of its first leader, SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer Otto Schwerdt.

⁵The victims were sometimes chosen because they were suspected of being opponents to the German authorities. However, many of the victims had not necessarily participated in any anti-German activities (Lundtofte 2003, 166).

⁶For an example, the famous amusement park in the Danish capital of Copenhagen, the Tivoli Gardens was bombed on the 25th of June 1944 (DFKHD 1954, 193).

⁷This estimate is based on the official Danish legal document from the conviction of the four leading German occupation authorities in 1948 (DFKHD 1954, 189-202). This legal document mainly concern the actions of "Petergruppen" and does not take into account members of the Danish resistance movement who were deported or executed by German authorities during the occupation, and does not include Danish soldiers killed by German military forces as well as probably various other instances of murder and sabotage carried out by German authorities and Danish collaborators. It is thus a very conservative estimate of the full extent of German-inflicted atrocities against Danish civilians during the occupation.

Figure 1: Distribution of German terror incidents during occupation of Denmark



Note: Each black dot represents a locality where one or more terror incidents took place. Thin lines are municipal borders in 1972.

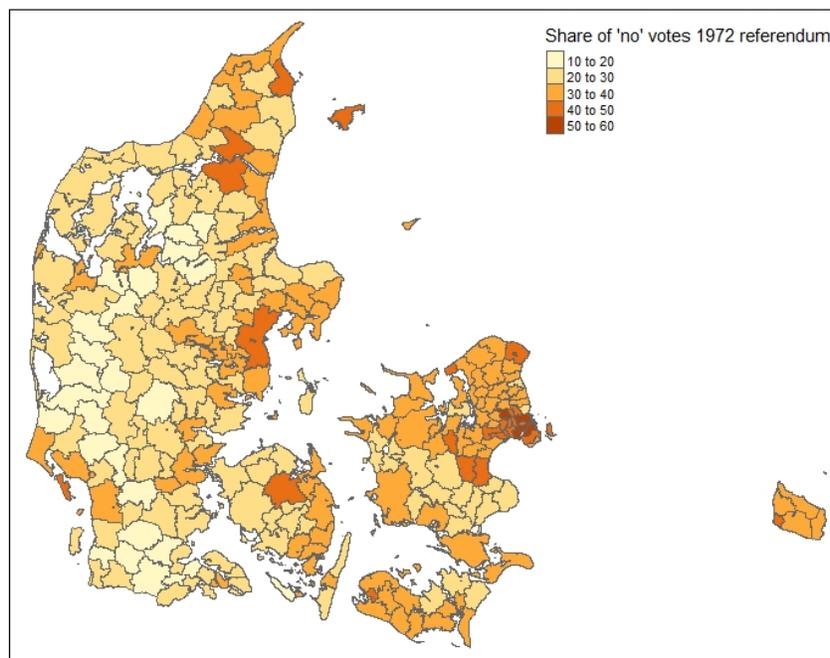
While the German atrocities against civilians in Denmark were relatively light compared to both the Western and Eastern European countries and territories under German rule during the war, the Terror none-the-less became one of the defining marks in the collective memory of the German occupation in Denmark. However, as can be seen in figure 1, the Terror was very unevenly distributed across Danish regions. Whereas some localities, and consequently the people living there, experienced terror incidents on a fairly regular basis in the last years of the occupation, other localities were not touched by the German Terror at all. The question then naturally arises about whether this difference across Danish regions with regards the level of violence experienced during the German occupation had any political implications after the War, including the level of public support for engaging in international cooperation with the former occupation power, Germany. An option which occurred when Denmark became eligible for European Eco-

conomic Community (EEC) membership in the decades after the war.

3 The Danish EEC referendum of 1972

Even before official founding of the EEC, the European supranational economic and political organization which later became the EU, in 1957 but increasingly after, the possibility of Danish membership of this European economic integration project was discussed among members of the Danish political elite. This was especially the case among the centre-right Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party, the main Danish parties on the right and the left. However, Danish membership was vetoed by French president Charles de Gaulle both in the early and the late 1960s (Lang-Jensen 2003, 10-15; 70-71). In 1970, however, Charles de Gaulle had resigned as French president and the UK, which was among Denmark largest export markets, had applied for EEC membership, which prompted the Danish government to apply for EEC membership shortly afterwards (Lang-Jensen 2003, 70-75). However, according to the Danish constitution, any transfer of sovereignty, including to supranational organizations, needs either a super-majority in the Danish parliament or the absence of a majority against it in a popular referendum. Thus, in order to Denmark to join the EEC, a referendum about "yes" or "no" to Danish EEC membership was held in October 1972. Consequently, during most of the year of 1972, Denmark was the object of a lively debate and campaign both for and against Danish membership by various political actors. Denmark eventually voted in favour of joining the EE with 63.3 percent for "yes". However, there was substantial geographical variation in the share of "no" votes in the referendum, confer figure 2.

Figure 2: Share "no" votes in the 1972 referendum in Danish municipalities



Note: Thin lines are municipal borders in 1972.

Most of the main Danish parties both on the centre-left and the centre-right were in favour of EEC membership in 1972 or held smaller marginalized sceptics fractions. Consequently, the unconditional opposition to Danish EEC membership came primarily from the parties and organizations of the far-left, including the Danish Communist Party and its two "successor" parties the Socialist People's Party and the Left Socialists (Lang-Jensen 2003). The Socialist People's Party having split from the Communist Party in 1958, while the Left Socialists was formed as a splinter from the Socialist People's Party in 1967. However, smaller organizations on the nationalist right also opposed EEC membership, including the Danish nationalist organization (and then in-active party) Dansk Samling. Both the Communist Party, and to some degree its successor parties, as well as the nationalist Dansk Samling had members which had been very active in the Danish armed resistance to the German occupation, which was an important part of these parties' identities. Ignoring their political differences, both the far-left Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party and the nationalist Dansk Samling

became founding members of the inter-party anti-EEC organization, the People's Movement against the EEC in the spring of 1972.

