

**CONFRONTING THE JANUS FACE: THE ARMED FORCES
AND AFRICAN TRANSITIONAL POLITICS**

by

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Abstract

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, scholars have given renewed attention to the role of the armed forces as an essential but ambivalent actor in the birth, life, and death of democracy. Despite this emergent literature, there is no consensus concerning the institutional dimensions, causal mechanisms, and regional differences that motivate why soldiers choose to support political reformers, side with dictators, or upend existing democratic regimes. This dissertation proposes a theory on the relationship between authoritarian civil-military relations, democratic transitions, and the duration of emerging democratic regimes in Africa. It argues that the continent has been characterized by three predominant forms of authoritarian civil-military relations, each with distinct democratization patterns: military regimes, ethnic civil-military relations, and representative civil-military relations.

Military regimes occur when a country is ruled by a junta of military officers. Cleavages between praetorian and professional factions of the armed forces make democratic transitions likely, but democratic settlements brittle. Authoritarian regimes with ethnic civil-military relations are ruled by a civilian who attempts to recruit co-ethnics into key positions in the army or other parallel military institutions. Patron-client relations between the authoritarian leaders and military institutions dominated by co-ethnics impede democratic transition, but the absence of a politically dominant military results in more stable democracy than in military regimes. Authoritarian regimes with representative civil-military relations refrain from manipulating either the political or

ethnic loyalties of the armed forces. Marginalized from politics and free from ethnic allegiances, such regimes are most likely to transition to stable democratic rule.

These theoretical claims are evaluated through cross-country regression analysis and case studies in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia. The cross-country analysis tests whether authoritarian military institutions affect the likelihood of democratic transition, as well as the duration of emerging democratic regimes. The case studies, which are supported by key informant interviews with military officials and politicians in Tunisia and Nigeria, trace the causal mechanisms that facilitate military action for or against democratization.

Primary Reader: Peter Lewis (advisor)

Secondary readers: Eliot Cohen, Bruce Parrott, Princeton Lyman, Naunihal Singh

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The act of conducting scholarly research is at once a supremely solitary and supremely engaging endeavor. Solitary, in the sense that the most of the time one spends as a researcher is on one's own. Absorbing vast literatures, combing through archives, assembling and analyzing data, and working one's way through chapter drafts are activities demanding little human interaction. Engaging, in the sense that I have found that never is the scholar truly alone. Only by constantly wrestling with the theories, methods, arguments and insights of others is new knowledge created. Moreover, the success or failure of a research project depends on accommodating participants, wise colleagues, and supportive loved ones. The shortcomings of this dissertation are my responsibility, but to others I owe a great debt of gratitude.

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Chapter 1

The Janus-Faced Soldier and the African State

Across Africa, armies often act as agents and instigators of authoritarian regimes. Most of Africa's dictatorships have risen to the sound of martial music over the radio waves, the sight of armored vehicles in the streets, and promises to restore order made by men in black boots with lopsided berets. Continental Africa's first coup began on July 23, 1952, when members of Egypt's Free Officers Movement overthrew King Farouk I, ending the monarchy and establishing a military dictatorship. The most recent coup was on November 14, 2017, when the military forced the resignation of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe after nearly 40 years in office.

Soldiers in Africa kill citizens of their own countries more often than they fight foreign adversaries. Between 1990 and 2015, peaceful protestors have been violently repressed by pro-government forces no less than five hundred times.¹ One of the worst such crackdowns occurred during the 2011 protests in Libya, when security forces shot, tortured or beat to death as many as one thousand civilians gathered to protest poor living conditions and to demand an end to the regime of Muammar Gaddafi. Since 1946, African countries have fought no less than seventy internal wars, seven times the number

¹ Calculated from Idean Salehyan, Cullen S. Hendrix, Jesse Hamner, Christina Case, Christopher Linebarger, Emily Stull, and Jennifer Williams, "Social Conflict in Africa: A New Database," *International Interactions* 38, no. 4 (2012), pp. 503-511. Peaceful protests include organized demonstrations, spontaneous demonstrations, organized strikes and limited strikes.

of armed conflicts that have been fought between African states.² The hundreds of thousands killed in conflicts in Liberia, Sudan, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are a direct product of the tendency of African armies to target civilians rather than other armed forces in wartime.³

Nevertheless, the African soldier has played as important a role in electing democratic leaders as she has in supporting dictatorships. Military seizures of power are often followed by a quick, orderly return to the barracks and free, fair elections. Early scholars of comparative politics called such armies “guardian” or “moderator” types,⁴ arguing that sometimes the military feels “obligated to ‘step in, to sort out the mess’ created by factious politicians, and after a period of ‘corrective government,’ to hand over to cleaned up civilian political system.”⁵ Early interventions in which the military appears to have been motivated, at least in part, by such aims include Sudan (1958), Sierra Leone (1962), the Republic of Congo (1963), Central African Republic (1965), Nigeria (1966), and Burundi (1966).⁶ One of the most recent such coups occurred in 2010

² These estimates are derived from the Uppsala University’s Conflict Data Program. See Melander, Erik Melander, Therése Pettersson & Lotta Themnér, “Organized Violence, 1989-2015,” *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 5 (2016), pp. 727-742 and Lotta Harbom, Erik Melander, and Peter Wallensteen. "Dyadic Dimensions of Armed Conflict, 1946—2007." *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 5 (2008), pp. 697-710. Interstate combatants include France and Tunisia (1961), Morocco and Algeria (1963), Ethiopia and Somalia (1964-1980), Uganda and Tanzania (1978), Chad and Nigeria (1983), Mali and Burkina Faso (1985), Chad and Libya (1987), Ethiopia and Eritrea (1998-2000), Cameroon and Nigeria (1996), Djibouti and Eritrea (2008), Sudan and South Sudan (2012).

³ See Stathis Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, "International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict," *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010), pp. 415-429 and Christopher Day and William Reno, "In Harm's Way: African Counter-Insurgency and Patronage Politics," *Civil Wars* 16, no. 2 (2014), pp. 105-126.

⁴ Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 219-237

⁵ Christopher Clapham and George Philip, *The Political Dilemmas of Military Regimes* (Barnes and Noble, 1985), p. 9.

⁶ See Ruth First, *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'état* (Penguin Books, 1970), pp. 206-222.

in Niger, when soldiers intervened in order to prevent President Mamadou Tandja from seeking a third term, then left power after organizing parliamentary and presidential elections in 2011.

Still, despite a continent-wide reputation for abusive interactions with civilians, the will of military forces to repress is not always limitless. In Africa in the 21st century, orders to shoot civilian political protestors are rarely obeyed. For every case of violent crackdown, there are more than 10 cases in which peaceful protests are allowed to unfold unencumbered.⁷ The rise in peaceful protest in Africa has been accompanied by a marked decline in the instance and success of military coups. In the 1960s and 1970s, three-quarters of African leaders who left power did so through a coup, violent overthrow, or assassination. Now, the ratio is reversed; between 2000 and 2005, the number of leaders who quit their office through violence dropped to less than 20 percent.⁸

In some countries, the military has a history of supporting only autocrats. The Algerian regime has remained authoritarian since it won independence from France in 1962; challenges to the regime have been ruthlessly repressed by a shadowy cabal of military officers who fought together in the Algerian War of Independence. Each of Chad's three prior post-independence governments has ended either in an authoritarian military coup or in civil war. The current government under Idriss Deby is one of the most Africa's most repressive, his rule undergirded by a large army supported by

⁷ Salehyan et al. "Social Conflict in Africa," Op Cit. The SCAD database records over 5,500 cases between 1990 and 2015 in which no repression or non-lethal repression was used against peaceful demonstrators.

⁸ Daniel Posner and Daniel J. Young, "The Institutionalization of Political Power in Africa." *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 3 (2007), p. 127.

generous funds from the United States, France, and other Western countries. The same can be said of countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Togo, and Uganda, each a nation where armies have intervened on multiple occasions to block or forestall attempts to liberalize.

In other countries, men in uniform almost always support democrats, or remain passively on the sidelines. In Tunisia, Mali, and Malawi, the military played an instrumental role in overthrowing authoritarian regimes. In Malawi, for example, the middle ranks of the military did not wait for orders from their senior commanders before they attacked militia forces loyal to the dictator Hastings Banda. With the militia forces in disarray, Banda was forced to cede to calls for multi-party elections.⁹ By contrast, in Botswana, Senegal, and Tanzania, the military has never held much of a political role at all. The Senegalese army is one of the few armies on the African continent never to have attempted a coup. In fact, the army of Senegal has twice intervened at the invitation of political leaders to *prevent* military takeovers in neighboring Gambia.

However, in most African countries, soldiers have supported both democrats or dictators at various times. Only 12 of Africa's 54 nations have maintained either strictly democratic or strictly authoritarian governments since their founding.¹⁰ In most of these nations, either by intervening directly for or against a particular government, the military has played an open and decisive role in the democratization process. Some have

⁹ See Jonathan Newell, "An African Army Under Pressure: The Politicisation of the Malawi Army and 'Operation Bwezani', 1992-93." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 6, no. 2 (1995), pp. 159-182.

¹⁰ According to the data collected for this study, which defines democratization as a Polity IV score greater than zero and only examines non-colonial regimes, these countries are: Angola, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Togo, Gambia, Morocco, Swaziland, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, and South Africa.

experienced periods of rapid alternation between authoritarian and democratic governments, where societal or inter-military divisions render soldiers unwilling or unable to make up their minds. General Arthur Ankrah overthrew Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first prime minister, in a coup d'état in 1966; General Ankrah was then replaced by Brigadier General Akwasi Afrifa, who returned the country to civilian rule under Kofia Busia in 1969. While on a trip to Great Britain for medical purposes, Busia was overthrown in 1972 by General Ignatius Acheampong, who was then executed by a firing squad in 1978 instigated by General Fred Akuffo, who was also executed by a firing squad instigated by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, who handed over power to the civilian president Hilla Liman in 1979. Unhappy with Liman's performance in office, Rawlings again seized power in 1981 and ruled Ghana for the next twenty years, including service as the Fourth Republic's first democratically elected head of state between 1993 and 2001.

Like Janus, the Roman god of transition, change, beginnings and endings, the role of the armed forces in the politics of democratization is multifaceted and many-faced. At times, the military acts on behalf of democratic social forces, overthrowing corrupt, repressive dictators and organizing their replacement through freely contested elections. At other times, the army acts as an instrument of repression, removing democratically elected leaders before they ever have a chance to govern or instigating atrocities in order to cement an authoritarian strongman's grip on power. Democracy-saving or -ending military interventions can be clustered closely together in time and space, or the army can

stand idly by in the face of the most abhorrent oppression or transformative social revolution, and simply do nothing at all.

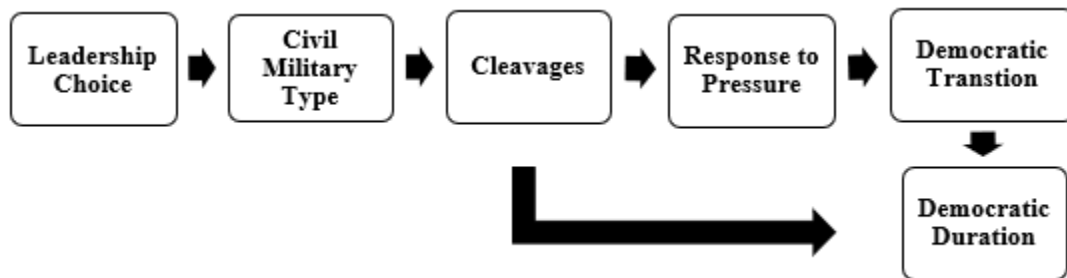
The primary purpose of this dissertation is to understand why the behavior of the armed forces towards their governments is so Janus-faced. Under what conditions will the military lend its support to democratic change? Are certain types of authoritarian regimes with certain types of civil-military relations more likely to be succeeded by stable democracies than others? Is escape from authoritarianism possible in countries where the armed forces consistently intervene to foreclose, interrupt, or forestall democracy?

1.1: The Argument: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Pathways to and From Democracy

It is my contention that the role of the military in African regime change is neither as fickle nor as capricious as it may appear, but depends on how military institutions are structured in relation to civilian ones. To minimize the threat of a coup and maximize their control over their nation's means of violence, authoritarian leaders must make *choices* concerning how to structure their armies. These choices lead to distinct patterns of *civil-military relations*, with different *cleavages* that emerge between authoritarian leaders and their armies, and within armies themselves. These cleavages, in turn, influence whether the military will act to preserve authoritarianism or allow a *democratic*

transition when confronted with pressure to liberalize. Moreover, the cleavages that existed within the army and its ties to the old regime elite usually persist after a transition, affecting a democracy's chances for *survival*. This theoretical framework, which begins with the choices of authoritarian leaders and ends with transitional outcomes, is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Transitional Politics: A Causal Logic



I argue that the choices of Africa's authoritarian leaders can be categorized into three types of authoritarian civil-military relations, each with distinct consequences for the conditions under which the army will allow a transition to lasting democracy to occur. One of these types is a *military regime*, where military officers choose to rule as a collective body. I argue that African military regimes are moderately likely to transition to democracy, but that democracies succeeding military regimes face dim prospects for survival, a pattern of democratic instability. The second civil-military relation type occurs when a civilian or personalist dictator rules a country and chooses to recruit co-ethnics into the officer corps or into parallel military institutions, creating an *ethnic army*. I argue

that countries with ethnic armies tend to block transitions to democracy, a pattern of democratic obstruction. The final civil-military relation type occurs when a civilian or personalist dictator rules but does not choose to ethnically stack the military, leading to *representative armies*. Dictatorships with representative armies tend to result in lasting democracy, a pattern of democratic stability.

Below, I outline the previous literature and my argument concerning how each of these civil-military relation types tend to influence democratic outcomes. To illustrate the causal logic of my argument, I draw on this dissertation's three case studies in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia.

1.1.1: Military Regimes and Democratic Instability

The idea that military regimes have important consequences for democratization is not new, but it is controversial. For many scholars of African studies, the seizure of power by soldiers is synonymous with misrule. The period from the early 1960s, when Africa's soldiers first seized power, to the 1990s, when many of the continent's authoritarian regimes were forced out, was a period of immense political and economic decline. African military officers who served as rulers, such as the Central African Republic's Jean-Bédél Bokassa, Uganda's Idi Amin, and Sudan's Omar al-Bashir presided over some of Africa's worst dictatorships. In their landmark survey of African transitional politics between 1990 and 1994, Bratton and van de Walle note 12 of the 14 relevant cases where a democratic transition was blocked were countries with previous

histories of coups or military rule. They observe that “an institutional legacy of military involvement in politics seemed to predispose security forces to intervene during transitions and to incline subsequent transition outcomes to fall short of democracy.”¹¹

This finding has been confirmed by the cross-national literature, which demonstrates that military seizures of power begets further military intervention.¹²

Nevertheless, the proposition that military regimes are more likely to lead to democracy has never been systematically tested in Africa. In the literature on comparative politics, there is evidence that, on the contrary, military regimes are actually more likely to result in democracy than other forms of authoritarianism. According one recent study by Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright and Erica Frantz, close to two-thirds of military regimes since 1945 have ended in democracy, compared to a 40 percent democratization rate for other regime types.¹³ These findings hinge upon a particular definition that distinguishes between military-ruled regimes and regimes simply ruled by a former military officer. As Geddes argues:

A military regime, in contrast to a personalist dictatorship led by a military officer, is one in which a group of officers determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy. In an institutionalized military

¹¹ Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in the Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 215.

¹² See Robert Jackman et al, “Explaining African Military Coups d’État, 1960-1982,” *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1983), pp. 1262-1275; Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer. "Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47.5 (2003), pp. 594-620; and Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, “Coups Traps: Why Does Africa Have so many Coups d’État?” Oxford University (2005).

¹³ Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set." *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 (2014), p. 325.

regime (many are not), senior officers have agreed on some formula for sharing or rotating power, and consultation is somewhat routinized.¹⁴

This dissertation follows Geddes and her colleagues in defining military rule as a “government in which a group of military officers determines who leads the country and has policy influence,” and in arguing that the distinction between military and other forms of rule creates unique cleavages within the armed forces and distinct consequences for a regime’s prospects and opportunities for democracy. Yet it differs in its predictions, siding with scholars in the Africanist tradition by arguing that the transition from military rule to consolidated democracy is rarely smooth.

Why is this the case? The answer lies in recognizing that military regimes have unique institutional cleavages that impact the probability that a regime ends in democracy and that democracy’s chances of survival. In this dissertation’s analytical framework, the *choice* by military officers to rule collectively leads to distinct *civil-military relations* marked by cleavages between the praetorian officers who prefer power and the broader military who prefers the barracks,¹⁵ as Geddes and others have argued. The military’s status as ruler, competition within the ruling elite, and tensions between praetorian and traditional officers make military regimes highly vulnerable to coups and causes the armed forces to *fracture* when the regime is threatened by internal or external pressure. The lack of military cohesion results in a process of competition, bargaining, and conflict

¹⁴ Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999), p. 124.

¹⁵ The use of the term “praetorian” to describe military intervention in politics was first popularized by early comparativists. In particular, see Samuel Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay." *World Politics* 17, no. 3 (1965), pp. 386-430 and Amos Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-military Relations in Developing Polities." *Comparative Politics* 1, no. 3 (1969), pp. 382-404.

between factions that results in a reasonable, but not certain, chance of a transition to *democracy*. Most of the time, some or all of the praetorian officers remain in the military after a democratic transition. These officers often act to seize power at the first opportunity, meaning that military regimes face dim prospects for *democratic survival*. Thus, military regimes tend to follow paths of democratic instability because they are fairly likely to transition to but unlikely to sustain democracy.