In the campaign against Danish membership of EEC, anti-German rhetoric featured prominently in the agitation of the parties of the far-left and the People's Movement against the EEC. Among the opponents of EEC membership, especially on the far-left, the EEC was seen as dominated by Germany (Lang-Jensen 2003, 54), the EEC likened to the Nazi-German vision of "Neuropa", and the threat of German dominance and control of Denmark after Danish entry into the EEC featured prominently in the campaign against Danish membership during 1972 (Hardis 2019). Parts of this campaign more or less explicitly utilized anti-German sentiments and invoked images of Nazi Germany and the German occupation of Denmark 1940-1945 (Madsen 2006, 24). A prime example is an anti-EEC propaganda poster from the Danish Communist Party which showed a black eagle with a swastika in its eye coming to swallow a helpless small Danish bird (Hardis 2019). Other examples include a poster from the People's Movement against the EEC which showed a caricature of a thinly-moustached man with an EEC lapel pin (in lieu of a swastika) coming from the South to grab Denmark. In a similar tone, a widely read Danish left-wing tabloid ran a headline stating that "The Germans will sell Denmark in one day using informatics" less than one week before the referendum.

The temporal closeness of the 1972 referendum to the German occupation 1940-1945 should also be kept in mind. Most of the electorate in 1972 would have personally experienced the German occupation of Denmark. However, as evident from figure 1, the level of local violence varied dramatically between Danish localities, which might have affected the level of anti-German sentiments and thus the effectiveness of the argument for the link between EEC membership and German influence and ultimately the level of support for Danish EEC membership in the 1972 referendum. In the next section, this theoretical argument is drawn out in greater detail.

4 Theory

This section provides the theoretical foundation for why and how a legacy of local German-inflicted violence during the occupation of Denmark might have

affected local (lack of) support for the EEC in the 1972 referendum. It builds on the argument that living in areas with more exposure to German-inflicted violence during the occupation would have made framing and arguments by anti-EEC political actors (political parties), utilising anti-German sentiments and memories of the occupation, more effective, and that local exposure to German-inflicted violence would have increased popularity and credibility of parties associated with the resistance of the German occupation which also opposed Danish EEC membership.

These arguments build on the assumption that the memory and salience of the German occupation of Denmark and the violence inflicted during this period was greater in areas which experienced more of this violence. People living in an area with more German violence during the occupation would have been more likely to have personally exposed to the violence during the occupation, or to have had friends, co-workers and/or family members directly exposed to this violence. Furthermore, the occupation and the violence inflicted during this would presumably have been much more likely to be remembered in communities where the violence took place, which again should affect the salience of these issues for individuals living in these communities. For an example, individuals passing by areas and buildings, which they knew were bombed, or areas where they knew people were murdered, on a daily basis, would presumably help to keep the memory of the violence during the occupation alive, even if these individuals were never directly exposed to violence themselves.

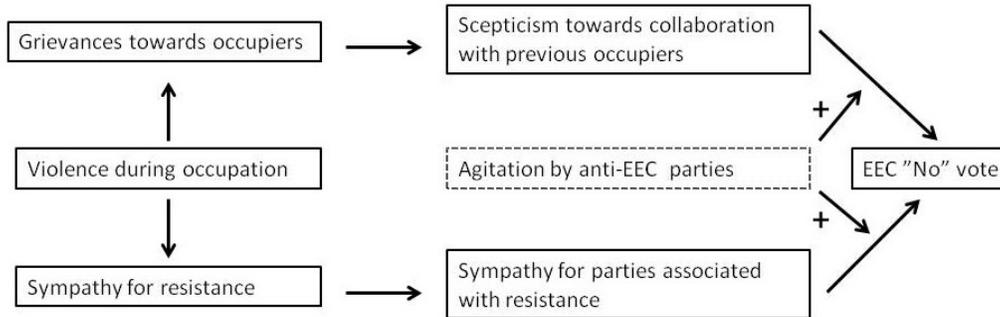
This stronger memory and saliency of the German-inflicted violence in areas more exposed to it during the occupation should have affected the local share of "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum through two mechanisms. First, people in these areas would have been more receptive to arguments against the EEC which played on anti-German sentiments. Applying the logic of theories of public opinion formation, German violence during the occupation would have changed the political predisposition of those exposed to this violence towards a higher level of anti-German sentiment and a higher saliency of the memory of the German occupation. This might have made them more receptive to arguments against the EEC by political parties and other opinion leaders using specifically frames and cues playing on anti-German attitudes and invoking memories of the German occupation and the resistance to it (Zaller 1992, 7-39). See Charnysh (2015, 1717-1719) as well as Ochsner and

Roesel (2017) for how political parties can invoke historical antipathies during political campaigns.