To evaluate the causal mechanisms behind the argument, this dissertation draws on both fieldwork and secondary sources from Nigeria, focusing in particular on the causes and consequences of Nigeria's second period of military rule from 1983 to 1999. Dating back to the country's first coup in 1966, the historical choice of Nigerian dictators has been institutionalized military rule. In each of Nigeria's authoritarian regimes, the military effectively wielded veto power over whom to choose as a leader and maintained enormous influence in shaping policy. Not only was a military leader in charge, but military officers served as ministers, governed states, and the military itself was responsible for writing opinions on topics ranging from economic policy to a timeline for the country's democratic transition.

The result of Nigerian military rule was to create a series of cleavages between officers who wielded power and the broader military. Despite the Nigerian military's control over the country's political system, the Nigerian armed forces were never unified over whether and how long the army ought to remain in power. The officers in charge of governing the country never represented a majority of officers, and the outsized benefits the praetorian class of officers received rankled many of their colleagues in more

professional roles. For example, the 1983 coup that brought Nigeria's second military regime was a legacy of its first, which lasted from 1966 and 1979 and left in place a network of junior officers hungry to return to power. These officers, which one former general called Nigeria's "first tier of coup merchants," played a role in every successful coup in Nigerian history.¹⁶ President Ibrahim Babangida, one of Nigeria's chief coup merchants and head of state from 1985 to 1983, was able to maintain power in part because he was a master at balancing the military's competing factions, promising a return to the barracks for those in the armed forces eager to leave while executing an endless series of delays to appease the hardliners. Babangida's skills as the consummate manipulator earned him the moniker "Maradona," after the soccer star known for his prodigious dribbling skills.

These cleavages led the Nigerian military to fracture when Babangida's government came under pressure to liberalize in the lead-up to and aftermath of the 1993 elections. Responding to exhortations from hardliners, Babangida annulled the results, only to lose support among much of the rest of Nigeria's officer corps, the majority of whom at that point favored a return to the barracks. Nevertheless, the 1993 contest for Nigeria's future was won by the praetorian class of officers, led by Sani Abacha, who briefly united officers around the common goal of removing his predecessor. After Abacha seized power, he was able to consolidate it in part by retiring or firing many of Nigeria's remaining senior officers, and because many of the officers who were left

¹⁶ M. Chris Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army: The Siege of a Nation* (Malthouse Press, 2001), p. 62.

refused to participate in coups or concern themselves with military politics of any kind. When Abacha died in 1998, however, senior officers made their preferences for a return to civilian rule by abruptly leaving power. They engineered the democratic election of Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired former general and head of state during Nigeria's first military regime.

The fracturing of Nigeria's armed forces in response to pressure to liberalize helped facilitate varying transitional outcomes. In 1993, the hardline faction of praetorian officers annulled the freest and fairest election Nigeria had ever had, arrested the candidate the majority of Nigerians had voted for, and violently cracked down on its opposition in order to continue military rule. After Abacha's death in 1998, the traditional faction of the Nigerian military seized power and ceded it to a democratically elected leader. The conflict and ambivalence within the Nigerian military, torn as it was between top officers who wanted to keep power, subalterns who wanted to replace them, and officers who believed that politics were not the military's concern, help to explain the country's lurches between authoritarianism and democracy. The Nigerian case therefore confirms this project's argument that factionalism and competition resulting from military rule create inconsistent transition outcomes.

Yet the influence of Nigeria's military regimes did not end with the country's democratic transition. The remarkable duration of Nigeria's current democratic regime, which, at 18 years and counting, has lasted longer than any previous Nigerian government, is a product of decisions made by current and former military leaders to break the cycle of military intervention. These factors included the military pasts of

General Obasanjo and other senior politicians, the surprise retirement in 1999 of military officers with prior political experience, and better ethnic representation among Nigeria's senior officers. So long as the cleavages between praetorian and professional officers persisted, democracy in Nigeria did not have good prospects for survival, which helps explain why democracy following the 1999 transition has lasted 19 years, where civilian rule following the 1979 transition lasted only four.

The argument's causal logic does not just provide insight concerning why Nigeria's current democracy has survived where its previous one failed. By illustrating how both transitions to and from democracy are a product of cleavages between praetorian and professional officers, it reconciles previous theories of military rule by explaining why military regimes face both a reasonable likelihood of democratization and why democracies that succeed military rule face poor chances of survival. In addition to Nigeria, many other African military regimes, including those in Niger, Egypt, Ghana and Burundi, have followed a pattern of democratic instability.

1.1.2: Ethnic Armies and Democratic Obstruction

When the military chooses to hand over power to a single dictator, the outcome is very different. In such cases, I argue, the conditions under which the military will support democracy is determined by the extent to which authoritarian leaders choose to make co-ethnicity the basis of military loyalty.

The cross-national evidence in support of ethnicity as a causal factor in driving the armed forces to support or oppose democratization is mixed. In most cross-national studies of military intervention, ethnicity is either measured as fractionalization, which denotes the overall number of ethnic groups in a country or ethnic dominance, which measures the percentage of the population of the largest ethnic group. Some studies have found ethnicity measured as such to be correlated with military involvement in politics.¹⁷ Most studies, however, have found either no relationship or a negative relationship.¹⁸ Collier and Hoeffler, for example, dismiss the negative relationship they find between ethnic dominance and coup plotting, arguing that Africa's ethnic diversity makes it less characterized by ethnic dominance than other regions and concluding that predominantly economic and not social conditions cause coups.¹⁹ These studies suggest that, at the very least, that a country's overall degree of ethnic diversity or ethnic fractionalization have little direct influence on military intervention outcomes.

However, the idea that ethnic struggles within the armed forces influence transitional politics is a common theme in the case literature on Africa. Many African regimes inherited armed forces from colonial powers, with recruitment skewed towards various ethnic groups. The French, for example, deliberately recruited ethnic groups they considered to be more "warlike" into the ranks of colonial armed forces, including

¹⁷ Augustine Kposowa, and J. Craig Jenkins. "The Structural Sources of Military Coups in Postcolonial Africa, 1957-1984." *American Journal of Sociology* (1993), pp. 126-163.

¹⁸ Robert Jackman, "The Predictability of African Coups d'État" *American Political Science Review* 72, no. 4 (1978), pp. 1262-1275; Johnson et al, "Explaining African Military Coups,". and Collier and Hoeffler, "Coup Traps."

¹⁹ Collier and Hoeffler, "Coup Traps," p. 16.

Berbers in Morocco, the Kabrai in Togo, the Malinke in Guinea, and the Fon in Dahomey (present-day Benin).²⁰ African leaders commonly manipulated ethnic representation within their armed forces, either in response to previous imbalances or in order to shore up political support. In Dahomey, coups led by junior officers in 1967 and 1972 dislodged the southern Fon hierarchy and promoted northern co-ethnic soldiers to top positions. Thus, while overall ethnic diversity or fractionalization has little effect on transitional politics, the choice by leaders to use ethnicity as a basis for military recruitment might.

Recent empirical studies suggest there is something to this argument. Bratton and Van de Walle find that the military was least likely to countenance threats to institutional privilege if the incumbent political leader was an ethnic patron, noting that all cases of antidemocratic military intervention fit this pattern.²¹ In addition, ethnicity-based recruitment may shorten the lifespan of emerging democratic regimes. Kristen Harkness finds that in 75 percent of cases where an elected leader did not share the same ethnicity as top officers recruited by the previous ruler coups resulted within four years. Across all other cases, less than 20 percent of the time did a coup result within four years.²²

Following these scholars, I argue that African regimes that build co-ethnic armies face dim prospects for democratization. Unlike previous scholarship, however, I contend that the chances of a democratic transition and survival in regimes with ethnic armies are

²⁰ See Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press, 1985).

²¹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, pp. 216-218.

²² Kristen Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coup Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa." 2016. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 4 (2016), p. 604.

different depending on whether or not the regime is military-led. This is because the central civil-military cleavage in civilian-led regimes with ethnically stacked armies is not between ruling and non-ruling officers, but between co-ethnic and non-co-ethnic soldiers and civilians.

In this dissertation's analytical framework, the *choice* by authoritarian leaders to rule as a personalist or civilian dictator and to stack the officer corps or parallel military institutions with members of their own ethnic group creates *ethnic armies*. Ethnic armies are more focused than military regimes on the traditional military mission of maintaining order, and are reinforced by co-ethnic patronage relationships with civilian authoritarian leaders. As a result, the central *cleavage* in ethnic armies is between soldiers that share the ethnicity of the authoritarian leadership, and soldiers and civilians that do not. Lacking political expertise and dependent upon the dictator for their positions, and often, their access to resources, officers in ethnic armies face incentives to repress political opponents when pressured to liberalize. As a result, authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies tend to *unite* in support of authoritarian leaders to block or foreclose opportunities to *transition to democracy*. In the rare cases when regimes with ethnic armies do transition, the chances of *democratic survival* are reasonable so long as ethnic group that dominated under authoritarianism remains or shares in power. Thus, regimes with ethnic armies tend to follow paths of democratic obstruction because they are unlikely to transition but moderately likely to sustain democracy.

This dissertation uses Sudan as the primary case through which it tests how ethnic armed forces block opportunities to democratize. For more than 27 years, Omar al-Bashir

has ruled Sudan, seizing power in a 1989 coup. Despite his status as an officer in Sudan's military, Bashir does not preside at the head of a military regime. Instead, Bashir's coup was instigated by a political party known as the National Islamist Front (NIF), and Bashir rules as the civilian head of party, through which he is responsible both for matters of state and chief of the armed forces. Outside of the security apparatus, few military officers in Sudan serve in high-level political capacities.

To control Sudan's armed forces, Bashir's regime relies extensively on the recruitment of co-ethnic soldiers into key positions, a practice called ethnic stacking.²³ Arab officers, in particular officers from northern Arab ethnic groups, dominate Sudan at the top echelons of the regular army's officer corps, as well as in numerous militia groups. As a result, the principle cleavages in the Sudanese armed forces have tended to fall along ethnic lines, between Arabs and non-Arabs in the regular army and between competing militia groups across the country, many of whom are composed exclusively from members of one ethnic group.

Bashir's policies of ethnic stacking have rendered Sudan's security institutions resistant to pressures to liberalize. Early in Bashir's regime, military support was crucial in allowing the leader to consolidate his control over the Sudanese state during a confrontation with NIF party members who were agitating for political representation beyond the traditional northern Arab elite. In addition, for decades both Sudan's regular army and militia groups have been used as instruments of violence and oppression in

²³ Ibid.

Sudan's southern and western peripheries. In the south, a decades-long civil war with predominantly Christian ethnic groups led to the secession of South Sudan from Sudan in 2012. As the conflict with the south wound down, Sudan's regular army coordinated a campaign with primarily Arab-aligned militia groups to maintain its hold over Darfur, committing acts of violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide. These events led to harsh international sanctions and Bashir's indictment by the International Criminal Court for war crimes.

Despite losing a third of the country and fierce international resistance to his rule, Bashir has become the longest serving leader in Sudan's history. By recruiting co-ethnic soldiers, providing them with patronage, and using them to perpetrate violent conflict against members of other groups, Bashir keeps Sudan's soldiers loyal to his regime. Ethnic stacking is a crucial part of the Sudanese government's strategy of keeping the periphery in a constant state of violence in order to maintain the center's hold on power. The argument advanced by this dissertation therefore helps to explain the persistence of authoritarianism in Sudan.

Sudan is far from the only African country where dictators ruling a civilian capacity who recruit co-ethnics to control their armies prove resilient to popular pressure for democratic reform. Other African countries who have followed patterns similar to Sudan's include Togo, Zimbabwe, and Chad.

1.1.3: *Representative Armies and Democratic Stability*

In a final class of cases, a single dictator rules but does not stack the regular army or parallel military institutions with co-ethnics. The reasons that dictators refrain from using ethnic stacking are varied, ranging from it simply not being an option due to a lack of ethnic diversity, or refraining out of fear that stoking ethnic tensions within the armed forces could prove destabilizing. It is these regimes, with neither ethnic nor political cleavages, that are most likely to result in stable democracy.

In this dissertation's analytical framework, the *choice* by authoritarian leaders to foster loyal military institutions by removing them from the political sphere completely or channeling their loyalty through non-ethnic political parties leads to *representative armies*. Political marginalization fosters *cleavages* between the army and the authoritarian elite, particularly if the elite invests heavily in the internal security apparatus or parallel military institutions and not the regular military to maintain order. These cleavages become most manifest when the dictatorship comes under pressure to liberalize, and the lack of ethnic ties or political patronage gives the armed forces little incentive to continue to support the dictatorship. As a result, representative armies usually choose to *defect* from an authoritarian regime and support a *transition to democracy*. Moreover, a lack of political experience or ethnic support of old elites makes representative armies unlikely to interfere in successor regimes, leading to high rates of *democratic survival*. Dictatorships with representative armies therefore tend to result in unusually long-lasting democracies, leading to a pattern of democratic stability.

This study uses Tunisia as its third and final case to examine how civilian dictators with representative armed forces tend to have the smoothest pathway to democracy. Tunisia's army lacks ethnic cleavages, and the choice of both of Tunisia's dictators, Habib al-Bourguiba and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, was to politically marginalize the Tunisian military in order to prevent a coup. Under both regimes, active-duty officers rarely held political office, the military was overseen by a civilian defense minister, and officers were not allowed to vote nor become members of the ruling party. Instead, much of the responsibility for Tunisia's national security policy fell to Tunisia's Interior Ministry, whose central responsibilities included presidential security and maintaining internal order.

As a result of the choice by Tunisia's dictator, the central civil-military cleavage that emerged was between the regular army on one side, and the authoritarian elite and internal security apparatus on the other. The military's marginalization meant that the Tunisia's armed forces were rarely asked to repress civilians. In fact, Tunisia's officers were themselves subject to strict monitoring and surveillance, and were at times sanctioned for political disloyalty by the Interior Ministry. The lack of involvement in Tunisia's internal security apparatus and marginalization from the regime gave Tunisia's officers a loyalty to the Tunisian state rather than the dictatorship, and led it to embrace a corporate ethos of political non-interference.

For 50 years, the Tunisian army's lack of interest or ability to conduct a coup led Tunisia to become one of the world's most stable dictatorships. Yet it also led the military to refrain from supporting the regime during the mass protests of 2010 and 2011.

Unprecedented in their scale and their explicit calls for the end of Tunisia's dictatorship, the military played an important role in Ben Ali's ouster, not only abstaining from attacking civilian protestors, but also at times openly siding with protestors against intelligence, police, and paramilitary forces loyal to the regime. The Tunisian military's lack of will to violently repress on the regime's behalf was crucial in ending the dictatorship.

In the immediate aftermath of Ben Ali's flight, the military controlled most of the country and might have seized power for itself. Instead, it allowed a transitional council made up entirely of civilians to conduct elections and establish democracy. Democracy, rather than a continuation of authoritarian rule, served the Tunisian military's interests for several reasons. The Tunisian officer corps was virtually devoid of political experience and had little interest in committing violence against Tunisian civilians. It had great interest, however, in leveraging its status as the guarantor of Tunisian democracy into increased budgets and institutional autonomy from the Interior Ministry. Democracy served, and continues to serve, both of these interests.

Finally, it is the same lack of ethnic cleavages or political ties to the old regime that explain how the Tunisian military has contributed to the country's democratic stability. Despite weak economic growth, heightened political instability, and an expanded security role, Tunisia's armed forces have resisted further calls by civilians to intervene. In no small part because of the military's commitment to political neutrality, Tunisia remains the only Arab country to have consolidated democratic rule following the 2010 and 2011 Arab uprisings.

Though civilian dictatorships that refrain from ethnic stacking represent the smallest class of cases, Tunisia is far from alone. Other countries that have followed similar paths to Tunisia include Senegal, Ghana, and Malawi.

1.1.4: Predicted Transition Paths

This project's argument concerning how authoritarian civil-military relations in Africa influence democratic transition paths are summarized in Table 1.1. The most important predictions of my argument can be condensed into three hypotheses with observable theoretical implications. They are: 1) democracies which succeed military rule are least likely to survive; 2) civilian-led authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies are least likely to transition not democracy; and 3) civilian-led authoritarian regimes with representative armies will be most likely to transition to stable democracy. The outcomes representing these observable implications are italicized in the table.

Table 1.1: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Predicted Transition Paths

Leadership Choice	Authoritarian Civ.-Mil Relation Type	Principal Cleavage	Military Response to Pressure	Dem Transition	Dem Survival	Likely Transition Path
Military in power Co-ethnics at times dominate military	Military Regime	Professional and Praetorian officers	Fracture	Moderately likely	<i>Least stable</i>	Democratic Instability
Military out of power Co-ethnics dominate military	Ethnic Army	Co-ethnic and non- co-ethnic soldiers and civilians	Unity	<i>Unlikely</i>	Moderately stable	Democratic Obstruction
Military out of power Co-ethnics do not dominate military	Representative Army	Army and authoritarian leadership	Defection	<i>Most likely</i>	<i>Most stable</i>	Democratic Stability

1.2: The Evidence: Military Rule, Ethnic Armies, Representative Armies and Democratization in Africa

The dissertation tests the proposed theory using a mixed-method analysis, providing empirical evidence in addition to the cases of Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia. The empirical chapter of this dissertation employs descriptive statistics and cross-country regression analysis to test the effect of authoritarian civil-military relations on the probability of a democratic transition and on the duration of subsequent democracies. The study's independent variables are authoritarian regimes with *military rule*, *ethnic*, and *representative* civil-military relations as outlined above. Likewise, the study's dependent variables are both the *probability* that the regime ends in democracy and the *duration* of

the succeeding democratic regime.²⁴ The study's main theoretical propositions are tested using an original database of all African transitions to and from democracy between 1960 and 2015. The data is compiled principally from Kristen Harkness's dataset on African military ethnicity,²⁵ Geddes, Frantz and Wright's dataset on authoritarian transfers of power,²⁶ and Polity IV's dataset on democracy,²⁷ and extended to 2015 using secondary sources.

These descriptive statistics, which confirm the theory, are reproduced in Table 1.2. In this study's 35 cases of military rule, military leaders ceded power to democracies in 23 instances, or two-thirds of the time. On average, these democracies lasted eight years, markedly lower than democracies succeeding other regime types. By contrast, democracy has succeeded the 41 regimes with ethnic armies in only seven instances, or 21 percent of the time; democracies succeeding authoritarian regimes with ethnic armed forces lasted the global average of 11 years. Finally, authoritarian regimes with representative armed forces were most likely to transition to and sustain democracy. Democracy resulted in 13 out of 16 such cases, or over four-fifths of the time. The

²⁴ Chapters 3 and 4 offer more extensive insight concerning precisely how the concepts underlying the typology are constructed and operationalized, mostly from existing data. Suffice it to say that, as with most generalized concepts, the typologies outlined above are ideal types and there exist a number of borderline cases. As a brief example, consider a country such as Algeria, where the military is responsible for selecting the country's leader but tends to remain aloof from all but the most consequential policy decisions. Most datasets, including the one used in this study, classify Algeria as military rule, though military's lack of political involvement is more characteristic of countries ruled by civilian or personalist dictators.

²⁵ See Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State." Dataset available at <https://kristenharkness.com/home/cv-and-publications/> <accessed November 28, 2017>.

²⁶ See Geddes, Frantz and Wright "Autocratic Breakdowns." Data available at <http://sites.psu.edu/dictators/> <accessed November 28, 2017>.

²⁷ See Marshall, Monty., and Keith Jagers. "Polity IV project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2002" University of Maryland (2002). Most recent version of the dataset is available at <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html> <accessed November 28, 2017>.

average duration of democratic regimes following the collapse of authoritarian regimes with representative militaries was 16 years, more than twice the length of regimes experiencing military rule. This evidence is strongly supportive of the argument laid out in the previous section.

In the quantitative chapter of this dissertation, I discuss in greater detail how I constructed this database, and employ rigorous quantitative tests to rule out potential sources of confounding variation, including economic factors, colonial legacies, oil wealth, military spending, ethnic demography, and previous political instability. Cross-nationally, ordinary least squares, logistic regression and survival analysis are each used to test the effect of authoritarian civil-military relations on both the likelihood of a democratic transition and the duration of a democratic settlement. In virtually all the models presented, including various robustness checks, the quantitative evidence is supportive of the theory.

Table 1.2: Democratization Outcomes of African Armed Forces Under Authoritarianism, 1960-

Present					
Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations	Path	<u>Hypotheses</u>		<u>Outcomes</u>	
		<i>Democratic Transition</i>	<i>Democratic Survival</i>	<i>Democratic Transition</i>	<i>Democratic Durability</i>
Military Rule (n=35)	Instability	Moderately likely	Least stable	66%	8 yrs
Ethnic (n=41)	Obstruction	Least likely	Moderately stable	17%	11 yrs
Civil (n=16)	Stability	Most likely	Most stable	81%	16 yrs
Average (n=92)				49%	11 yrs

The case studies in this dissertation are meant to do more than merely test the observable implications of this study’s quantitative analysis. They contextualize, challenge, examine causal mechanisms that are not possible to capture from the available quantitative data, and suggest avenues for further research. As discussed in the previous section, one case is selected according to each institutional type: Nigeria for military rule, Sudan for ethnic armed forces, and Tunisia for representative armed forces. In both Nigeria and Tunisia, key informant interviews with military officials, politicians and academics were conducted to add more information about potential causal processes. The analysis adopts a combination of cross-country comparison and inter-temporal congruence procedures, which strengthen my argument’s external validity and causal claims. A comparison of each of the three cases selected for this dissertation is laid out in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Comparison of Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia on Key Variables and Indicators

Country	Civil Mil Relation	Transition Outcome	Dem Duration (yrs)	GDPk	Ethnic Groups	Religions	Pop.	Life Exp (yrs)
Nigeria	Military	Blocked & Successful	4,17	\$3,005	Hausa (25%) Yoruba (21%) Igbo (19%)	Muslim (50%) Christian (40%) Other (10%)	174 mn	52
Sudan	Ethnic	Blocked	N/A	\$1,753	Arab (39%) Dinka (10%) Beja (6%)	Muslim (70%), Christian (19%) Other (11%)	52 mn	62
Tunisia	Representative	Successful	6	\$4,317	Arab (98%)	Muslim (99%)	11 mn	75
SSA Avg		52%	11	\$1,637				

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators and CIA World Factbook

For Nigeria, the first case study, this project employs *congruence*, which makes use of spatial or temporal variation within a particular case to draw inferences. Nigeria’s particular history contains variation along both of my outcome variables of interest, which makes it ideally suited for congruence procedures. Nigeria’s first military regime, from 1966 to 1979, was followed by a period of democracy that lasted only four years. Its next military regime, which began in 1983, experienced a blocked transition to democracy in 1993 followed by a transition to the country’s current democratic regime in 1999. This history allows for two series of comparisons: one between the military’s role in ending democracy in 1983 and its relative loyalty during the Fourth Republic, and another between the military’s dual decisions to block democracy in 1993 and then permit one in 1998. The inter-case variation on my dependent variable in Nigeria

eliminates variance resulting from cross-country differences. As a result, the congruence procedures I adopt provide a stronger test of the theory than comparative methods alone.²⁸ As discussed in the preceding section, the results of this analysis of Nigeria confirm the central arguments laid out in the dissertation, and offer further insight into the conditions under which military regimes are most likely to cede power, as well as how to ensure the best chances for a lasting democratic settlement.

The other two cases are more conventional, serving both as cross-country comparisons to Nigeria and for causal process tracing. Sudan, like Nigeria, is a large, diverse country with substantial oil wealth and significant ethnic and political divides between a predominantly Muslim north and Christian south. Unlike in Nigeria, however, the main instigator of Bashir's coup was an Islamist political party, the National Islamist Front, and not the armed forces itself. Bashir went on to rule in as a personalist dictator and not at the head of a cabal of military officers. The evidence from the case suggests that Bashir's status as a civilian dictator allowed him to cultivate co-ethnic armies in parallel military institutions and prevented the emergence of a praetorian, politically involved class of officers in Sudan's regular army, two factors which help to explain his long tenure. To illustrate the continuity between the military's role in democratization in northern and sub-Saharan Africa, the dissertation draws on Tunisia as its third and final case. Though distinct from both Nigeria and Sudan in its lack of ethnic diversity,

²⁸ See Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 58-64 and Alexander George and Timothy McKeown. "Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decision Making." *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations* 2, no. 1 (1985), pp. 29-34.

evidence from a wealth of other cases in Africa, as well as the empirical section of the dissertation, suggest that ethnic stacking within the armed forces is a stronger predictor of democratization outcomes than ethnic diversity in the general population.

1.3: Key Concepts: Democracy, Democratization, The Armed Forces

In addition to military rule and ethnic stacking described above, several concepts are of crucial importance to the arguments developed in this dissertation.

1.3.1: Defining Democracy

Democracy is a contested concept. When practitioners discuss democracy, what they often refer to is electoral democracy, or the holding of free, frequent and fair elections. Electoral democracy is indeed an important concept, because, as Michael Bratton argues: “if nothing else, the convening of scheduled multi-party elections serves the minimal function of marking democracy's survival.”²⁹ At times, however, democracy is taken to mean far more. For some analysts, a democratic country must not only have free frequent and fair elections, but also guarantee civil and political liberties; regimes that meet these qualities are often referred to as liberal democracies.³⁰ In addition to civil and political liberties, other scholars have called on the definition of democracy to

²⁹ Michael Bratton, “Second Elections in Africa,” *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 3 (1998), p. 52.

³⁰ See, for example, Fareed Zakaria. “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy.” *Foreign Affairs* (1997), pp. 22-43.

include economic rights typically guaranteed by modern welfare states. Amartya Sen argues “the intensity of economic needs *adds* to – rather than subtracts from, the urgency of political freedoms.”³¹

Following the Polity IV project, I define *democracy* more minimally as “the presence of institutions and procedures which constrain executive action and through which citizens can express effective policy preferences.”³² Polity IV’s definition was chosen for several reasons. First, employing the Polity IV definition allows for a straightforward operationalization of democratic transition and collapse in the quantitative section of this study. In using mixed-method forms of analysis, this type of consideration is far from the least important. Second, the Polity IV project offers the most historically comprehensive database of democracy available, allowing complete coverage of the 1960 to 2015 period considered by this study and the potential for future comparative work to go back even further in time. Finally, given this project’s focus in Africa, a more minimalist definition of democracy is preferable because many African countries that scholars call “democracies” are not liberal democracies and nearly all fail to provide the kinds of economic rights provided in a typical welfare state. The chosen definition therefore provides for a considerable amount of variation on the dependent variable, also an important consideration in quantitative analysis.

1.3.2: Measuring Democratization

³¹ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Anchor Books, 1999), p. 148.

³² See Monty Marshall, Ted Gurr, and Keith Jagers, “Polity IV Project: Dataset Users’ Manual,” (Center for Systemic Peace, 2016).

What is meant by a democratic *transition*? Though the term “transition” may seem by its nature ambiguous, conditions governing transitions between authoritarian and democratic regimes are fairly easy to identify and broadly agreed upon, at least in much of the quantitative literature. In most cases, an authoritarian regime transitions to democracy after a brief interim period during which it conducts elections and, if successful, completes a transfer of power. In some cases, electoral authoritarian regimes slowly adopt procedures that better constrain the executive and offer voters more choices in terms of their leaders. The Polity IV dataset measures democratic characteristics on a positive scale, authoritarian characteristics on a negative scale, and codes transition periods as missing. This allows me to adopt simple coding procedures to account for both of transition types. In most cases, I code a “democratic transition” as occurring when a country in the Polity IV dataset goes from negative to positive, usually but not always after an interim period.³³ In the quantitative section, I further rely on several alternative specifications of “democracy” and “democratic transition” to test the robustness of my argument.

Determining when a *blocked transition* occurs poses more of a challenge. In essence, one must attempt to determine when *potential* transitions to democracy were *prevented* from occurring. Fortunately, cases of blocked transition are also common, largely mirror the cases of transition, and the use of coding procedures from pre-existing data obviates the need for excessive reliance on subjective hypotheticals. First, I consider a transition to be “blocked” when an authoritarian regime enters an interregnum and then

³³ More detailed procedures are laid out in the third chapter.

reverts back to authoritarianism. Second, I consider a transition to be “blocked” when one authoritarian regime succeeds another, under the assumption that the change of power between authoritarian leadership groups also provided a potential opportunity for a transfer of power to a democracy.³⁴ To determine when one authoritarian regime succeeds another, I rely on the work of Barbara Frantz and Joseph Wright, whose dataset is among the first of its kind to measure such types of transitions.³⁵

1.3.3: The Armed Forces

For the purposes of this project, the *armed forces* refer to a country’s military and paramilitary institutions, including militia forces and presidential guards, whose primary responsibility is external defense and the conduct of warfare. The reason for including militia forces and presidential guards in my definition of the armed forces is that in Africa, such forces are often powerfully armed and usurp many of the functions of the regular army. Moreover, defining the armed forces as such distinguishes it from intelligence, secret services, or police, who under authoritarian regimes have roles more concerned with information gathering and the internal maintenance of authoritarian rule. I use the term *military* and at times *army* interchangeably with the armed forces.

³⁴ In a small number of additional cases, an authoritarian regime was overthrown by an insurgency; these were also considered “blocked.”

³⁵ See Geddes, Frantz and Wright, “Autocratic Breakdowns.”

1.4: Contributions and Qualifications

The insights contained in this project are intended to provide insight to a variety of academic and policy audiences. This dissertation ought to be of interest to scholars of democratization, who have generally overlooked and undertheorized the role of the coercive apparatus in giving rise to and ending democratic regimes. Most theories of democratization do not take the military into account. Other factors, including economic prosperity, crisis, inequality, diffusion, international influence, and bargaining between elites and non-elites, are far more widely accepted causes of democratization and democratic collapse. In past scholarship, the armed forces have factored into the democracy equation only rarely, usually as part of approaches that emphasize bargaining between elites and non-elites. Yet even the scholars of democratization who acknowledge the military's importance often devote little attention to explaining the conditions and factors that prompt the armed forces to support or to overthrow authoritarian regimes.³⁶

This dissertation can be considered one among a recent, emerging scholarship intended to fill this gap. The principal goal of this project is to explain the conditions under which the armed forces are likely to support democracy, a subtle but crucial difference from explaining democratization itself. My aim with this dissertation is not to disabuse readers of the notion that the many factors highlighted by scholars in the

³⁶ The two most important examples are Bratton and van de Walle, "Democratic Experiments in Africa" and Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (JHU Press, 1986/2013). Both are considered authoritative works on transitional politics in authoritarian regimes, acknowledge the military's importance, but spend little time systematically analyzing how institutional differences within the military might lead to varying responses in the face of pressure to liberalize.

previous paragraph are important. Rather, with the army's unique status as an elite actor that maintains an overwhelming monopoly on violence, my aim here is to convince the reader that the consent of the armed forces is best viewed as a necessary but not sufficient condition for democratization to occur, to illuminate the contexts in which winning that consent is most likely, and to consider how to prevent the army from acting as a spoiler when it is most likely to pose a threat.

These objectives ought to make this project of interest to contemporary scholars of comparative authoritarianism, military intervention, and military loyalty, whose work this dissertation is indebted to and draws upon. The Arab uprisings, in which the armed forces played an enormous and unanticipated role in shaping the political trajectories of many Middle Eastern countries, generated renewed academic interest in authoritarian civil-military relations.³⁷ As a result, scholars increasingly acknowledge that the monopoly on violence wielded by the armed forces makes it a particularly crucial actor within the authoritarian elite, and have begun to debate how civil-military relations influence military decisions about whether to intervene in politics.³⁸ A consensus that has emerged from this literature is that mass, popular, non-violent protests provide an important incentive for military defection from authoritarian regimes by raising the costs of repression.³⁹ Yet not all armed forces possess an equal will to repress, and, while the

³⁷ See, for example, Gregory Gause, III. "Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability." *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 4 (2011), pp. 83-84.

³⁸ Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 1, 2012) and Zoltan Barany, "The Role of the Military," *Journal of Democracy* 22, vol. 4 (2012), pp. 24-35.

³⁹ See Bellin, Op Cit. See also Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (Columbia University Press, 2012).

current scholarship recognizes the importance of the internal character of the military, the extent to which generalized theory is possible and no consensus exists concerning which factors are most important.⁴⁰

This project makes at least two important contributions to this literature. First, it is one of the few recent studies that examines how civil-military relations influence transitional politics in Africa. Though there is nothing inherent in the argument presented limiting its scope just to the African continent, this project makes an argument for a more cautious approach to generalization than some of the extant scholarship.⁴¹ It draws heavily on a long line of Africanist scholarship on patrimonialism, militarism and ethnic politics, and builds on the work of several scholars who apply quantitative or mixed-methods to this vast qualitative literature.⁴² Generally speaking, African countries are on average less wealthy, more ethnically diverse, and less densely populated than countries in other regions of the world. More importantly for the purposes of this study, the armies

⁴⁰ See Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton University Press, 2012). Where Barany rejects the idea of a more generalized theory, recent scholarship has begun to use cross-national data in an attempt to draw more universal conclusions. See Ore Koren, "Military Structure, Civil Disobedience, and Military Violence." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 4 (2014), pp. 688-712 and Erica De Bruin. "Preventing Coups d'État: How Counterbalancing Works," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2017), 0022002717692652.

⁴¹ For example, Terrence Lee argues that the four cases he chooses in Asia are a "useful heuristic to explain the variance in outcomes in the recent North Africa and Middle East uprisings." He maintains that the wide variation in regime types, his book's focus on most similar-cases, and his use of process tracing methods to test causal mechanisms provide strong evidence in favor of his book's argument and compensates for a lack of regional variation. Lee's core contention is that the military's defection in the face of mass protest depends on whether authoritarian institutions are personalistic, which increases the likelihood defection by disaffected elements of the authoritarian elite, or power sharing, which decreases the likelihood of defection. See Terrence Lee, *Defect or Defend: Military Responses to Popular Protests in Authoritarian Asia* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), p. 6.

⁴² This dissertation is particularly indebted to the work of Michael Bratton, Nicolas van de Walle, and Kristen Harkness, whose methodological approaches and intellectual insights were crucial to formulating the approach used here. See Bratton and Van De Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* and Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State." See also Kristen Harkness, *The Origins of African Civil-Military Relations* (Princeton University Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, 2012).

of Africa have a very different institutional history than those in other parts of the world. Almost all of Africa's armies were inherited directly from the colonial regimes that controlled them. For these colonial powers, Africa's armies were not benign instruments of external self-defense, but forces of internal oppression and social control. European powers deliberately ignored promoting national identity, and instead recruited soldiers from either dominant, or more often, peripheral and minority ethnic groups to form the basis of colonial armies. This colonial legacy has played an important role in making African armies what they are today. Compared to armies in most other places of the world, Africa's armies are on the whole more ethnically divided, less well equipped, and guided more by informal patronage relationships than by professional service ethics. They oppress civilians, contain rebellions, and fight against one another far more than they participate in interstate wars. Many armies in other regions of the world do share many of these characteristics, but no other region is dominated by the same central tendencies. By limiting the regional focus on the analysis, the dissertation employs middle range theory to relax assumptions of unit heterogeneity that characterizes much early cross-national work while providing for more nuanced generalizations in a smaller array of cases.