Secondly, experiences of German-inflicted violence locally might have boosted local support for the armed resistance towards German occupation and the perceived legitimacy and popularity of this armed struggle. Especially after the end of the occupation, when German forces could no longer retaliate and punish this support, see Rozenas and Zhukov (2019). This, in turn, would have directly increased the popularity of parties and organizations associated with this resistance (not least because of these parties' own use of this part of their history in their propaganda and campaigns), which in Denmark happened to be the organizations (mainly on the far-left) which also opposed Danish EEC membership. As suggested by Costalli and Ruggeri (2019), political parties' popularity and credibility can be strongly affected by a history of resistance towards illegitimate rule. These arguments are also in line with theories of partisan attachment, where voters' attachment to a political party is closely related to the party's ability to keep a strong "brand" (Lupu 2013). In this case, far-left the political parties' continued use of their role in the resistance to the German occupation and the linkage of this part of the parties' "brand" to their present political activities (including their resistance to the EEC) should have helped these parties keep a high level of partisan attachment in areas where the local support for resistance to the German occupation was strong to begin with, the areas most affected by the German Terror.

Thus, we should expect areas with more German-inflicted violence during the occupation to have greater popular and electoral support for the (far-left) parties with a connection to the resistance to German rule and thus, through the familiar idea of political parties and other political elites as opinion leaders (Brader et al. 2012, 1486-1487), to sway voters to vote in accordance with these parties' policy stance ("no" to EEC membership) in the 1972 referendum. These theoretical arguments are drawn out in the model in figure 3.

Figure 3: Theoretical model



5 Data and estimation

The data to test the effect of localised Germany occupation violence on lack of support for entering the EEC consists of a cross-section of all 278 Danish municipalities in the year 1972. The central dependent variable is the share of "no" votes, and thus votes against Danish EEC membership, in the 1972 referendum. The data comes from the Danish Statistical Agency. The central independent variable is the level of German-inflicted violence experienced by the civilian population locally during the German occupation. In order to measure this, I code known instances of German-inflicted terror incidents against Danish civilians during the occupation by type (murder, attempted murder, injury and property damage) as well as geographical location. The data comes from the official court documents of the 1948 trial against the leaders of the German security and army forces during the German occupation of Denmark, Werner Best, Hermann von Hanneken, Gunther Pancke and Otto Bovensiepen (DFKHD 1954, 189-202).⁸ I then construct an index of German terror, which can be seen in equation 1 below.

$$Terrorindex_i = K_i + (AT_i)/2 + (W_i)/2 + D_i \quad (1)$$

Where K is the number of people killed in municipality i as a consequence of German terror. AT is the number of people which were the victims of

⁸The documents only cover incidents from January 1944 to April 1945. However, most of German terror incidents took place during this time, as the terror against the Danish civilian population only became official German policy in late 1943.

an attempted murder by German authorities and W is the number of people wounded as a consequence of German inflicted violence, while D is the amount of property damages inflicted by German sabotage of civilian facilities in millions of (1940s) Danish Kroner (DKK). Sabotage damages which cannot be specifically placed in one municipality are excluded from the calculation of damages. By constructing the index in this way, I weight Terror incidents with deadly outcomes higher than Terror incidents that merely resulted in wounded civilians and give relatively high importance to high-scale sabotage incidents, since these would have been very visible for people living in affected localities.⁹ However, the results are robust to various alternative ways of calculating the Terror Index, including both increasing or decreasing the relative weights of attempted killings and the number of wounded as well as including property damages in log points instead of million DKK.¹⁰ The geographical variation in the Terror Index across Danish municipalities can be seen in figure 4.

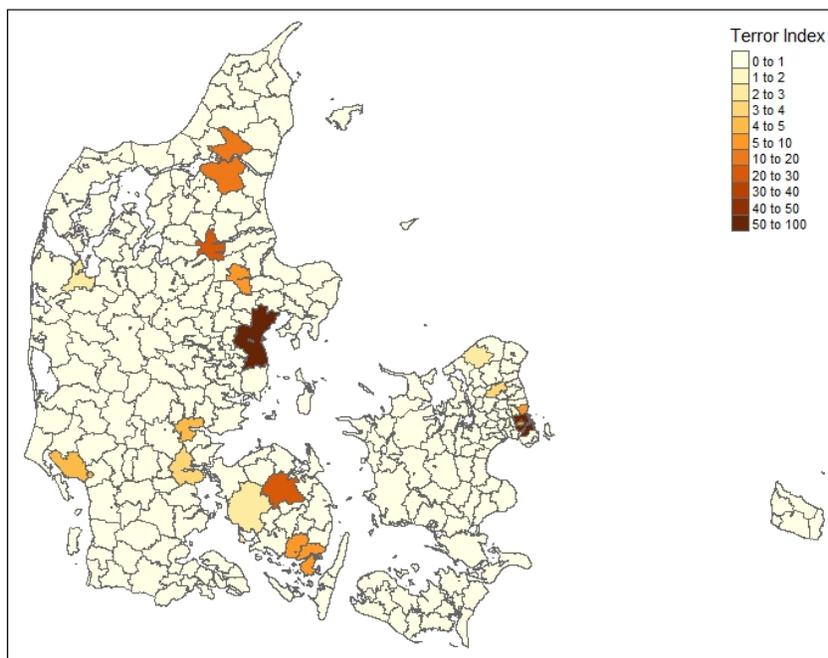
In some of the estimations, I include a number of control variables. One type of control is the demographic characteristics of each municipality which might have affected both previous German terror as well as support for the EEC, especially since the German Terror as well as "no" vote share in the 1972 referendum was concentrated in the urban areas of Denmark, confer figure 1 and 2. Consequently, I include both the log of population in each municipality and urbanization rate (the share of the population living in urban areas) as controls in later estimations. These variables are based on data from the Danish Statistical Agency's, Statistics Denmark, Statistical Yearbook. Where data for population is from 1972, whereas urbanization data is based on a census from 1970. Furthermore, in some of the later estimations, I include the vote share of the Danish Communist Party and the nationalist right-wing party, Dansk Samling in the 1939 Danish legislative election.¹¹ One could suspect that the German occupation authorities might have targeted areas with historical high far-left (communist) and nationalist public support during the terror campaign, since these movements were also heav-

⁹In appendix A, the effects of each (unweighed) component of the Terror Index on "no" vote share in the 1972 referendum can be seen.