Second, the project contributes to active debates on the causal mechanisms through which authoritarian civil-military relations impact regime change. The argument that the factionalism within military regimes both facilitates and hinders democratization is a synthesis of earlier work. Likewise, the finding that ethnic stacking has different consequences depending on whether or not the regime is civilian or military-led

demonstrates the importance of intervening cleavages and interaction effects. The causal framework advanced here, which begins with the choices of authoritarian leaders and ends with democratization outcomes, offers a more contingent, path dependent framework for thinking about the processes through which civil-military relations influence transitional politics.

Finally, this dissertation is intended to provide insight to policymakers interested in maintaining political stability, encouraging democracy and fostering more meritocratic security institutions in Africa. For those concerned with predicting the military's role in future political transitions in Africa, it suggests that two pieces of information—the ethnic stacking within the military, and whether or not the military rules as an institution—are particularly crucial. More broadly, it suggests that policymakers ought to adopt a variety of contingent strategies to encourage liberalization and military transformation depending on an authoritarian regime's type of civil-military relations. Authoritarian regimes with civil-military regimes or experiencing military rule are both vulnerable to mass popular protest, but democracies succeeding military rule do not generally last long unless officers are given strong incentives to refrain from continued political intervention. For authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies, mass popular protests are most likely to be repressed, and policymakers should consider alternative strategies to promote liberalization.

1.5: The Chapters to Come

The rest of this project is divided into seven additional chapters. Chapter 2 offers a brief review of the literatures on democratization and military intervention, paying particular attention to two key issues in the literature. First, the chapter contextualizes the role of the military in the overall literature on democratization, establishing the consent of the military as a necessary but not sufficient condition in order for democratization to occur. Second, it summarizes the existing debate concerning how the internal character of the armed forces might or might not cause the armed forces to defect from authoritarian regimes or upend emerging democracies. Factors that past and present scholars argue might shape affect the internal character in ways that might have consequences for democratization include: professionalism, capabilities, patrimonialism, authoritarian regime type, military rule, and ethnic politics.

Chapter 3 advances this project's argument, drawing upon literatures on military rule and ethnic politics to develop a theory of authoritarian civil-military relations and democratization in Africa. I argue that choices by African authoritarian leaders have led to three different types of authoritarian civil-military relations, each with distinct cleavages that affect an army's support for regime changes. Like scholars of comparative authoritarianism, I argue that the cleavages between officers who govern and those who do not distinguishes military rule from other civil-military relations types, and that these tensions help explain why the result of military rule is often democracy. However, I side with scholars in the Africanist tradition in arguing that military regimes rarely lay the foundation for stable democracy, instead often leading to further cycles of intervention.

Drawing on the arguments of those who study military ethnicity, I argue that civilian dictatorships with ethnically-stacked armed forces are most resistant to pressures to democratize, albeit less likely to interfere in an emerging democracy due to the lack of a politicized officer corps and expansive corporate interests that tend to characterize military rule. It is therefore in civilian-led authoritarian regimes without ethnically stacked militaries that the military is most likely to support a transition to stable democratic rule.

Chapter 4 employs descriptive statistics and cross-country regression analysis to test the observable implications of this project's theory. The first section discusses how the data were collected and how the dissertation's key concepts were operationalized to render them suitable for statistical analysis. The second section examines descriptive statistics along the study's independent and dependent variables, and conducts medium-n statistical analysis to link individual countries within this dissertation's typology to the hypothesized outcomes. The final section of the chapter uses ordinary least squares, logistic regression and survival analysis with a fully specified set of control variables. The preponderance of evidence in this section confirms the study's argument that associates military regimes with democratic instability, authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies to democratic obstruction, and authoritarian regimes with representative armies to stable democracy.

Chapter 5 begins the case portion of the dissertation by analyzing the military's role in transitional politics under Nigerian military rule. The chapter employs congruence procedures to examine the role of the military in African democratization at four critical

junctures with divergent outcomes on the project's dependent variables. Comparing Nigeria's aborted attempt at democracy from 1979 to 1983 and the blocked transition in 1993 to the successful transition to the Fourth Republic in 1999, the chapter validates the dissertation's argument on how tensions between praetorian and professionalized officers affect the transitional politics of military rule. The analysis presented in the chapter suggests that the incorporation of formerly politicized officers into Nigeria's political elite, mass retirements of remaining politicized officers, and better ethnic balance within the top echelons of Nigeria's armed forces were crucial to ensuring the stability of Nigeria's democracy.

Chapter 6 examines the military's role in sustaining authoritarianism in Sudan, where Omar al-Bashir rules as a civilian dictator with military institutions dominated by a northern, Arab elite. The case supports the project's contention that civilian dictators with ethnic armies are particularly likely to prevent opportunities to democratize. In his capacity as a civilian dictator, Bashir was able both to stack the regular army, popular defense forces, and militia groups with Arab co-ethnics. The case suggests that these decisions both generated considerable willingness among Sudan's armed forces to be used as an instrument of repression and diminished the military's ability to enact a successful coup to topple the regime.

Chapter 7 discusses the military's role in sustaining democracy in an ethnically homogenous Tunisia, which was ruled for over 50 years by civilian dictators who did their best to remove the armed forces from politics. As in Sudan, a strong police apparatus and parallel security institutions helped discourage a military coup. Unlike in

Sudan or Nigeria, however, the Tunisian armed forces were rarely used to repress civilians or fight internal wars. The evidence from the case suggests that the military's decisions to defect from the regime in 2011 was a product both of its lack of will to repress mass protestors as well as institutional concerns motivated by the desire of the army to improve its standing vis-à-vis other security forces. Without notable ethnic or political divisions, the Tunisian army has also refrained from intervening in Tunisia's democracy. The findings validate this project's contention that representative armies are most likely to result in stable democracy.

Chapter 8 concludes by offering a brief comparative analysis of all three cases, listing a series of policy recommendations, and suggesting avenues for further research. The comparative analysis summarizes the differences in civil-military relations under authoritarianism in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia, and then illustrates how those differences facilitated diverging reactions at critical junctures crucial to the democratization process in each nation. The second section uses insight from this project to list a series of policy recommendations aimed at Nigerian statesman, democracy activists, and the international community considering how they might best promote democracy while maintaining political stability. The final section considers the study's limitations and offers suggestions and ideas for follow-up research.

Though the topic of the armed forces was once among the most studied subjects in Africanist literature, in recent years it has been neglected in favor of the study of insurgencies, rebel groups, and social movements. As the following pages hope to illustrate, a grasp of African military institutions and their relationships to the regimes

they serve can provide equally illuminating insight into the politics of transition, bargaining, and conflict.

Chapter 2

Civil-Military Relations, Authoritarianism and Democracy in Africa: Debating the Mechanisms

Despite a widespread recognition of the armed forces as a key veto player in transitional politics, the role of the army is frequently ignored by scholars of democratization. Other factors, such as economic growth, crisis, inequality, diffusion, international influence, and bargaining between elites and non-elites are much more well-established causes of democratic transition and democratic failure. Most often, the role of the military is discussed as a factor in transitional politics in state-centric theories of democratization, which more closely examine the mechanisms through which bargaining between the authoritarian elite, protestors, and outside actors lead to regime change. Yet even this literature often fails to consider the military as an actor independent of the authoritarian elite. Among the scholarship that does pay more careful attention to the role of civil-military relations in transitional politics, which has experienced a renaissance in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, there exist a host of plausible explanations, but little consensus, particularly on the causal mechanisms linking pre-existing civil-military relations to future political transitions.

This chapter summarizes the extant literature and places the contributions of this project within it. In the next section, I briefly summarize non-state-centric approaches to democratization, in which the armed forces are generally considered a non-factor. In the third section, I summarize state-centric approaches to democratization, in which the army

is at times considered important but where few scholars have conducted rigorous inquiry of the military's motivations and how it might differ from other state or elite actors. In the fourth section, I draw on the broader literature on militarism and military intervention, as well as more recent scholarship on military loyalty and defection, to weigh the merits of several factors that might influence the military's support of democratization. These factors include: professionalism, capabilities, patrimonialism, authoritarian regime type, military rule, and military ethnicity. A final section offers a brief summary of the current gaps in the literature.

2.1: Non-State-Centric Approaches to Democratization

The oldest and most empirically established theories on the causes of democratization can be generally categorized as non-state-centric. In non-state-centric approaches, state structures and state institutions play little role in democratization processes. Instead, transitions to and from democracy are influenced by domestic and international social forces. Though the non-state-centric literature is vast and empirically rich, it is poorly integrated and offers little insight into the causal mechanisms that lead to concrete political change. The absence of any emphasis on the role of state institutions in democratization means that the potential role of military institutions is altogether ignored.

One of the most robust empirical findings in the social sciences is the link between economic development and democratization, a core tenet of modernization theory. In 1959, Seymour Martin Lipsett first observed that factors such as wealth,

industrialization, urbanization and education levels are far higher in democratic countries.⁴³ Since Lipsett's time, numerous other studies have confirmed the relationship between development and democratization, though precisely how and why development causes democratization remains the subject of significant debate. Where early modernization theorists tended to argue that wealth, education, modernization and democratization were inextricably linked,⁴⁴ later scholars have found that the correlation between modernization and democratization is most robust with respect to GDP growth and per capita energy consumption.⁴⁵ In a landmark article published in 1997, Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi argued that economic development did not cause democracy directly, but prevented relapses into authoritarianism after transitions occurred.⁴⁶ Though Przeworski and Limongi's argument is the subject of empirical controversy,⁴⁷ the basic overall correlation between economic development and democratization remains one of the most widely accepted findings in the field of comparative politics.

⁴³ Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 01 (1959), pp. 69–105.

⁴⁴ Ibid; see also Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (Free Press, 1958); Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton University Press, 1960) and Deane Neubauer, "Some Conditions of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 61, no. 4 (1967), pp. 1002–9.

⁴⁵ Irma Adelman and Cynthia Taft Morris, "A Factor Analysis of The Interrelationship Between Social and Political Variables and Per Capita Gross National Product," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 79, no. 4 (1965), pp. 555–78 and Robert Jackman, "On the Relation of Economic Development to Democratic Performance," *American Journal of Political Science* 17, no. 3 (1973), pp. 611–21.

⁴⁶ Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts," *World Politics* 49, no. 02 (1997), pp. 155–183.

⁴⁷ Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes, "Endogenous Democratization," *World Politics* 55, no. 4 (2003), pp. 517–49 and David Epstein, Robert Bates, Jack Goldstone, Ida Kristensen, and Sharyn O'Halloran, "Democratic Transitions," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (2006), pp. 551–69.

Other theories of democratization focus less on development itself, but on the social forces behind it. In addition to economic development more generally, both economic crisis⁴⁸ and social mobilization in the form of mass protests have been found to correlate with transitions to democratic rule.⁴⁹ Recent scholarship has found that Muslim countries are less democratic, though scholars debate whether the correlation is due to gender inequality,⁵⁰ oil wealth,⁵¹ or simply a characteristic of the Arab world rather than an issue with Islam more generally.⁵² More controversial social forces that have been proposed as explanations for democratization include ethnolinguistic diversity,⁵³ Christianity,⁵⁴ and colonial legacies.⁵⁵

Finally, scholars have stressed an array of systemic or systems level factors that influence democratization. Dependency theorists once argued that the concentration of global power and wealth in Western countries impeded the democratic development of

⁴⁸ Karen Remmer, "The Political Impact of Economic Crisis in Latin America in the 1980s." *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 3 (September 1991), pp. 777–800 and Mark Gasiorowski, "Economic Crisis and Political Regime Change: An Event History Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 89, no. 4 (1995), pp. 882–97.

⁴⁹ Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) and Jan Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁵⁰ Steven Fish, "Islam and Authoritarianism" *World Politics* 55, no. 1 (2002), pp. 4–37.

⁵¹ Michael Ross, "Oil, Islam, and Women." *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (2008), pp. 107–23.

⁵² Alfred Stepan and Graeme B. Robertson, "An 'Arab' More Than a 'Muslim' Democracy Gap." *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 3 (2003), pp. 30–44.

⁵³ Gasiorowski, "Economic Crisis and Political Regime Change,"; Robert Barro, "Determinants of Democracy." *Journal of Political Economy* 107, no. 6 (1999), pp. 158–83; Steven Finkel, Aníbal Pérez-Liñán; Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990–2003," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (2007), pp. 404–39.

⁵⁴ Przeworski et al, *Democracy and Development*; Barro, "Determinants of Democracy"; Michael Ross, "Does Taxation Lead to Representation?" *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 2 (2004), pp. 229–49;

⁵⁵ Barro, "Determinants of Democracy"; Nathan Jensen and Leonard Wantchekon, "Resource Wealth and Political Regimes in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no. 7 (September 1, 2004), pp. 816–41.

the global periphery,⁵⁶ findings that are echoed in some contemporary studies of globalization and trade.⁵⁷ Other scholars argue that pressure from international donors or the ascendance of Western liberal order helped facilitate democratization after the end of the Cold War.⁵⁸ Related arguments, for which there exists significant empirical support, stress the importance of “snowball” effects or the “diffusion” of ideas from neighboring countries or regional organizations in facilitating democratic transition and ensuring democratic survival.⁵⁹

Though there is not a complete consensus on the precise mix of non-state-centric factors that influence democratization, the vast scholarship and strong empirical evidence highlights their importance. Perhaps the most comprehensive cross-national study, conducted in 2010 by Jan Teorrell, finds that economic crisis, diffusion, regional organizations, peaceful demonstrations, Muslim populations, size, and economic modernization each trigger, prevent, sustain, or impede democratization in various respects.⁶⁰ Michael Coppedge, who conducted a comprehensive review of a wide array of

⁵⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 1979) and Kenneth Bollen, “World System Position, Dependency, and Democracy: The Cross-National Evidence,” *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 4 (1983), pp. 468–79.

⁵⁷ Quan Li and Rafael Reuveny, “Economic Globalization and Democracy: An Empirical Analysis.” *British Journal of Political Science* 33, no. 1 (2003), pp. 29–54; Roberto Rigobon and Dani Rodrik, “Rule of Law, Democracy, Openness, and Income.” *Economics of Transition* 13, no. 3 (2005), pp. 533–64.

⁵⁸ Finkel et al, “The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building”; Thad Dunning, “Conditioning the Effects of Aid: Cold War Politics, Donor Credibility, and Democracy in Africa.” *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (2004), pp. 409–23.

⁵⁹ Przeworski et al, *Democracy and Development*; Kristian Gleditsch and Michael Ward, “Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization.” *International Organization* 60, no. 4 (2006), pp. 911–33; and Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, “Linkage versus Leverage. Rethinking the International Dimension of Regime Change.” *Comparative Politics* 38, no. 4 (2006), pp. 379–400.

⁶⁰ Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization*, p. 145.

methodological approaches to democratization, is more circumspect, concluding that the most robust predictors of democracy are per capita income and diffusion from neighboring countries.⁶¹

Non-state-centric factors are important causes of democratization, yet they are limited in at least two crucial respects. First, because most of the data supporting them is at the cross-national level, they provide poor insight on the causal mechanisms linking international and domestic factors to political change. One reason that scholars cannot agree on which non-state-centric factors are most crucial to democratization is because, as Coppedge argues, “quantification encourages the use of thin concepts and theories, which widen the gap between theories and evidence.”⁶² Without the development of more complex, theoretically integrated concepts—which are more difficult to measure—it becomes difficult to rule out an increasing number of plausible explanations. The problem is compounded by the fact that, as quantitative approaches have proliferated, the combinations of dependent and independent variables, concepts, samples, and models tend to lead to increasingly overdetermined analytical approaches with few conclusive findings. Even more than fifty years after Lipsett’s findings were first reported, Coppedge himself admits: “we know that democracy and income are associated, but we do not know why.”⁶³

⁶¹ Michael Coppedge, *Democratization and Research Methods* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 325.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

Second, while non-state-centric factors may be necessary conditions for democratization to occur, they are not sufficient. Non-state-centric factors can apply considerable pressure on state actors to enact transitional change, but a transition's success or failure of a transition is ultimately determined by the state itself. As Bratton and van de Walle argue: "A complete theory of political agency would also attend to the endeavors of ordinary citizens, the interplay between elite and mass actions, and the unintended as well as the planned consequences of political events."⁶⁴ In order to formulate a more robust, integrated theory of democratization, one must account for contingency. This requires combining the influence of non-state-centric factors with an understanding of how regimes and the political actors within them conceptualize their interests and respond to pressures for transitional change.

2.2: State-Centric Approaches

In contrast to non-state-centric approaches, state-centric approaches conceive of democratic transition and consolidation as contests between the elite, state actors and other interests such as the poor, protesters or the international community. The power to determine democratization outcomes usually rests with the elite, which is constrained by a variety of factors in considering whether to repress movements towards democratic change. Such factors include capital specificity and the level of economic inequality, the

⁶⁴ Bratton, Michael, and Nicholas van de Van de Walle. *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 22.

need to extract rent in order to provide for the protection of territory, and institutional or political barriers to collective action. Some state-centric approaches consider the armed forces a crucial actor whose interests may or may not differ from other state actors or those in the authoritarian elite. Most, however, simply assume that the authoritarian elite controls the coercive apparatus, and that the armed forces share the same interests as the elite. This is an oversight that scholars are increasingly coming to recognize.

Perhaps the earliest example of a state-centric approach to explaining democratization can be found in the work of Barrington Moore, originally published in 1966. He conceived of democratization as a contest between monarchs, aristocrats, peasants, and the urban bourgeoisie.⁶⁵ For Moore, the emergence of democracy in the United States, England and France is explained by the existence of a powerful urban bourgeois, who circumvented a landed aristocracy and peasants *en route* to establishing liberal democracy. Another example is the related theories of state formation advanced by Charles Tilly and Jeffrey Herbst, who each argue that modern states in Europe and Africa, respectively, are driven by elites who extract rent in order to control territory.⁶⁶

Perhaps the most enduring and most influential example of the state-centric approach is the so-called “transitions” or “positional” paradigm advanced by Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter. In a comprehensive, four-volume examination of

⁶⁵ Barrington Moore. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

⁶⁶ Charles Tilly, “War and State Making as Organized Crime,” in *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Peter B. Evans, and Theda Skocpol, (Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 169–85 and Jeffrey Herbst. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

transition from authoritarianism to democracy across a broad range of countries, O'Donnell and Schmitter conceive of transitions to democracy as caused by bargaining and competition between regime hard-liners and soft-liners responding to intense political pressure from opposition groups and protestors.⁶⁷ Subsequent variants of the transitional school use formal modeling,⁶⁸ assume a multitude of actors,⁶⁹ or examine the transitional politics of particular countries or regions.⁷⁰ In Bratton and van de Walle's *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, which remains one of the definitive works on African democratization, transitions to democracy are conceived of as a three-stage process, beginning with mass protests, continuing with liberalization reforms, and finally resulting in democratization, with domestic political factors and inter-regime dynamics playing a particularly crucial role.⁷¹

A final variant state-centric approach is to conceive of democratization in economic terms, using a combination of formal models and game theory. For these theorists, democratization comes about as a result of bargaining between the elite and the

⁶⁷ Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (JHU Press, 1986).

⁶⁸ Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Gary Marks, "Rational Sources of Chaos in Democratic Transition." *American Behavioral Scientist* 35, no. 4-5 (1992), pp. 397-421; Daniel Sutter, "Settling Old Scores: Potholes along the Transition from Authoritarian Rule," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39, no. 1 (1995), pp. 110-28.

⁶⁹ Barry Weingast, "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of the Law." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 2 (1997), pp. 245-63; Josep Colomer, *Strategic Transitions: Game Theory and Democratization* (JHU Press, 2000).

⁷⁰ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*; John Higley and Richard Gunther, *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America." *Comparative Politics* 23, no. 1 (1990), pp. 1-21.

⁷¹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*, op. cit.

poor over how to redistribute public goods.⁷² One of the most influential works in this tradition is that of Carles Boix, who argues that economic inequality and capital mobility promote democracy by affecting the incentives of the poor to protest and the wealthy to repress.⁷³ Boix combines formal modeling with empirical evidence that includes three different samples covering the periods from 1816 to 1992, as well as case studies in Switzerland and the United States. In an equally influential work, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson propose a slightly more complex theory of democratization, elaborating how democratic transition and consolidation occur not just as a result of economic inequality or economic structure, but also civil-society strength, economic and political crisis, and the structure of a country's political institutions.⁷⁴

State-centric theories, in particular more contemporary approaches, are theoretically integrated, consistently supported by cross-country empirical evidence, and consider the strategic logic and causal linkages between structural conditions and choices by individual agents and actors. Yet, as this brief survey illustrates, these approaches vary considerably in how they conceptualize the state and assess the interests of the actors who compose it. In most state-centric theories, the state or, at times, an "elite" are conceptualized as one actor with a coherent set of interests, or further disaggregated into "hard-liners" who favor continued authoritarian rule and "soft-liners" who oppose it. This characterizes both the work of earlier theorists such as Moore and Tilly, but also more

⁷² Yi Feng and Paul J. Zak. "The Determinants of Democratic Transitions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 2 (1999), pp. 162–77; Carles Boix. *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁷³ Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution*, pp. 3-10.

⁷⁴ Acemoglu and Robinson, Op. Cit.

recent ones such as Boix, Acemoglu and Robinson. Only sporadically is the military considered as an agent with interests that potentially diverge from the rest of authoritarian elite. Even more rarely are these interests given comprehensive treatment, but it is clear from scholars that do explicitly examine the armed forces that it is considered a particularly consequential veto player of democratization from within the state.

Take, for example, the work of O'Donnell and Schmitter. They argue that the defining feature of political transition is uncertainty, where “standard actors ... are divided about their ideals and interests, and hence, incapable of coherent collective action.”⁷⁵ Amidst this seeming chaos, the fear of a coup hangs “like a sword of Damocles” above a polity on the brink of potential institutional change.⁷⁶ In their formulation, this fear causes the military to act as a “swingman” between soft-line elites acting in solidarity with protesters and hard-liners seeking to repress them.⁷⁷ Yet they make little effort to consider in which direction the military will “swing,” saying only that in order for a transition to democracy to occur the military must “be made to accept normal institutional status; modify messianic self-image, given an honorable role in accomplishing national goals, and made impervious to enticement of civilians who turn to them when frustrated by democratic means.”⁷⁸

Bratton and van de Walle fare somewhat better. They call the connection between the armed forces and democratic transition trajectories “among the most striking

⁷⁵ O'Donnell and Schmitter., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, p. 4.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 25-32

revealed by [their] study.”⁷⁹ Their observation that legacies of past military intervention and ethnic patronage relationships between soldiers and regime elite are potential causes of blocked democratic transitions are significant departure points for this dissertation. Despite this observation, the seven pages Bratton and van de Walle devote to the subject, which covers a brief period from 1990 to 1994, remains one of the only cross-national comparative analyses of the armed forces in African democracy of the past quarter century.

No doubt, the armed forces are a key veto player within the regime elite, and an understanding of the military’s incentives, motivations and interests for supporting transitions to and from democracy is a potentially important component of any broader state-centric theory. As Samuel Finer argues, the combination of size, specialization and firepower give the armed forces “overwhelming superiority in the means of applying force.”⁸⁰ The monopoly on violence means the armed forces possess unique leverage among elite actors to determine the outcome of political transitions. It is ironic that, despite the fact that the coup d’état is the most prominent form of irregular regime change in the world,⁸¹ and that it is responsible for 75 percent of all failures of

⁷⁹ Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, p. 211. The authors add that in most countries the military did not abandon the incumbent straightaway, but only once the incumbent lost political legitimacy. This observation is very reminiscent of O’Donnell and Schmitter, who highlight the military’s will to repress as the key variable in determining which side to support.

⁸⁰ Samuel Finer, *Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (Westview Press, 1988), p. 5.

⁸¹ Naunihal Singh, *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), p. 3.

democratic governments,⁸² most state-centric theories of democratization simply fail to take the military into account.

More recently, a lack of adequate theory on the role of the military in democratic transitions was one of the key reasons that Middle East scholars failed to understand or foresee the divergent trajectories that many countries would take in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Most scholars simply assumed that that the political and institutional history of the region meant that soldiers in Arab countries would inevitably side with the regime in face of mass uprisings. Instead, the role of the military in quelling popular discontent varied dramatically, with soldiers in Egypt and Tunisia initially offering their support to protestors, the Libyan and Yemenese armies fracturing, and the armies of Syria and Bahrain siding with the regime.⁸³ As Gregory Gause writes, one of the main reasons scholars missed the Arab Spring was most “assumed that no daylight existed between the ruling regimes... an assumption that obviously proved incorrect.”⁸⁴

This dissertation contributes to an emerging scholarship on the politics of military defection that has emerged in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in considering civil-military relations a variable of crucial consequence to democratization. The point of departure for the analysis is, due to their effective monopoly on the means of violence, the armed forces are the consummate veto players in processes of democratization. It assumes that significant analytical leverage to understand the opportunities, pathways,

⁸² Nikolay Marinov and Hein Goemans. “Coups and Democracy.” *British Journal of Political Science* p. 44, no. 04 (October 2014), p. 804.

⁸³ See Zoltan Barany, “The Role of the Military,” *Journal of Democracy* 22, vol. 4 (2012), pp. 24–35.

⁸⁴ Gregory Gause, III. “Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability.” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 4 (2011), pp. 83-84.

and outcomes of political transitions can be gained through a deeper understanding of what motivates the armed forces. It is informed by recent scholarship, but also by an older generation of literature on militarism and military intervention. This scholarship rarely investigated democratization as an explicit outcome variable, but provides some basis with which it is possible to begin a broader discussion on how the military influences African transitional politics.

2.3: Civil-Military Relations and Democratization

Until recently, how civil-military relations influence processes of democratic transition and consolidation was a topic neglected by scholars. Nevertheless, other outcome variables, including the military itself, has been a subject of considerable scholarly inquiry. Vast literatures exist which examine the logic and causes of military coups, which interrogate the phenomenon of military rule, and which debate military professionalism, intervention and effectiveness.

More recently, a number of scholars have taken up the call by Gause to pay closer attention to how the coercive apparatus affects transitional politics. Most of these studies examine military defection in the face of popular opposition and focus on the Middle East,⁸⁵ though several use broader cross-country analysis or comparisons from other

⁸⁵ Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (2012), pp. 127-149; Zoltan Barany, "The Role of the Military"; Derek Lutterbeck, "Arab Uprisings, Armed Forces, and Civil-Military Relations." *Armed Forces & Society* 39, no. 1 (2013), pp. 28-52; Michael Makara. "Coups-proofing, Military Defection, and the Arab

regions of the world.⁸⁶ Only a few examine the role of the armed forces in the consolidation of emerging democracies,⁸⁷ though more work exists here on Africa.⁸⁸ Echoing the general democratization literature, a general consensus has emerged regarding the importance of large, non-violent protests in encourage military defection, at times leading to democracy.⁸⁹ As Bellin observes, “to use lethal force against hundreds or thousands of peaceful protestors carries the whiff of a massacre. And this poses a series threat to the image and prestige of the military and may very well undermine morale and discipline within the corps.”⁹⁰ The larger the demonstration, the higher the cost of repression.

Large peaceful protests may be important in encouraging military defection, but the consensus is that they are not enough. During the Arab Spring, for example, Tunisia’s armed forces showed next to no appetite for repressing mass peaceful protestors, while the capacity for brutality among Syria’s armed forces was nearly limitless, and those of

Spring." *Democracy and Security* 9, no. 4 (2013), pp. 334-359; Risa Brooks, "Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2013), pp. 205-220; Sharon Nepstad. "Mutiny and Nonviolence in the Arab Spring Exploring Military Defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria." *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013), pp. 337-349; Holger Albrecht and Dorothy Ohl, "Exit, Resistance, Loyalty: Military Behavior during Unrest in Authoritarian Regimes." *Perspectives on Politics* 14, no. 01 (2016), pp. 38-52.

⁸⁶ Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (Columbia University Press, 2012); Ore Koren, "Military Structure, Civil Disobedience, and Military Violence." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 4 (2014): 688–712; Zoltan Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolution and Why* (Princeton University Press, 2016).

⁸⁷ Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁸⁸ Mathurin Hounnikpo, *Guarding the Guardians: Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Governance in Africa* (Routledge, 2016); Kristen Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coup Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 4 (2016), pp. 587–616.

⁸⁹ Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*; Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness"; Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolution*.

⁹⁰ Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness," p. 132.

Egypt somewhere in between. Africa's armies show similar variation: the armed forces of Niger, for example, balked at being asked to crack down on civilians in the early 1990s, whereas the army of neighboring Chad continued to commit human rights abuses as Idriss Déby first postponed and then held flawed elections that rubber-stamped his rule.⁹¹ There is therefore also agreement that the "internal structure of the military" is also an important determining factor in hardening the military's will to repress, and perhaps even shaping opportunities for political mobilization in the first place.⁹² Here scholars differ significantly in their selection, analysis and definition of which factors matter most.

Drawing upon both more recent scholarship as well as much of the older literature in comparative politics, African politics, and civil-military relations, I group existing explanations into six categories that encapsulate much of the current debate: explanations centered around professionalism; those centered around military capacity; those centered around neo-patrimonial relationships between authoritarian and military leaders; those centered around variation in authoritarian forms of rule more generally; those centered around military rule specifically; and, finally, debates on the influence of military ethnicity. I review each of these explanations below.

⁹¹ William F. Miles, "Tragic Tradeoffs: Democracy and Security in Chad." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 33, no. 1 (1995), pp. 57-61.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 131. See also Risa Brooks, "Military Defection and the Arab Spring" *Oxford Encyclopedia of Politics* (2017), pp. 18-19.

2.3.1: Military Professionalism and Democratization

Among the earliest attempt to grapple with the question of military obedience to democratic civil authority can be found in the “normal” theory of civil-military relations, pioneered by Samuel Huntington. During the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution, the growth of the nation-state, and the rise of democratic ideals led to the slow but steady replacement of aristocratic and mercenary-led armies with sophisticated bureaucracies who conceived of war as a science. Huntington argues that the creation of a professionalized military bureaucracy is essential to ensuring the soldier obeys the statesman.⁹³

For Huntington, there are three central aspects of military professionalism. First, a professional soldier cultivates specialized expertise in the management of violence. For Huntington, the “direction, operation and control of a human organization whose primary function is the application of violence is the peculiar skill of the officer... It distinguishes the military officer *qua* military officer from other specialists which exist in the modern armed services.”⁹⁴ The second aspect of the professional soldier is a sense of responsibility to the society in which the soldier serves. Like a doctor or lawyer, the professional soldier is motivated by the technical love of his craft that provides a specialized function in modern society, his behavior “governed by a complex mass of regulations.”⁹⁵ The final aspect is the corporate character of officership, or the existence

⁹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 8-10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 12.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 15.

of the officer corps as an autonomous legal and social unit, one that includes not “just the official bureaucracy, but also societies, associations, schools, journals, customs and traditions.”⁹⁶ The fact that the professional soldier spends much of his life embedded in these norms and traditions further isolates the soldier from the society he serves.

No doubt, Huntington’s concept of professionalism is intuitively appealing. *The Soldier and the State* is required reading for military cadets and students of strategic studies across the world, and considered by many to be the seminal work in the field of civil-military relations. Huntington’s combination of expertise, service ethic, and corporate integrity still represents the embodiment of what most professional officers aspire to be.

In addition, the notion of officers as competent professionals is part of what led many early scholars to believe that the military was an inherently modernizing force. In one of the first-ever studies on the role of the military in the process of modernization, Lucian Pye observes: “[T]he good soldier is also to some degree a modernized man. Thus it is that the armies in the newly emergent countries come to play key roles in the process by which traditional ways give way to more Westernized ideas.”⁹⁷ In *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Huntington agrees: “In the early stages of political modernization, the military plays a highly modernizing and progressive role... The middle class makes its debut on the political scene not in the frock of the merchant but in the epaulettes of a

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

⁹⁷ Lucian Pye, “Armies in the Process of Political Modernization.” *European Journal of Sociology* 2, no. 1 (1961), p. 88.

colonel.”⁹⁸ As the world decolonized and militaries, particularly in Africa, began to take on a greater political role, it was thought that the military’s advantages in organization and Western-orientation would enable it to govern benevolently.⁹⁹

Yet many scholars find Huntington’s concept of professionalism and its implications for the military’s role in political development and modernization problematic. Some reject Huntington’s notion of corporateness, arguing that a degree of civilian interference in military affairs may be both inevitable and desirable. Morris Janowitz argues that the need for logistic, engineering and administrative skills makes modern military institutions more bureaucratic, representative of civil society, and full of politically aware leaders.¹⁰⁰ In his analysis of Lincoln, Clemenceau, Churchill, and Ben-Gurion, Eliot Cohen argues that the most astute civilian leaders act with more strategic foresight and tactical awareness than the generals that serve them. During the Battle of Britain, for example, Churchill once brought in a 29-year-old junior analyst to make the case that the Germans were likely using radio signals to help target their bombs and persuade his War Cabinet to adjust tactics accordingly.¹⁰¹

Others dispute the idea that either expertise in violence or a professional service ethic leads to soldiers to become obedient or public-minded civil servants. There was

⁹⁸ Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 201-203.

⁹⁹ James S. Coleman and Belmont Brice, “The Role of the Military in Sub-Saharan Africa.” In *Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries*, edited by Johnson, James (Princeton University Press, 2015).
Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations: An Essay in Comparative Analysis* (University of Chicago Press, 1964).

¹⁰⁰ See Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Free Press, 1971)

¹⁰¹ Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (Simon and Schuster 2002, pp. 95-97).

perhaps no critic of Huntington more strident than Samuel Finer, who argued that aspects of military professionalism can lead to military intervention in politics. Military expertise in violence, for example, can erode civilian control if military leaders feel as if they alone are competent to judge military requirements.¹⁰² In addition, soldiers may feel a sense of loyalty more to an abstract notion of the state than to any particular civilian government. Finer cites the German conception of the Reich, as well as Douglas MacArthur's open criticism of Harry Truman, which sparked a major crisis in America's civil-military relations, to emphasize that major military leaders have at times only questionable loyalty to the civilians they serve. Pointing out that the majority of states in existence have experienced coups, Finer questions whether it is even "natural" for the armed forces to obey civilian power, given the military's superior organization and arms compared to civilian groups.¹⁰³

Finally, and particularly problematic for this study, scholars argue that Huntington's notion of professionalism is overly influenced by experience of the United States and Western countries, and not on an understanding of military institutions as they function across the rest of the world. Though they held a monopoly on violence, the armies that African nations inherited from the British and French were used primarily as instruments of internal social control rather than to defend external borders, making them far from Huntington's abstract ideal of military professionalism.¹⁰⁴ Robin Luckham

¹⁰² Samuel Finer, *Man on Horseback*, p. 21.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 4

¹⁰⁴ For broader insight into how a focus on control over people rather than over territory influenced state formation in Africa, see Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

maintains “[i]n Africa states and military establishments were initially externally imposed, offering little scope for ‘internal forging of mutual constraints between rulers and ruled;’ as in Europe (Tilly 1985, 84). Hence, in retrospect, the ideas that democracy and civilian control could be engineered, interconnected with development, and could be assured by military professionalism seem more than a little naïve.”¹⁰⁵ Contrary to what early theorists of civil-military relations believed, the military’s strengths in organization, discipline and technological sophistication did not make the military itself a natural vehicle for modernization. In the decades following independence, militaries across Africa seized power, but failed to realize substantive gains in either democracy or development. By the early 1980s, all but a handful of Africa’s governments were repressively authoritarian, more than half of these governments were military in origin, and coups or coup plots had occurred in nine out of ten African states.¹⁰⁶

These critiques illustrate that expertness, social responsibility, and corporate components of professionalism are in fact distinct concepts, and it is possible to make varying arguments for and against the relative weight of each. The critiques of Janowitz and Cohen, for example, question the extent to which the military ought to exist autonomously from society, whereas those of Finer focus on whether military expertise and values really do prevent the military from political interference. In a widely cited

¹⁰⁵ Robin Luckham, “The Military, Militarization and Democratization in Africa: A Survey of Literature and Issues,” *African Studies Review* 37, no. 02 (September 1994), p. 14; Charles Tilly, “War and the Power of Warmakers in Western Europe and Elsewhere 1600-1980,” in *Global Militarization*, edited by Peter Wallenstein, Johan Galtung and Carlos Portales (Westview Press, 1985).