¹⁰Results are available upon request.

¹¹The 1939 election data is recorded at the then-county level and thus covers several municipalities.

Figure 4: Level of German Terror in Danish municipalities



Note: Thin lines are municipal borders in 1972.

ily involved in the resistance against the German occupation. Consequently, not addressing this issue might cause concerns about a potential endogeneity bias in the estimated effect of German terror on later support for the EEC, especially if there is strong geographical persistence in the support for these political/ideological movements. Data from the 1939 elections also comes from Statistics Denmark. Descriptive statistics can be seen in table 1.

As the main estimator for the effect of the level of German terror on the share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum, I use OLS regression. In equation 2, this estimation can be seen.

$$Share_{no}votes_i = \beta Terrorindex_i + \beta Z_i + \beta_c + \epsilon_i \quad (2)$$

Where $Share_{no}votes_i$ is the share of "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum in municipality i , $Terrorindex_i$ is score on the "Terror Index", while Z is a vector of the demographic and political (communist and nationalist vote

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variable name	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max	N
Share of "no" votes 1972 referendum	29.81	7.68	14.60	54.60	278
Terror Index	0.94	6.68	0	90.50	278
Urbanization	0.62	0.22	0	1	278
Log of Population	9.26	0.86	4.80	13.32	278
Communist vote share, 1939 election	1.57	0.85	0	4.94	278
Nationalist Right vote share, 1939 election	0.46	0.34	0	1.53	278

share in 1939) control variables. ϵ_i is the error term. c are the county-fixed effects, which are included in some of the estimations to control for regional patterns, which might confound both support for the EEC as well as German terror three decades earlier. Since the two capital municipalities of Copenhagen and Frederiksberg in 1972 had status as both municipalities and counties, including county-fixed effects neutralizes observations from these two municipalities, where a large majority of the German terror took place, confer figure 1 and 4. Including county-fixed effects is thus a particular hard test of the relationship between German WWII terror and lack of support for entering the EEC in 1972.

6 Main results: OLS estimates

In table 2, the OLS estimates for the effect of the German occupation terror on opposition to Danish EEC membership can be seen. In column 1, the pure bivariate relationship between the level of German occupation violence and "no" votes in the 1972 referendum can be seen. In accordance with the theoretical argument, there is a substantial and statistical significant relationship between these variables. An increase in the Terror Index of one standard deviation in a given municipality increases the share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum with about 2 percentage points. An effect which is statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. In column 2, county-fixed effects are added to the estimation to take into account regional patterns in both German terror and support for the EEC. However, even though the inclusion of the county-fixed effects effectively neutralizes the effect of the capital municipalities of Copenhagen and Frederiksberg where the vast majority of

German terror incidents took place, confer figure 1 and 4, the Terror Index increases in effect size and keeps its level of statistical significance. In column 3, the demographic control variables are added. The Terror Index drops somewhat in effect size but is still substantially and statistically significantly associated with less support for EEC membership. While urbanization has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on the "no" vote share, municipal population size does not seem to matter.

Finally, I address the possibility that the German terror might have been specifically targeting areas with large support for political movements associated both with the resistance to German occupation during the war and later key opponents of Danish EEC. To take this potential endogenous factor into account, in column 4, I include the vote share of the Danish Communist Party and the nationalist right-wing party, Dansk Samling, in the 1939 Danish legislative election. However, neither of these variables seem to have any statistically significant effect on the share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum. With the inclusion of these variables, the effect of the Terror Index on the "no" vote share remains and it is still statistically significant at the $p < 0.10$ level. Apparently, the effect of the Terror on later opposition to the EEC does not seem to be merely reflecting German attempts to target areas with larger levels of electoral supporters of the parties associated with the (early) Danish resistance movement, both on the Left and on the Right, many of which later became opponents of the EEC. Thus, even controlling for regional patterns as well as pre-war far-left and nationalist electoral support, there seems to be substantial evidence in favour of the argument that areas which experienced more German-inflicted violence and repression during the occupation of Denmark had lower support for Danish EEC membership almost 30 years later.

Table 2: German terror and "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Terror Index	0.31 (0.04) ^{***}	0.37 (0.12) ^{***}	0.19 (0.10) ^{**}	0.20 (0.11) [*]
Urbanization			17.49 (2.67) ^{***}	17.54 (2.71) ^{***}
Log of Population			-0.29 (0.76)	-0.31 (0.77)
Communist vote share, 1939 election				-0.25 (0.73)
Nationalist Right vote share, 1939 election				1.21 (4.76)
County-fixed effects	NO	YES	YES	YES
<i>N</i>	278	278	278	278
<i>R</i> ²	0.07	0.50	0.64	0.64

Dependent variable is share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

7 Robustness test: Instrumenting the German Terror

The previous results show substantial evidence in favour of an effect of previous exposure to German Terror on opposition to Danish EEC membership in the 1972 referendum. This is even robust to controlling for the pre-war vote share of the parties associated with both armed resistance to German rule and later opposition to Danish EEC membership, which suggest that the results are not merely an artefact of the German occupation forces targeting areas with higher Communist and Nationalist support. However, in order to further address the potential endogeneity of the German Terror to factors which might have impacted the later lack of support for the EEC, I instrument the German Terror using a two-stage least squares estimator.

As instrument for the German Terror, I use whether the municipality was home to one of five Danish head quarters of the German secret police, the Gestapo, during the German occupation of Denmark.¹² Since the Gestapo and its sister organization the SD were among the German organizations responsible for the Terror,¹³ areas close to a Gestapo head quarter were much more likely to be targeted with German Terror. Furthermore, the Gestapo head quarters were established in early fall of 1943 near large Danish population centres before the official decision to initiate the Terror was taken later in 1943 (Lundtofte 2003, 45; 157-162) and should not be able to affect the "no" vote share in 1972 in any other way than through their effect on the level of German Terror, once population size and urbanization rate are controlled for.¹⁴

¹²An instrument somewhat similar to that of Bautista et al. (2018) who use distance to military bases as the instrument for repression during the Pinochet military dictatorship.

¹³Including by providing with targets the German-Danish hit squad "Petergruppen", of which several Gestapo men were also members (Lundtofte 2003, 168).

¹⁴Thereby fulfilling the exclusion restriction (Angrist and Pischke 2009, 116), especially given that the estimation additionally contains controls for pre-war Communist and Nationalist Right vote share.

The locations of the head quarters of the Gestapo in Denmark¹⁵ were found on the Danish town of Kolding's local archive's website. See also Lundtofte (2003) for more information about the role played by the Gestapo during the German occupation of Denmark.

The results of the two-stage least square estimation can be seen in table 3. When the level of German Terror is instrumented by the presence of a local Gestapo head quarter, the German Terror has an even larger and more statistically significant effect on the share of "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum than in the case of the pure OLS estimates from table 2. A one unit increase in the Terror Index translate into an about half percentage point increase in the share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum.

¹⁵The so-called *Aussendienststellen* which were placed in the Danish cities of Copenhagen, Odense, Kolding, Aarhus and Aalborg. The towns of Esbjerg and Rønne, which only had head quarter status during part of the time the Gestapo was active in Denmark is not counted as head quarters (Lundtofte 2003, 44). However, the two-stage results are similar if these two towns are counted as having Gestapo head quarters. Results are available upon request.

Table 3: Instrumenting the German Terror

	<i>Panel A: Second stage</i>
Terror Index	0.50 (0.18)***
Urbanization	17.83 (2.62)***
Log of Population	-0.97 (0.76)
Communist vote share, 1939 election	-0.96 (0.82)
Nationalist Right vote share, 1939 election	3.45 (5.05)
County-fixed effects	YES
R^2	0.63
	<i>Panel B: First stage</i>
Gestapo head quarter	20.92 (7.92)***
County-fixed effects	YES
R^2	0.85
N	278

Dependent variable in panel A is share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum.

Dependent variable in panel B is the Terror Index.

Coefficients for urbanization, log of population, Nationalist and Communist vote share not shown in panel B.

Robust standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

8 Exploring the mechanism: German terror and support for far-left parties

Judging from the previous results, there is substantial evidence in favour of the argument that the level of German-inflicted violence during the occupation of Denmark did indeed increase opposition to Danish membership of the EEC in the 1972 referendum. This provides support of the general theoretical argument that previous exposure to violence during foreign occupation might breed opposition to engaging in international cooperation with the former occupiers. In this section, I explore one of this theoretical argument's mechanisms, namely the increased support for political parties associated with resistance to the German occupation in areas more affected by occupation violence.

In order to test this, I obtain municipal-level data from the Danish legislative election of 1971, held the year before the referendum.¹⁶ In table 4, columns 1-4, I then analyse the effect of German terror on the vote share of the far-left-wing parties in Denmark, the Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party and the Left Socialists, as well as the combined vote share of these three far-left parties. As previously mentioned, these parties were, through their common association with the 1940s Danish Communist Party, closely associated with the armed resistance to the German occupation during the war and actively opposed Danish EEC membership. In accordance with the proposed theoretical mechanism, the local level of German terror experienced during the occupation seems to positively affect the level of support for the far-left parties, even controlling for the electoral support for the Danish Communist Party, the "ancestor party" of all the three 1971 far-left parties, in the 1939 election.

In column 5 of table 3, as a placebo test for the above mechanism, I also analyze the effect of exposure to German terror on electoral support for the Danish Social Democratic Party. One could speculate that exposure to German terror during the occupation might have caused the local population to move to the left with regards to redistributive preferences, and that it was this general leftwards shift which caused the local population to vote against EEC membership due to concerns over welfare state issues (Madsen 2006),

¹⁶Data is again from Statistics Denmark.

rather than increased sympathy for far-left parties associated with the armed resistance and general anti-German sentiments. However, the level of local German terror during the occupation seems to have had no effect on the local vote share of the Danish Social Democratic Party which was in favour of Danish EEC membership and had been the main party in the Danish coalition government collaborating with the German occupation forces until 1943 but which had also been the main party responsible for the expansion of the Danish welfare state in the decades before 1971. This further suggest that the exposure to German terror seems to have caused increased sympathy to parties associated both with armed resistance to the German occupation forces during the war and opposition to Danish EEC membership and not just a general turn to the left with regards to redistributive preferences.