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Johnson, Robert Slater and Pat McGowan “Explaining African Military Coups d’État, 1960-1982,” *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1983), p. 627.

1999 review article, Peter Feaver argues that future research “should focus on teasing out the explanatory force of different component factors of what has been called professionalism and leave the synthetic concept at the rhetorical level, where it belongs.”¹⁰⁷ Following Feaver’s call, this project considers more discrete factors and how they might impact the military’s role in transitional politics. Fortunately, there are no dearth of factors to choose from.

2.3.2: Military Capacity and Democratization

Some scholars have cast off the broad idea of military professionalism in favor of a narrower one focused on the first element of Huntington’s definition: whether or not military expertise in the management of violence begets democratization. For Huntington, only when “the functions of an officer become distinct from those of the politician and policeman” does the soldier become relieved of the desire or the capacity to interfere in politics.¹⁰⁸ Leaders in emerging democracies seeking to foster the loyalty of the armed forces ought to “[g]ive them toys. That is, provide them with new and fancy tanks, planes, armored cars, artillery and sophisticated electronic equipment... New equipment will make them happy and keep them busy trying to learn how to operate it.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Peter Feaver, “Civil-Military Relations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999), p. 235.

¹⁰⁸ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁹ Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 252.

The idea that investments in operational capabilities render soldiers loyal to democratic institutions are perhaps most enthusiastically supported by members of the armed forces themselves. In numerous interviews with military officials conducted for this project, military officials expressed their conviction that investments in training, equipment, and improvements in the technological sophistication of the armed forces were crucial in keeping soldiers content, professional, and committed to democratic governance. The belief in the intrinsic benefits of increasing the operational capacities of partner militaries is evident in U.S. military's engagement with Africa. According to a U.S. Africa Command's [AFRICOM] 2016 posture statement, the first among a long list of key objectives is "strengthening democratic institutions," which is to be achieved by employing "security force assistance and exercises as decisive efforts to build partner capacity."¹¹⁰ This is not empty rhetoric. Between 2006 and 2013, military assistance to Africa doubled, from less than \$300 million to more than \$600 million. Though the U.S. only has one official base on the continent, it maintains as many as 60 smaller facilities spread across 34 countries, from which it conducts drone strikes, joint special force operations, and a multitude of other security cooperation activities.¹¹¹

Though intuitively appealing, the idea that military capabilities beget armed forces that respect democratic norms and principals of civilian control is as controversial as the notion of professionalism itself. I have already mentioned how Samuel Finer

¹¹⁰ David Rodriguez, "U.S. Africa Command 2016 Posture Statement" (U.S. African Command, 2016), p. 2.

¹¹¹ Nick Turse. "The US Military's Best Kept Secret." *The Nation*, November 17, 2015. <https://www.thenation.com/article/the-us-militarys-best-kept-secret/> [accessed February 13, 2017].

critiqued Huntington's argument by drawing upon the examples of Japan and particularly Germany in World War II, both of whom had very sophisticated armies and were nevertheless very repressive regimes. Other more contemporary examples, from Soviet Russia to an increasingly competent China, also provide cases contradicting the notion that capable armed forces are inherently democratic ones. In a prominent 2015 work, Caitlin Talmadge argues that in fact there exists significant variation in battlefield performance among authoritarian regimes, and that much of this variation can be explained by whether the regime faces internal or external threats.¹¹²

Africanist scholars likewise observe that military capabilities in Africa appear to vary widely between both the continent's democratic and autocratic regimes.¹¹³ Ghana, Tunisia and South Africa, for example, are each democracies with highly capable armed forces. Yet the armies of Sierra Leone and Namibia are among the most poorly equipped and underfunded on the continent, and the army of Botswana is virtually non-existent. Authoritarian armies show similar variation; Algeria and Ethiopia possess some of the strongest armies in Africa, while Zimbabwe and Mauritania are among the weakest. At the very least, armed forces with considerable operational capabilities appear possible in both authoritarian and democratic contexts, falsifying Huntington's contention that military expertise begets civilian control.

¹¹² Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictators Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Cornell University Press, 2015).

¹¹³ See Samuel Decalo, "Modalities of Civil-Military Stability in Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 27, no. 4 (1989), pp. 547-578; Kristen Harkness, *The Origins of African Civil-Military Relations: Ethnic Armies and the Development of Coup Traps*, (Unpublished Princeton University Doctoral Dissertation, 2012).

Empirical studies of the importance of the role of the size and strength of the military in causing soldiers to intervene in politics likewise offer a mixed assessment. Studies which draw most of their data from cases post-1960, or which focus exclusively on Africa, suggest either no relation or a positive relationship between military size, spending as a percentage of the national budget, and spending per soldier on military coups.¹¹⁴ Collier and Hoeffler suggest the mild positive correlation they find could be due to a protection racket, where regimes faced with a military predisposed to intervention will attempt to buy the military off in a fruitless attempt to maintain loyalty.¹¹⁵ Thus, spending may help ensure that the armed forces refrain from intervening on material grounds, but with the unintended consequence of increasing the capacity and desire of the military to intervene.

The fact that numerous cases falsify Huntington's contention and that the empirical evidence is inconclusive suggests that there is little obvious relationship between military capabilities and democratization as commonly understood and measured by most analysts. The most likely explanation is that a military's ability to fight a war simply has no effect on its support for democracy. It is also possible, as contended by Collier and Hoeffler, that military spending has effects that cancel one another out. A final possibility is, as with the concept of professionalism, the concept of "military

¹¹⁴ J. Craig Jenkins and Augustine J. Kposowa. "Explaining Military Coups d'État: Black Africa, 1957-1984." *American Sociological Review* (1990), pp. 861-875; Augustine Kposowa, and J. Craig Jenkins. "The Structural Sources of Military Coups in Postcolonial Africa, 1957-1984." *American Journal of Sociology* (1993), pp. 126-163; Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, *Coup Traps: Why Does Africa Have So Many Coups d'État?* Department of Economics, University of Oxford, 2005.

¹¹⁵ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. "Military Spending and the Risks of Coups d'État." Department of Economics, University of Oxford, 2007.

capabilities” will have to be further disaggregated if scholars are to tease out any compelling influences. Commonly used measures of military capabilities such as size and funding (either on an absolute, per capita, or per soldier basis) do not capture all the variables relevant to military effectiveness, such as technological sophistication or combat experience. Some aspects of military capabilities—such as equipment, training, or salaries and benefits—might be more influential than others. Few studies have examined these differences in great detail, in part because of a lack of available data.¹¹⁶

Given the prominence of professionalism and military capabilities in the existing literature, this study follows the existing scholarship by proxying for military size and influence in the quantitative analysis. Its findings generally concur with scholars who argue that military capabilities exert no obvious relationship to transitions to and from democracy. Further attempts to define and measure the concept of “military capability” would require a considerable amount of additional theorizing and effort to find and code observable data. Though an admirable undertaking, a more detailed examination of military capabilities is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

¹¹⁶ See Jonathan Powell, "Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 6 (2012), p. 1022.

2.3.3. *Patrimonial Armies*

Following the Arab Spring, scholars of Middle Eastern politics offered another explanation for military defection from authoritarian regimes: the existence of patrimonial relationships between authoritarian elites and the armed forces. In contrast to approaches that emphasize capabilities, here the argument is that non-merit-based recruitment practices foster loyalty to authoritarian elite based on patronage relationships between soldiers and dictators. In Eva Bellin's formulation: "where the military is organized along patrimonial lines, where military leaders are linked to regime elites through bonds of blood or ethnicity or sect, where career advancement is governed by cronyism and political loyalty rather than merit, where the distinction between public and private is blurred and, consequently, where economic corruption, cronyism, and predation is pervasive, then the fate and interests of the military's leadership become intrinsically linked to the date longevity of the regime."¹¹⁷ Echoing both Huntington and Weber, the opposite of patrimonialism is referred to as an army's level of institutionalization, or the extent to which the armed forces is governed by a clear set of rules, established career paths, and merit-based promotion.¹¹⁸

As maintained by Belin, the patrimonialism / institutionalization duality does appear to explain a substantial amount of the variation in the behavior of the armed forces towards popular protestors during the Arab Spring. In Tunisia, the army was small, practiced meritocratic recruitment, and removed from politics, which encouraged it to

¹¹⁷ Belin, "Reconsidering the Robustness," p. 133.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. See also Derek Lutterbeck, "Arab Uprisings," pp. 31-32.

defect from the regime. In Egypt, the army practiced merit-based recruitment but was the beneficiary of a substantial amount of economic largess from the regime, which made the calculation concerning whether or not to defect more ambivalent. In other Arab militaries, in particular those of Libya, Bahrain, and Syria, the armed forces were patrimonially linked to the regime, which explains the decision to defect.

To what extent might the level of patrimonialism explain the variation in military choices to defect from authoritarian regimes across the rest of Africa? On the one hand, the Africanist literature is rife with arguments about how the patrimonial relationships that pervade Africa inhibit political development. Jean Francois Bayart famously described patron-client relationships in Africa as “politics of the belly,” referring to the tendency of Africa’s elite to use public resources for private consumption among cronies and kinship networks.¹¹⁹ Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz attribute the violence and underdevelopment in Africa compared to the rest of the world to system of patrimonialism defined by “lack of governmental and administrative efficiency, institutionalization, disregard for formal political and economic rules, and universal resort to personal gratification and vertical solutions to societal problems.”¹²⁰ Bratton and Van de Walle maintain that patrimonialism is “the *core* feature of politics in Africa,” and observe that virtually all authoritarian states in Africa combine absolute power in the

¹¹⁹ See Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Longman, 1993).

¹²⁰ Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (International African Institute, 1999), p. xix.

hands of one ruler or strong man, the extensive use of patron-client relationships, and the use of state resources for political legitimation.¹²¹

However, the pervasiveness of patrimonial institutions in Africa, both within the armed forces and in African governments themselves, means that analyses with a sole focus on whether there exist patrimonial relationships between authoritarian leaders and African armies have limited explanatory power. Bratton and van de Walle are sensitive to this issue. They qualify their argument that most of Africa's regimes are patrimonial with the observation: "That virtually all of African regimes could be viewed as neo-patrimonial should not obscure the significant variation in political institutions that evolved across different states in the region."¹²² As they observe, very few, if any, African armies escape patrimonial relations altogether. Even in authoritarian regimes with armies that were widely considered to be free from political influence, such as those in Tunisia or Zambia, patronage-client relationships were common between authoritarian elite and top military officers. Moreover, patrimonial relationships pervade armies in both democratic and authoritarian contexts. From democracies in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire to dictatorships in the Congo and Mauritania, a persistent source of military mutiny in Africa is due to neglected pay, poor barracks conditions, and a lack of investment in operational capabilities by elites who use the funds intended for such purposes for private ends.

¹²¹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*, p. 62.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Equally as important, the concept of patrimonialism as it is used to explain variation in military support for democratic institutions is overstretched. In his definition, Middle East scholar Derek Lutterbeck lists four factors that characterize a “low level” of institutionalization within the armed forces: security forces based on tribal or family ties to the regime, ideological security forces, politicized security forces, and favoritism and corruption in security forces.¹²³ Yet is it not likely that each of these forms of patrimonialism operate through distinct causal mechanisms, each of which might have different implications for the circumstances under which an army might choose to support or undermine an authoritarian regime? Like Huntington’s notion of professionalism, patrimonialism is an intuitively appealing but misleading idea because it encompasses several distinct but related concepts.

To explain the stance of the African armies towards democratization requires a more nuanced understanding of continental civil-military relations than is provided by the patrimonialism. Because the characterization of “patrimonial” could be used to apply to virtually every African army, the presence of patrimonialism itself is not enough to explain the wide variation in support for regime change. Moreover, because the term “patrimonial” encompasses multiple, related concepts, more refined concepts should yield more specific insight that is easier to operationalize. This dissertation will thus consider other factors with more direct causal mechanisms linking authoritarian civil-military relations to democratization outcomes.

¹²³ Lutterbeck, “Arab Uprisings,” p. 33

2.3.4: Authoritarian Regime Type

It is possible that the differences in the armed forces' support for democracy are due to differences in the structure of the authoritarian regimes under which they serve. Since the early 1950s, scholars have interrogated what authoritarian regimes are, the differences between them, and how these differences affect their ability to persist. Initial studies focused their inquiries on the nature of totalitarianism as a form of dictatorship where the regime dominated all aspects of human life.¹²⁴ Realizing that totalitarianism represented more of an absolutist form of dictatorship than an explanation of the distinction between dictatorships of various kinds, later scholars propose more varied typologies.¹²⁵ Though some permutations exist, contemporary scholarship tends to classify authoritarian regimes into four basic categories: monarchies, who rely on their family and heredity kinship networks to maintain power; military dictatorships, where the armed forces rules the country; single or dominant party dictatorships, where power rests in the hands of civilian-dominated single-party; and personalist dictatorships, where a single individual controls the state apparatus.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1973). See also Zbigniew Brzezinski and Carl Friedrich, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Harvard University Press, 1965) and Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (Macmillan, 1972).

¹²⁵ Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000) and Paul Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics* (St. Martin's Press, 2000).

¹²⁶ See Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999), pp. 115–44; Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes*; José Cheibub, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited," *Public Choice* 143, no. 1–2 (2009), pp. 67–101; and Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set." *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 02 (2014), pp. 313–331.

Despite the shared understanding that the continent is dominated by patrimonial rule, Africanists too have historically devoted much ink to explaining distinctions between varying types of authoritarian regimes. The variations here are enormous, but most classifications loosely follow the distinctions made in the comparative literature, with different subcategories added and subtracted by various scholars. For Ruth Collier, post-independence African regimes are classified into military regimes and one-party rule.¹²⁷ Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg argued that authoritarianism in Africa was principally personalist, and offered the typology of prince, autocrat, prophet and tyrant to explain distinctions in authoritarian leadership styles.¹²⁸ Bratton and van de Walle identified four basic types of authoritarian regimes in Africa: settler oligarchies, military oligarchies, competitive one-party systems, and plebiscitary one-party systems.¹²⁹ For Naomi Chazan, Peter Lewis and their colleagues, the relevant types of authoritarian regimes are administrative hegemonic, party-mobilizing, party centralist, personal-coercive, and populist.¹³⁰

In the broader literature, there is strong empirical evidence that differences in the nature of the authoritarian regime influence both the circumstances of a transition and the length and stability of an emerging democracy. Military regimes result in democracy 62 percent of the time, compared to 45 percent of single-party regimes, 36 percent of

¹²⁷ Ruth Collier, *Regimes in Tropical Africa: Changing Forms of Supremacy, 1945-1975* (Univ of California Press, 1982), pp. 95-117.

¹²⁸ Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant* (University of California Press, 1982).

¹²⁹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*.

¹³⁰ Naomi Chazan, Peter Lewis, Robert Mortimer, Donald Rothchild, and Stephen John Stedman. *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*. 3rd edition. (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

personalist regimes, and 13 percent of monarchies.¹³¹ About one third of transitions from military rule since 1945 have resulted in stable democracy, compared to only 16 percent of personalist regimes.¹³² Much of this evidence, particularly on the influence of authoritarian regime type on the length of democracy, is descriptive and has not been subject to more rigorous empirical testing. In Africa, the effect of authoritarian regime type on the probability of a democratic transition and democratic duration has yet to be systematically examined.

There are, however, at least two problems with using authoritarian regime type as the unit of analysis through which to analyze the impact of authoritarian civil-military relations on transitional politics. First, the existence of so many typologies makes it difficult to justify and select a particular one. Given the descriptive evidence, a logical starting point would be to use the military rule, single-party, personalist and monarchy typology advanced by Barbara Geddes and her colleagues. However, a number of scholars, including Bratton and van de Walle, reject the use of “personalism” as an analytical category, noting that virtually all authoritarian regimes contain some aspects of personalism.¹³³ Indeed, the transition and survival rates of personalist and single-party regimes appear to be similar, and may have limited utility in explaining democratization outcomes in Africa. For example, Benin, Togo, Libya, and Malawi each experienced

¹³¹ Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright and Eric Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 (2014), pp. 313-331.

¹³² Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization?" p. 136.

¹³³ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*; Cheibub Ghandi and Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited"; and Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell. "Pathways from Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 1 (January 22, 2007), pp. 143-57.

authoritarian rule classified as “personalist” by the Geddes and Wright dataset in the early 1990s, but only Malawi and Benin ultimately transitioned to democracy.

Monarchies, too, are a problematic category. Though transition patterns in monarchies may be different than other types of authoritarian regimes, there are few remaining monarchies left in the world. Monarchies have experienced only eight transitions since World War II, one of which resulted in democracy.¹³⁴ In Africa, there are two remaining monarchies out of 54 countries: Swaziland and Morocco. Such a limited sample size makes it difficult to draw general conclusions. Selecting an authoritarian typology among the many that have been advanced by Africanist scholars would pose even more of a challenge due to their nearly limitless permutations. Is there any reason to suspect that party-centralist and party-mobilizing regimes lead to different democratization outcomes? What about between “princes” and “autocrats?”