Table 4: Mechanisms: German Terror and electoral support for the far-left

	Communist Party	Socialist People's Party	Left Socialists	Total Far-left	Social Democrats
Terror Index	0.01 (0.01)	0.06 (0.03)*	0.01 (0.01)*	0.09 (0.04)**	-0.02 (0.08)
Urbanization	0.59 (0.17)***	4.91 (1.05)***	0.62 (0.22)***	6.12 (1.30)***	19.24 (3.17)***
Log of Population	0.00 (0.11)	0.19 (0.41)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.18 (0.51)	0.71 (0.76)
Communist vote share, 1939 election	0.04 (0.03)	0.38 (0.16)**	0.12 (0.04)***	0.53 (0.20)***	0.02 (0.57)
County-fixed effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	278	278	278	278	278
R^2	0.50	0.74	0.73	0.77	0.55

Dependent variable is the party's vote share in the 1971 election. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

That there is a strong link between local support for the far-left in the 1971 election and local opposition to Danish EEC membership is shown in figure 5, where the relationship between far-left vote share (The combined vote share of the Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party and the Left Socialists) in the 1971 election and the share of "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum can be seen.

Figure 5: Far-left electoral support and share of "no" votes 1972 referendum

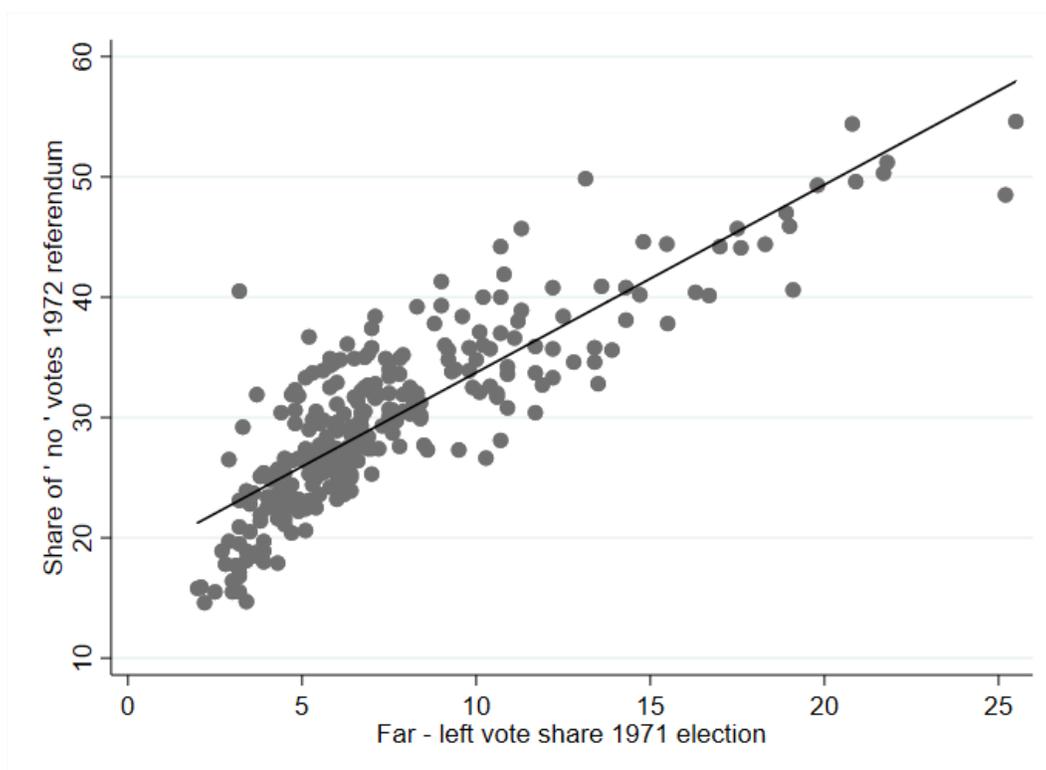


Table 5: Far-left support and "no" votes in the 1972 EEC referendum

	(1)
Far-left vote share, 1971 election	1.55 (0.16)***
Urbanization	7.93 (1.89)***
Log of Population	-0.47 (0.52)
County-fixed effects	YES
N	278
R^2	0.80

Dependent variable is share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum.

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 5 further shows the magnitude of this effect, where, even holding demographic factors constant, an one percent increase in the vote share of the far-left in the 1971 elections translates into an about 1.5 percent increase in the local share of "no" votes in the referendum the year after.

9 Effect of the German Terror on opposition to the EEC/EU over time

There is strong evidence for a negative effect of local exposure to German-inflicted violence during the occupation of Denmark on support for Danish EEC membership in 1972. Apparently, the Danish far-left's use of anti-German sentiments, the explicit reference to the EEC as a German-dominated entity resembling Nazi Germany's vision of Neuropa and their invocation of their own history of armed resistance to German rule apparently increased their general popularity and enabled them to better sway voters towards voting "no" to Danish EEC membership in areas which saw more German-inflicted violence during the German occupation of Denmark.

However, the question naturally arises about the persistence of the effect of German occupation violence on anti-EEC/EU sentiments. While the literature on the political legacies of violence generally acknowledges that the political effects of violence and repression decline over time, as memories fade and the people who have actually experienced the violence eventually die out (Rozenas and Zhukov 2019, 570), there is also theoretical arguments as well as empirical evidence for the claim the political effects of violent legacies at least partly persist over time, as parents transfer their attitudes to their children and schools and other authorities, including political parties, keep memories of previous repression alive (Lupu and Peisaikhin 2017; Rozenas et al. 2017; Rozenas and Zhukov 2019, 570). According to these arguments, we might expect that the effect of local German occupation violence on Danish anti-EEC (later EU) attitudes to persist over time but also to decrease in relative size.