Second, and more importantly, it is likely that different classifications of authoritarian regime types simply mask deeper institutional factors that foster transitional change. One of these factors is likely to be the structure of civil-military relations. Given that the goal of this project is explain the role of the military in democratization in Africa, a better approach might be to look much more specifically at different modalities of authoritarian civil-military relations themselves, rather than starting with more general differences based on the comparative literature. This allows a potential theory to develop a more direct and convincing causal logic linking authoritarian civil-military relations to

¹³⁴ Geddes, Frantz and Wright, “Autocratic Breakdown,” p. 326.

democratization outcomes. Here, the literature on comparative authoritarianism does give us one potentially fruitful avenue of inquiry: the distinction between military-led and civilian-led authoritarian regimes.

2.3.5: Legacies of Military Rule

There is overwhelming evidence, at least in the general literature, that military regimes experience different transition outcomes than other authoritarian regimes. As already mentioned, close to two-thirds of military regimes since 1945 have ended in democracy, compared to a 40 percent democratization rate for other regime types.¹³⁵

There are at least two competing explanations for this disparity. In one view, military rule tends to give way to democracy more frequently than other forms of autocracy because the absence of political parties, legislatures or other forms of institutions makes them less able to credibly commit to power sharing deals with loyalist friends, who might otherwise act to overthrow the regime. By “giving up his absolute powers to select members of the ruling clique into government positions, the dictator can more credibly guarantee a share of power and the spoils of office over the long run to those who invest in the existing institutions rather than subversive coalitions.”¹³⁶ Military rulers can solve this commitment problem by instituting single-party rule or initiating a democratic transition.

¹³⁵ Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright and Eric Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown," p. 325; Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization?" p. 136.

¹³⁶ Beatriz Magaloni. "Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule." *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 4-5 (2008), pp. 717-718.

The absence of effective tools for sharing power may help explain why military regimes tend to be so unstable compared to other forms of authoritarian rule, as well as their decline in recent years compared to single-party or hybrid authoritarian regimes.¹³⁷ What the theory does not explain is why military regimes result in democracy in some cases but not in others. Presumably, military dictators often face a choice between attempting to transmute themselves into a single party or whether to assent to free, fair and competitive elections in which they face a greater risk of losing power. Why military rulers appear to opt more often for multiparty elections rather than cling on to power, the central concern of this dissertation, is unaccounted for.

In another well-established view, the more frequent democratization rate for military regimes stems from divisions within the armed forces generated as a result of military rule. Armies are institutions that above all else tend to prefer corporate unity, but an army in power is also army divided. In any military regime, only a small percentage of officers serve in political roles, while the vast majority of officers remain in traditional military functions like commanding infantry units, maintaining supplies and equipment, or training for potential combat engagements.¹³⁸ The process of governing a country can be damaging to a military's morale, particularly if the challenges of maintaining power cause coups, arrests, or other purges within the army.

¹³⁷ Beatriz Magaloni and Ruth Kricheli. "Political Order and One-Party Rule." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2010), pp. 123–43.

¹³⁸ Eric Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments* (Prentice Hall 1976); Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization?"

Fortunately, the armed forces have the option to return to the barracks, unlike other authoritarian leaders.¹³⁹ A number of scholars of the armed forces observe that the military will often decide to preserve corporate unity by retreating to the barracks rather than risk a costly intra-military conflict that could devolve into civil war.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, the regime's monopoly on violence and control over the political system could allow it to negotiate an exit on more favorable terms than in situations in which it simply serves as a client to an authoritarian leader. For lower ranking officers, leaving power might be especially appealing because they can often continue with their military careers.¹⁴¹ And even military leaders might prefer a return to democracy over a continuation of authoritarian rule, where they might face a higher risk of being violently ousted by other officers and face post-tenure punishment.¹⁴²

Barbara Geddes models the consensus that emerges within the armed forces over whether or not to interfere in politics in terms of game theory.¹⁴³ Assume two factions within the military: a minority faction of officers who covet power, and a majority who prefers the barracks. Despite these different preferences, each would prefer to act together. The minority would prefer to intervene, but would be far worse off without support from the majority, because the intervention would face a lower probability of

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Nordlinger, Op. Cit.; Geddes, Op. Cit and Singh, Naunihal. *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

¹⁴¹ Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics* (University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 69.

¹⁴² Alexandre Debs and H. E. Goemans, "Regime Type, the Fate of Leaders, and War," *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010), pp. 430-445; Alexandre Debs, "Living by the Sword and Dying by the Sword? Leadership Transitions in and out of Dictatorships," *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2016), pp. 73-84.

¹⁴³ Geddes "What Do We Know About Democratization?," p. 127.

success and failure could mean retirement, discharge, or even execution for treason. The majority would prefer not to intervene, but could face the same costs as the unsuccessful conspirators in the event of a failed coup attempt, and face sanction from the conspirators if a coup is successful and the majority did not support it. This is known as a “coordination” or “battle of the sexes” game: once the military is either in or out of power, neither faction can improve its preferred outcome without the other’s consent.¹⁴⁴

However, this relatively benign view of military rule does not square with much of the Africanist scholarship. At one extreme, many scholars do not give much credence to the idea that the effects of military rule in Africa have been systematically different than other forms of authoritarianism. Luckham argues that Africa’s civilian autocracies are just as oppressive as the continent’s military ones and points out that there appear to be wide variations in the nature of military rule itself. He concludes that “existing typologies tell us little about what soldiers actually do with their power: how they govern, on behalf of whom, through which instruments of governance, and with what consequences for those they govern.”¹⁴⁵

The more dominant view is one that associates military rule with factionalism, political violence, and inhibited democratization. In 1970, Ruth First observed a pattern whereby army intervention into politics established old boys’ networks among African militaries that led to coups and counter-coups with “increasingly political aims.”¹⁴⁶ In

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 128, see also Singh, *Seizing Power*.

¹⁴⁵ Luckham, “The Military, Militarization and Democratization in Africa,” p. 40-44.

¹⁴⁶ Ruth First, *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d’état* (Penguin Books, 1970), p. 19.

addition, military officers have presided over some of Africa's most destructive and repressive dictatorships. Of Uganda's Idi Amin, whose regime killed hundreds of thousands, Samuel Decalo writes that the dictator's "colossal brutalities defy cataloguing and need no review. As crimes against humanity they are at the same rank as Nazi Germany's."¹⁴⁷ In Nigeria, the 1966 seizure of power by General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi led to a counter-coup that killed Ironsi, followed by the defection of numerous officers, and ended in a fratricidal civil conflict which killed millions. Writing in 1996, Seth Kandeh observed, "most instances of military withdrawal from direct political involvement have been abrupt and short-lived."¹⁴⁸ Reinforcing Kandeh's point, African history is littered with examples of cases where the army retreated from politics only to seize power several years later, including Ghana (1979 and 1981), Niger (1992 and 1996), Comoros (1996 and 1999), and Burundi (1994 and 1997). At the very least, the idea that the military will always withdraw from politics in order to preserve corporate unity is falsified: at times, the armed forces is divided over whether or not to stay in or leave power, and these divisions lead to retirements, purges, executions, defections, and even civil war.

The view of military regimes as divided, pre-disposed to violent conflict, and obstacles to democratization also has a measure of empirical support. In their survey of African transitional politics between 1990 and 1994, Bratton and van de Walle note 12 of

¹⁴⁷ Samuel Decalo, "African Personal Dictatorships." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 23, no. 02 (1985), p. 222.

¹⁴⁸ Jimmy Kandeh, "What Does the 'Militariat' Do When It Rules? Military Regimes: The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia." *Review of African Political Economy* 23, no. 69 (1996), p. 397.

the 14 relevant cases where a democratic transition was blocked occurred in countries with previous histories of coups or military rule. They observe that “an institutional legacy of military involvement in politics seemed to predispose security forces to intervene during transitions and to incline subsequent transition outcomes to fall short of democracy.”¹⁴⁹ Bratton and van de Walle’s assertion is backed by a broader empirical literature, which finds coups tend to be clustered together in time and space, and that military intervention tends to create institutional and network-based incentives for further coups or other forms of military interference in politics.¹⁵⁰ More recent work by Rollin Tusalem from a sample of 44 countries likewise provides evidence that the politicization of the military is associated with declines in the quality of subsequent democratic rule.¹⁵¹

In part, these conflicting interpretations may be due to differences in how scholars use the concept of military rule. The more recent literature distinguishes between rule by a military regime, in which a group of military officers chooses the country’s leader and maintain significant influence over policy; and a personalist military dictatorship, in which a serving or former military officer serves as dictator but the military’s political role is marginalized.¹⁵² The finding that military rule is overall more likely to democratize is strongest with respect to military regimes. The distinction between

¹⁴⁹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, p. 215.

¹⁵⁰ A number of cross-national studies finds that past military intervention in politics is highly predictive of future intervention. See Collier and Hoeffler, “Coups Traps”; Belkin and Schofer, “Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk;” and John Londregan and Keith Poole, “Poverty, the Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power.” *World Politics* 42, no. 02 (1990), pp. 151-183.

¹⁵¹ Rollin Tusalem, “Bringing the Military Back In: The Politicisation of the Military and its Effect on Democratic Consolidation.” *International Political Science Review* 35, no. 4 (2014), pp. 482-501.

¹⁵² Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization”; Geddes, Frantz and Wright, “Autocratic Breakdown” and Nam Kyu Kim and Alex Kroeger, “Regime and Leader Instability Under Two Forms of Military Rule,” *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 1, pp. 3-37.

personalist and military regimes is usually not made in the Africanist literature, and whether these two sorts of regimes experience different democratization outcomes has never been empirically verified.

The literature on military rule thus presents an intriguing puzzle. On the one hand, there is evidence that in some respects, military regimes are more likely than other forms of authoritarianism to result in democracy. On the other, military regimes are frequently characterized as prone to factionalism, political instability, and forestalled attempts at democracy, particularly in Africa. Are the findings of comparativists about the more benign nature of institutionalized military rule applicable to Africa? Are democratic regimes that succeed military rule more likely to last or more likely to be cut short as a result of a legacy of previous military governance?

These questions and the causal logic behind them are further investigated in this dissertation. This study's empirical section draws on the data of Geddes, Frantz and Wright to investigate whether military regimes are more likely to end in democracy, and whether military regimes affect the prospects for survival of democracies that may succeed them. In addition, this study's Nigerian case study section more closely examines the causal processes at work to see if they are more reflective of the arguments made by those who view military rule as detrimental to democracy or those who are more favorable. So far as the author is aware, this study is the first to empirically test the influence of military rule on both democratic transition and consolidation outcomes in Africa. Ultimately, as I will elaborate on in further detail in the next chapter, I offer a

theoretical synthesis between scholars who disagree on whether the legacy of military rule has been favorable or unfavorable to democratization.

2.3.6: *Military Ethnicity*

The cross-national literature historically finds very little evidence that ethnicity, broadly defined, influences military intervention, either in Africa or otherwise. In most cross-national studies of military intervention, ethnicity is either specified as fractionalization, which measures the overall number of ethnic groups in a country, or ethnic dominance, which measures the percentage of the population of the largest ethnic group. Some studies have found ethnicity measured as such to be correlated with military involvement in politics.¹⁵³ Most studies, however, have found either no relationship or a negative relationship.¹⁵⁴

The lack of consistent empirical findings has meant that until recently, the prevailing wisdom among scholars was that military intervention in politics was best explained by economic or political opportunity structures. Collier and Hoeffler, for example, dismiss the negative relationship they find between ethnic dominance and coup plotting, arguing that Africa's ethnic diversity makes it less characterized by ethnic dominance than other reasons and concluding that predominantly economic and not

¹⁵³ Kposowa and Jenkins, "The Structural Sources of Military Coups."

¹⁵⁴ See Robert Jackman, "The Predictability of African Coups d'État" *American Political Science Review* 72, no. 4 (1978), pp. 1262-1275; Thomas Johnson, Robert Slater and Pat McGowan "Explaining African Military Coups d'État"; Collier and Hoeffler, "Coups Traps."

social conditions cause coups.¹⁵⁵ In their landmark article on the causes of civil war, James Fearon and David Laitin sum up the logic behind this consensus by arguing that ethnic antagonisms and nationalist sentiments are too common to reliably distinguish the small number of cases where war breaks out.¹⁵⁶

Nevertheless, the idea that ethnic divides, particularly within the military, profoundly influence transitions is a common theme in the literature on African politics. Many African regimes inherited armed forces from colonial powers with recruitment skewed towards various ethnic groups, and have many times since independence changed recruitment policies to favor one group or another. The French, for example, deliberately recruited ethnic groups they considered to be more warlike into the ranks of colonial armed forces, including Berbers in Morocco, the Kabré in Togo, and the Malinké in Guinea.¹⁵⁷ The skewed representation directly presaged further patterns of political instability. In 1963, Sylvanus Olympio became the first ever African head of state killed in office, a victim of a coup masterminded mainly by Kabré army officers who were incensed at Olympio's refusal to incorporate their demobilized co-ethnics from the French army into the country's incipient military institutions.

African leaders have also commonly manipulated ethnic representation within their armies, either in response to previous imbalances or in order to shore up political support. In Liberia, a coup attempt by General Thomas Quiwonkpa led then-president

¹⁵⁵ Collier and Hoeffler, "Coups Traps," p. 16.

¹⁵⁶ James Fearon and David Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003), p. 76.

¹⁵⁷ Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press, 1985), pp. 447-451.

Samuel Doe to expel soldiers of Quiwonpka's Gio and Mandingo ethnic groups and to recruit his armed forces strictly from Doe's own Krahn ethnicity. This act of exclusion allowed Quiwonpka's protégé Charles Taylor and other rebel leaders to recruit their forces from the Gio and Mandingo, resulting in 15 years of intermittent civil war, during which up to a fifth of the nation's population was killed.¹⁵⁸

These observations are backed by more recent empirical evidence using data more closely aligned with the kinds of processes observed by earlier scholars. For Daniel Posner, to capture the contribution that ethnic heterogeneity makes to policymaking requires "an index of fractionalization that reflects the groups that are actually doing the competing over policy, not the ones that an ethnographer happens to identify as representing distinct cultural units."¹⁵⁹ Posner constructs an index of politically relevant ethnic groups and finds that African countries with more such groups have experienced poorer economic growth outcomes than others. Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer and Brian Min extend Posner's logic into the study of political violence, showing how the more ethnic groups are excluded from state power, the more likely conflict is to erupt.¹⁶⁰

These more recent works suggest that the role of ethnicity is likely much more complicated than suggested by simple statistical models of fractionalization or dominance. As Kristen Harkness argues:

¹⁵⁸ See Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Roots of an African Civil War* (Hurst, 2001).

¹⁵⁹ Daniel Posner "Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2004), p. 853.

¹⁶⁰ Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (2010), pp. 87-119.

The ethnic composition of the military is thus not a reflection of society at large, but the result of a series of political decisions and tactics which may or may not be a consequence of underlying social diversity. Thus, even if a clear relationship existed between the ethnic composition of the military and coups...we would not necessarily expect that relationship to hold when examining the overarching relationship between nation-wide ethnic and cultural diversity and coups. We would also expect the mechanisms linking ethnic politics, via their operation within military institutions, to political instability to be far more complex than currently theorized.¹⁶¹

In Harkness's view, military intervention is not a direct product of ethnic divisions within society, but of explicit decisions by political leaders to structure their armed forces along ethnic lines. It could be that ethnic divides affect a military's support for dictatorship or democracy only when the military itself becomes a product of ethnic contestation.

Several more recent works, both in the broader literature and in African studies, suggest there is something to this observation. Writing in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Gregory Gause pointed out that the Syrian, Bahraini, Saudi Arabian and Jordanian armies may have remained loyal to their governments because "the regime represents an ethnic, sectarian or regional minority and has built an officer corps dominated by that overrepresented minority."¹⁶² Using a database of 97 civil disobedience campaigns between 1972 and 2012, Ore Koren's work shows that militaries that discriminate against the recruitment of certain groups are far more likely to be involved in violent crackdowns and mass killings of protestors.¹⁶³

In Africa, there is evidence that armies fragmented along ethnic lines are both more likely to block democratization attempts and to end emerging democratic regimes.

¹⁶¹ Kristen Harkness, *The Origins of African Civil-Military Relations*, p. 18.

¹⁶² Gause, "Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring," p. 84

¹⁶³ Koren, "Military Structure."

During the 1990s, Hutu-dominated militaries in Rwanda, Kabré-dominated armies in Togo, and the Arab-dominated armies of Sudan each acted to block or forestall a democratic transition. In their study, Bratton and Van de Walle find that the military was least likely to countenance threats to institutional privilege if the incumbent political leader was an ethnic patron, noting that all cases of antidemocratic military intervention fit this pattern.¹⁶⁴ Using a unique dataset put together from consulting archives in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Senegal, and Kenya, Harkness shows that where new democracies with armies dominated by one ethnic group experienced the election of a leader from a different ethnic group, coups resulted within four years in 75 percent of cases.¹⁶⁵ Across all other cases, coups resulted within four years less than 20 percent of the time.

Thus, the evidence appears to be turning against the consensus of earlier generations of empirical scholars. Crude measures of ethnicity have little effect on political outcomes, but other measures, such as politically relevant ethnic groups or ethnic exclusion, do appear to be deeply related to processes of political violence and political change. The new generation of empirical scholars and older generation of scholars of African politics can agree: in no institution do choices by authoritarian leaders to politicize ethnicity appear to have more profound consequences for democratization than in the military.

¹⁶⁴ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, p. 216

¹⁶⁵ Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State."

This dissertation follows in the tradition of the more recent scholarship in empirically investigating the impact on military ethnicity on transitional politics. Drawing upon the work of Africanists such as Van de Walle and Harkness, the dissertation investigates the effect of ethnic stacking on both democratic transition and consolidation outcomes. As will be further elaborated upon, the findings mostly concur with the latest scholarship that ethnicity-based recruitment policies are harmful to democratization. Yet it, in part because ethnicity-based recruitment practices are so widespread in Africa, I find that that the effects of such policies are more salient in non-military lead regimes.