While much earlier literature on the persistent political effects of violence and repression has very large time gaps between the measurement of political outcomes, which are often qualitative different in nature, see Rozenas and Zhukov (2019), the relative frequency of Danish EEC/EU referenda after Denmark's entry into the EEC in 1973¹⁷ allows us to, in a very fine-grained

¹⁷Since, as mentioned, according to the Danish constitution in place since 1953, any transfer of sovereignty to supranational organizations requires either a super-majority in the parliament, which has usually not existed, or the absence of a majority against the sovereignty transfer in a popular referendum.

way, track the effects of the German Terror on opposition to the EEC/EU over time using the same measure, opposition to (further) integration within the EEC/EU in popular referenda. In figure 6, the effect of the German Terror Index on the "no" (to further European integration) vote share at the municipal level in other Danish EEC/EU referenda 1972-2000 can be seen.¹⁸

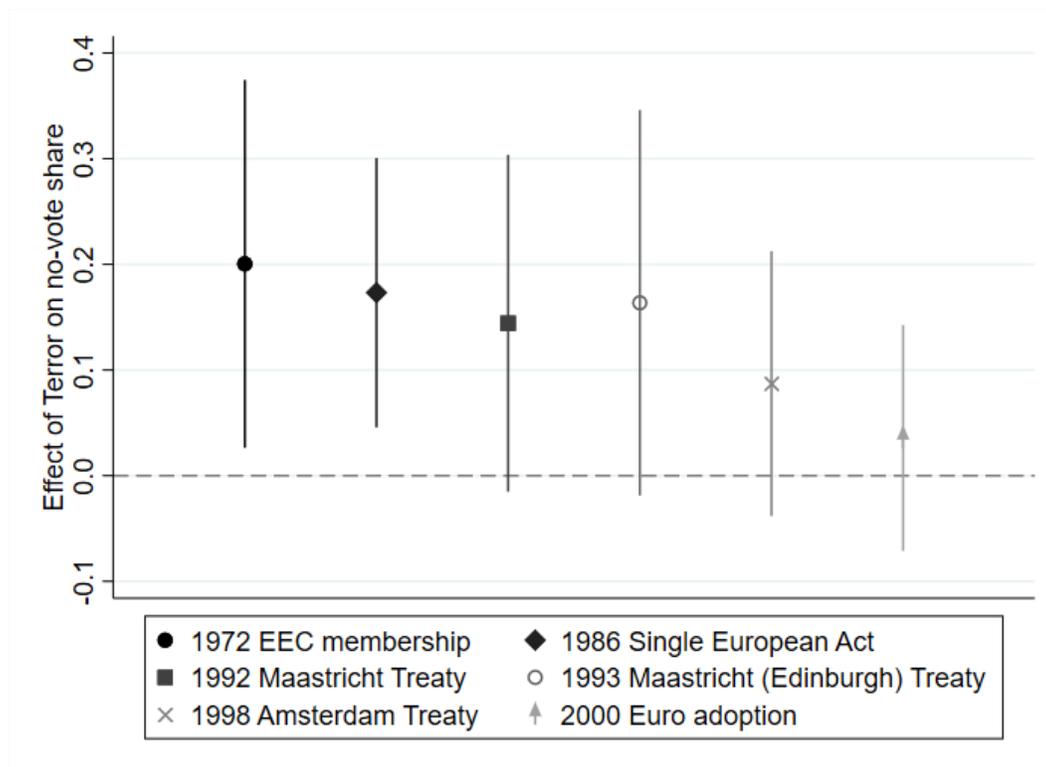
A clear trend emerges from figure 6. While the level of localized German Terror during the occupation continues to have a positive effect on local voter opposition to (further) European integration, this effect becomes smaller over time and, at the time of the referendum on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty 1992, has become statistically indistinguishable from zero. Furthermore, at the time of the referendum about Denmark adopting the Euro in 2000, about a generation after the initial ascension to the EEC, the effect of the German Terror is less than one-fifth of its 1972 effect size and far from any level of statistical significance.

Apparently, as the number of people with personal experience of the German Terror declined, the saliency of the German occupation and anti-German sentiments seemed to have decreased locally, which seemed to have had an effect on the level of local opposition to EEC/EU integration. Furthermore, the declining memory and salience of the German occupation and the violence associated with it might have made anti-EEC/EU parties (especially on the far-left) less likely to rely heavily on anti-German propaganda and the invocation of similarities between the EEC/EU and Nazi Germany in later campaigns against EEC/EU integration.¹⁹

¹⁸This figure is based on OLS regressions where the municipal "no" vote share is regressed on the Terror Index for the six Danish referenda about EEC/EU integration from 1972 to 2000. The full regression results can be found in appendix B.

¹⁹E.g. the openly use of the Swastika to represent EEC/EU and Germany in posters and other types of propaganda seemed to have gone out of fashion among activists and political parties of the Danish far-left after the 1970s. Instead Nazi-accusations and allusions were increasingly brought against members of the new (and usually Euro-sceptic) Danish nationalist right, such as the Danish People's Party (founded in 1995), which became a new Euro-sceptic force on the Danish right.

Figure 6: Effect of German Terror on "no" vote share in later EEC/EU referenda



Note: Outer lines represent 90 percent confidence intervals. All estimations include county-fixed effects and controls as in table 2.

10 Conclusion

Can a legacy of violence during foreign occupation decrease the public support for later international cooperation? This article has investigated this issue by looking at the effect of violence during the German occupation of Denmark 1940-1945 on public support for Danish membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in the Danish 1972 referendum. The results show that the municipalities which saw more German-inflicted violence during the German occupation of Denmark indeed had higher levels of resistance to Danish EEC membership in 1972 even holding demographic and pre-occupation political factors constant. The mechanism seems to have been

higher levels of support for the Danish far-left parties which opposed Danish membership, held strong connections to the resistance movement during the German occupation and deliberately utilized anti-German sentiments and memories of the German occupation and the Danish resistance movement in their campaign against Danish EEC membership. However, the effect of German occupation violence on local resistance to the EEC/EU seemed to have declined over time, as the memory and active use of the German occupation in Danish EEC/EU referenda campaigns faded.

The results have important implications for how to view the role played by previous intra-European conflicts on intra-state cooperation and political and economic integration in Europe and other regions today. While the increasing integration of European countries through the EEC and later the EU has often been seen as one of the impacts of World War II (Dedman 1996, 10-33),²⁰ the result of this article suggest that the violence and repression experienced during the War might have acted as a non-trivial hindrance for popular support for further economic and political integration with Germany among previously occupied countries. The results of this article also provide an potential explanation for the different results of the Norwegian referendum to join the EEC in 1972 compared to the Danish referendum the same year. While the Danish electorate voted decisively in favour of entering the EEC, Norwegian voters rejected EEC membership with a small majority, even though the political establishment in both countries were generally in favour of EEC membership. The results of this article suggest that the German-inflicted occupation violence during World War II, which was much more severe in Norway compared to Denmark, could be part of the explanation of the very different sentiments in these two Scandinavian countries. It also suggest that had Denmark suffered a level of violence compared to other Western countries under German occupation, the EEC referendum in 1972 might have had a different outcome.

Furthermore, the article also raises the questions of whether the memories of German occupation violence would have been politically activated, and would potentially have been politically important, in countries such as the Netherlands and France if membership of the EEC had been the subject of referenda in these countries. The results thus also raises the question of to

²⁰Often with the explicit stated goal of preventing future intra-state wars in Europe.

what extent memories of oppression during previous foreign occupations still plays a role for public support for European and other types of supranational political and economic integration and cooperation.²¹ As the results show, the political impact of the German occupation violence with regards to resistance to European integration faded quite substantially over time in Denmark but might be more persistent in countries where German occupation violence was carried out on a larger scale, as was the case in most other countries occupied by Germany during World War II. Future research could explore these issues further.

Public memories of historical violence and oppression might thus be a potent force both within both national and international politics. Previous experiences of violence inflicted by foreign states might decrease the population's willingness to later engage in international cooperation with these states, including joining international organizations with the previous oppressor states. However, this article's results also suggest, in accordance with previous research (Charnysh 2015; Ochsner and Roesel 2017; Costalli and Ruggeri 2019), that political parties play a pivotal role in translating historical grievances and experiences of violence into political action, and that the linkage of certain political parties to certain political events might bolster their popularity and credibility during political campaigns, including against further supranational integration and cooperation. If decisions about international cooperation and integration will increasingly become the subject of direct public-decision making through referenda, as has been in the case in many European countries over the past decades, these insights hold substantial implications for the future of international cooperation and international organizations as well as the study of these in a world where the past is evidently still with us.

²¹The findings of Fouka and Voth (2016) do indeed suggest that this might be the case.

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A Components of the Terror Index

Table A.1: Components of the Terror Index and share "no" votes in the 1972 referendum

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Number of peopled killed	0.62 (0.13) ^{***}			
Number of attempted murders		4.16 (0.35) ^{***}		
People wounded			0.76 (0.20) ^{***}	
Damages in millions of DKK				0.84 (0.19) ^{***}
County-fixed effects	NO	NO	NO	NO
N	278	278	278	278
R^2	0.07	0.08	0.04	0.08

Dependent variable is share of "no" votes in the 1972 referendum.

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

B German Terror and "no" votes in other EEC/EU referenda

Table B.1: German terror and "no" votes in EEC/EU referenda 1972-2000

	1972	1986	1992	1993	1998	2000
Terror Index	0.20 (0.11)*	0.17 (0.08)**	0.14 (0.10)	0.16 (0.11)	0.09 (0.08)	0.04 (0.06)
Urbanization	17.54 (2.71)***	20.66 (3.74)***	7.72 (3.41)**	4.60 (3.54)	2.67 (2.83)	-1.99 (2.60)
Log of Population	-0.31 (0.77)	0.87 (0.96)	-0.52 (0.94)	-0.89 (0.98)	-1.06 (0.76)	-1.23 (0.59)**
Communist vote share, 1939 election	-0.25 (0.74)	-0.57 (0.55)	-1.20 (0.59)**	-1.42 (0.58)**	-1.63 (0.56)***	-1.83 (0.46)***
Nationalist Right vote share, 1939 election	1.21 (4.76)	8.59 (4.43)*	-4.26 (3.85)	-5.37 (3.90)	-1.04 (3.30)	-3.15 (2.78)
County-fixed effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	278	276	276	276	276	276
R^2	0.64	0.67	0.32	0.41	0.33	0.39

Dependent variable is share of "no" votes in the referendum. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Two municipalities were amalgamated with other municipalities between the 1972 and the 1986 referendum.

The urbanization data used in 1993 is from 1992.

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$