2.4: Conclusions

There is little doubt that authoritarian civil-military relations do have important consequences for future patterns of democratization. However, there exists far less consensus on which types of civil-military configurations matter most, their impact on democratization, and how to operationalize them. Of the six factors discussed, this review suggests that most either have little impact, or are conceptually stretched to the point of having limited analytic utility. Military professionalism endures as an abstract ideal for fostering the loyalty of soldiers to civilian institutions, but is composed of several distinct concepts with questionable causal logic linking them to support for or against democracy. A case in point is with respect to military capabilities, one aspect of Huntington's definition of professionalism, which empirical scholars have tested numerous times and

found possesses no consistent relationship to the military's role in transitional politics. The causal logic linking patrimonialism to the undermining of the military's support for democratic institutions is more convincing, but encompasses a wide variety of civil-military relations, many of which are common to virtually every military in Africa. Numerous scholars in both the broader comparative literature and in the Africanist literature have argued that distinctions between various forms of authoritarianism have important consequences for both civil-military relations and democratic outcomes. Yet the dizzying array of typologies, and the fact that some of the more prominent ones appear to experience similar outcomes, merits a more direct focus on civil-military relations themselves.

One particular kind of authoritarian rule—military rule—contains both a compelling causal logic and considerable empirical evidence of democratization patterns different from other forms of authoritarianism. Yet the argument made by comparativists that military rule is more likely to result in durable democracy for the sake of corporate unity is undermined by the claims of Africanist scholars and empirical evidence that associates military intervention and rule with blocked transitions and political instability. Though it is possible that these differences may be reconciled by distinguishing between regimes controlled by military juntas and those controlled by military strongmen, the effect of military rule on future patterns of democratization has never been empirically tested in Africa.

Most evidence exists in favor of the idea that ethnicity, and in particular skewed ethnic recruitment within the armed forces, undermines democracy. Though earlier

empirical scholarship found little relationship between ethnicity and military intervention, more recent cross-national studies and a vast qualitative literature in Africa calls into question these earlier findings. By recruiting co-ethnics into their armies, African autocrats create powerful constituencies with incentives to remain loyal and block opportunities for democratization.

In the next section, I draw upon both the scholarship on military rule and military ethnicity to develop a theory of African civil-military relations that explains a considerable amount of the variation in transitional outcomes in Africa. My argument draws on a theoretical framework that traces the causal mechanisms through which military rule and ethnicity-based recruitment cause soldiers to support or oppose changes in regime. These theoretical propositions are then tested quantitatively, through cross-country regression analysis, and qualitatively, through case studies in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia.

Chapter 3

Authoritarian Armies and Transitional Pathways

I contend that patterns of authoritarian civil-military relations are essential to understanding future democratization patterns. Specifically, I argue that the role of authoritarian civil-military relations in African transitional politics is rooted in the *choices* of authoritarian leaders concerning how to manage their armies. In Africa, two of the most important choices that authoritarian leaders have faced historically is whether or not the military should govern the country as an institution, and whether or not to recruit co-ethnics into their armies. I argue that these choices have empirically given rise to three different types of authoritarian civil-military relations. Each of these three kinds of authoritarian civil-military relations are defined by different cleavages within the armed forces and between the armed forces and the regime. These cleavages influence two key outcomes considered in this dissertation. First, by affecting how the army reacts when the regime is threatened, the cleavages affect the probability that the regime will end in democracy. Second, because the cleavages usually persist even after the dictatorship's demise, they influence the chances of democratic survival.

The first type of authoritarian civil-military relation is a military regime, which occurs whenever a junta or group of military officers chooses to rule. Military regimes concentrate a country's means of violence and political power, yet they are also uniquely polarized between soldiers who serve in ruling roles and those who do not. The concentration of coercive power in one, highly factionalized institution leads the army to

fracture when the regime is threatened from internal or external sources of opposition. The fractious nature and competing interests between soldiers who seek power and those who prefer the barracks means that military regimes sometimes result in democracy. However, because a network of officers with previous access to political power tend to remain in the military even after a transition, democracies that succeed military regimes face dim prospects of survival.

The second type of authoritarian civil-military relation occurs when civilian-led dictatorships choose to stack the armed forces with co-ethnic officers, an arrangement I also refer to as ethnic civil-military relations or dictatorships with ethnic armies. Regimes with ethnic civil-military relations divide more predictably along co-ethnic lines, between officers who are ethnic patrons of the dominant faction of the authoritarian elite, and non-co-ethnic soldiers and civil servants. Because opposition to authoritarian rule is most often perceived as a threat to the privileged status of co-ethnic officers, soldiers in regimes with ethnic civil-military relations tend to unify in favor of a hardline response to pressure to liberalize. Soldiers in ethnic armies are therefore more likely to block opportunities for democratization by siding with those who favor the continuation of authoritarian rule and repressing the political opposition. The army's status as client rather than ruler, however, does make the few democracies that succeed dictatorships with ethnic armies more likely to survive.

The third type of authoritarian civil-military relation I identify is civilian-led dictatorships that do not ethnically stack their armies, which I refer to as representative civil-military relations or dictatorships with representative armies. Regimes with

representative civil-military relations are divided neither along ethnic nor political lines. Lacking political or co-ethnic ties to the regime, and often marginalized from it, representative armies face incentives either to remain neutral or to defect from the regime when it comes under pressure to liberalize. The result is that regimes with representative civil-military relations are very likely to end in a transition to democracy. Moreover, a lack of either political ambition or ethnic ties to the authoritarian elite within the officer corps tends to make democracies with representative armies unusually stable.

This dissertation makes two central contributions that further knowledge of how civil-military relations impact transitional politics. First, the theoretical framework offered here illuminates the conditions and the mechanisms through which authoritarian civil-military institutions cause soldiers to support transitions to and from democracy. It shows how decisions by micro-level actors, such as authoritarian leaders and army officers, have persistent effects on the structures, incentives and social relations governing civil-military relations. These effects, in turn, condition the response of militaries to macro-level social forces most commonly associated with regime change in the literature, forces such as international pressure, mass protest, and economic crisis. The understanding of the role of authoritarian civil-military relations in transitional politics advanced in this dissertation is thus more path-dependent, theoretically integrated, and less over-determined than most previous approaches.

These outcomes and the causal logic associated with them offers a second contribution to ongoing debates surrounding the importance of military rule and ethnic stacking in shaping transitional politics. By showing that the same cleavages that make

military regimes likely to end in democracy also bode ill for democratic survival, I synthesize existing arguments about the nature of military rule. Moreover, because virtually all military governments in Africa have historically practiced ethnic stacking, I show that the impact of the decision to recruit co-ethnics into the army is to a degree context dependent. Because the military is in one case a client and in another case a ruler, I demonstrate that the impact of ethnic stacking can vary based on a regime's institutional type.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five additional sections. In the first section, I elaborate in further detail on the theoretical framework underpinning my argument and how it relates to existing debates in the literature on democratization. The following three sections elaborate on how transitional politics in military regimes, civilian-led dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies, and civilian-led dictatorships with representative armies follow the theoretical framework advanced here and derives hypotheses for each type. The final section briefly summarizes the argument and lays out the observable implications to be tested in the next chapter.

3.1: From Dictators Choices to Democratic Outcomes: A Theoretical Framework

Every dictator must make choices concerning how to manage their armies. Though not all dictatorships in Africa have historically been subject to the same constraints, these choices are meaningful. For example, some African leaders have come into power as a result of military coups, at the head of rebellions, and are supported

clients of an outside power. Others were elected or served as a leader in their country's nationalist movement, had only marginally powerful militaries, and little support from outside powers. These constraints are important, and, as other scholarship has shown, undoubtedly have impacted both civil-military relations and transitional politics in their countries.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, it must be remembered that authoritarian leaders, particularly when they are in the process of attempting to consolidate power, have tremendous discretion in managing their armies. It is the dictator, after all, that formally controls top military appointments, determines how officers will be recruited, how they will be paid, whether and when they will fight, and to what extent the army will be involved in politics.

My theoretical framework begins with the argument that two choices are particularly meaningful in determining how African dictatorships have managed their armies. The first of these choices concerns whether the armed forces will seize power and, after having done so, govern as a collective, through a junta of officers that controls top political and military promotions. The second choice is whether or not the authoritarian leaders chooses to recruit co-ethnics into the regular army or other parallel military institutions, a practice called ethnic stacking.¹⁶⁷ These choices are meaningful because a relatively small group of officers and authoritarian elite is charged with making them, and because, in both instances, significant variation exists. The military has chosen

¹⁶⁶ See, for example, Ruth First, *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'état* (Penguin Books, 1970) and Kristen Harkness, "The Origins of African Civil-Military Relations: Ethnic Armies and the Development of Coup Traps," PhD Dissertation (Princeton University, 2012), pp. 46-75.

¹⁶⁷ See Kristen Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coup Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 4 (2016), pp. 587-616. See also Cynthia Enloe, "The Military Uses of Ethnicity," *Millennium* 4, no.3 (1975), pp. 220-233.

to rule as a junta in some but not all of Africa's dictatorships, and most but not all of Africa's authoritarian regimes have recruited co-ethnics into their armies.

These choices also have lasting consequences on the types of civil-military relations that characterize the dictatorship. In more theoretical terms, we can view the choices that authoritarian leaders make in managing their armies as the beginning of a causal chain of path dependence.¹⁶⁸ As maintained by James Mahoney, path dependent arguments are defined by the analysis of contingent choices that cannot easily be explained by past events and which give rise to deterministic causal processes.¹⁶⁹ The contingent choices in my argument are ethnic stacking and military rule, and I argue that their interaction gives rise to "sticky" informal and formal social and institutional relationships that impact the military's role in transitional politics. Throughout this dissertation, I refer to these relationships as authoritarian civil-military relations.

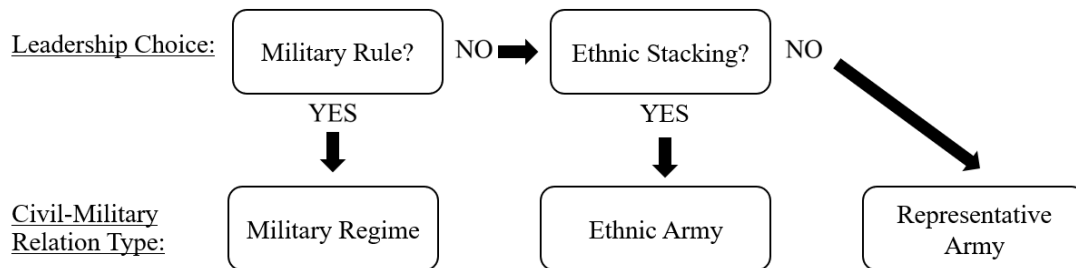
In particular, I argue that the interaction between military government and ethnic stacking has given rise to three predominant forms of authoritarian civil-military relations in Africa. The first of these is the military regime, which is a product of the choice by the military to rule as a collective. The second civil-military relation type occurs when the military chooses not to govern as a collective, but a civilian or personalist dictator stacks the armed forces with his or her co-ethnics. The final type is when a civilian or

¹⁶⁸ For important works on path dependence in the social sciences, see Douglass North "Institutions," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5, no. 1 (1991), pp. 97-112; W.B. Arthur. *Increasing Returns and Path dependence in the Economy* (University of Michigan Press, 1994); James Mahoney. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology." *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (2000), pp. 507-548; and Paul Pierson. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000), pp. 251-267.

¹⁶⁹ Mahoney, "Path Dependence," p. 510-511.

personalist dictator does not stack the armed forces with co-ethnics, instead choosing recruitment practices that are representative of society. Though it is possible that systematic differences exist between military regimes who do and do not practice ethnic stacking, in practice, virtually all military regimes in Africa have also practiced ethnic stacking. Figure 3.1 below depicts how the choices of military rule and ethnic stacking give rise to the three types of authoritarian civil-military relations central to this project's argument.

Figure 3.1: Leadership Choices and Authoritarian Civil-Military Relation Types



What are the persistent aspects of these forms of civil-military relations, and how do each these of types of civil-military lead to varying democratization outcomes? First, I posit that each civil-military type is characterized by a different series of cleavages. The cleavages can be internal to the military itself, arising from differences in how soldiers are recruited, promoted, or interact with the political sphere. They can also be external, arising from how soldiers differ in the goals and allegiances with the broader

authoritarian elite. These cleavages are important because they are the most crucial feature distinguishing each civil-military relation type and because they tend to endure. Once induced as a matter of policy or practice, the cleavages continue to affect military's institutional and service culture even if the formal policies that gave rise to them are repealed. In more path dependent terms, the inter-and intra-military cleavages in this dissertation's causal framework are a source of inertia, facilitating the "reactive sequences" through which authoritarian civil-military relations impact democratization outcomes.¹⁷⁰

Second, I posit that the effects of these cleavages are most pronounced at critical junctures, when the regime is under significant pressure to reform. As discussed in the literature review, it is these kinds of non-state centric factors that are the most empirically established causes of democratic transitions. In the face of an economic downturn or crisis, the loss of support from a key international patron or superpower, or in the face of mass popular protests, states become more likely to democratize. Yet, as argued by the scholarship on the politics of military defection, it is also during these critical junctures that soldiers, because of their monopoly on violence, tend to have the most influence on transition outcomes. By understanding the nature of a regime's main civil-military cleavages when the dictatorship comes under threat, we gain insight into the degree of its support of the authoritarian regime.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 109.

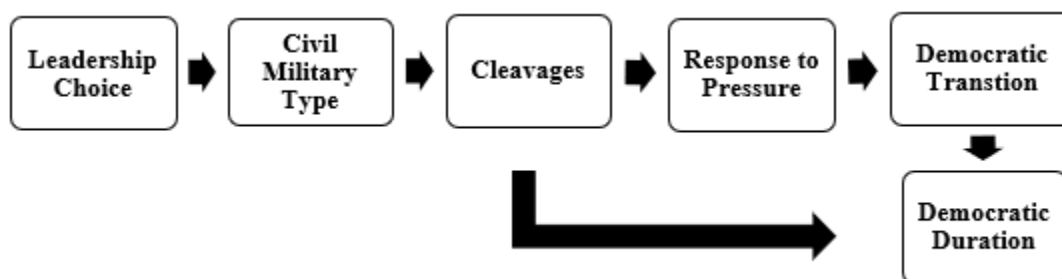
Ultimately, the actions of soldiers, conditional on pre-existing cleavages, lead to either authoritarian persistence or a democratic transition through a variety of mechanisms. Soldiers can show their unwavering support for the dictator by cracking down on the political opposition, precluding any kind of transfer of power, and leaving the dictatorship intact. They can also block a democratic transition through a military coup, either replacing the leader but leaving the authoritarian leadership group largely intact or giving rise to a new regime entirely.¹⁷¹ If they are followed by free and fair elections and a peaceful transfer of power, military coups can also be mechanism of democratic change. Lastly, soldiers can choose to remain neutral instead of cracking down on the political opposition or to defect from the authoritarian regime by actively supporting protestors, a choice which almost always forces the dictator to resign and leads to democracy. As I will seek to demonstrate in subsequent sections, soldiers serving in authoritarian regimes in each civil-military type are not equally likely to support the dictatorship in the face of pressure to reform or liberalize. As a result, each civil-military relation type is associated with sharply divergent transition outcomes.

¹⁷¹ This project follows Geddes, Frantz and Wright in classifying the regime by the leadership group, meaning “the small group that actually makes the most important decisions.” This definition allows for an analysis not just of transitions between authoritarianism and democracy, but between different kinds of authoritarian regimes as well. The concept used by Geddes, Frantz and Wright is similar to the “Selectorate” concept advanced by Susan Shirk and Philip Roeder and the “Winning Coalition” concept in the work of Bueno de Mesquita et al. See Geddes Barbara, Joseph Wright, Erica Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set,” *Perspectives on Politics* 12 (2014), p. 315; Susan Shirk, *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China* (University of California Press, 1993); Philip Roeder, *Red Sunset: The Failure of Soviet Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1993); Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph Siverson, and James Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (MIT Press, 2003).

Just as crucially, the cleavages associated with each civil-military relation type do not typically end with the authoritarian regime, but outlast it. After a transition to democracy, rarely does the armed forces undergo wholesale reform. Even instances when reforms to integrate the army or induce civilian rule are made, the central civil-military cleavages, and the relationships, norms, customs, and interests associated with them, tend to persist. So long as politically experienced and ambitious soldiers remain in the military or share ties of ethnic patronage with the previous authoritarian elite, the threat of a coup hangs heavy over an emerging democracy. As a result, the choices that authoritarian leaders make in managing their armies has implications for the survival of any democracy that succeeds authoritarian rule.

Figure 3.2 below summarizes this dissertation's theoretical framework. It illustrates on a conceptual level how choices by authoritarian leaders in Africa have led to distinct types of civil-military relations, with different cleavages that impact the conditions under which armies will support or oppose regime change. In the next three sections, I discuss in greater detail each pathway from leadership choice to democratization outcome. For each type of authoritarian civil-military relation, the casual processes linking authoritarian choices to transitional outcomes is further outlined, the argument's contributions to previous literature is discussed, and testable hypotheses to be more closely examined in future sections are derived.

Figure 3.2: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Transitional Politics in Africa: A Theoretical Framework



3.2 The First Pathway: The Military Regime and Democratic Instability

Wherever the military seizes power, the armed forces must choose whether to govern directly, whether to hand over power to a civilian dictator, or whether to organize elections. The choice to govern directly creates a military regime, the first major type of civil-military configuration under authoritarianism discussed in this dissertation. In military regimes, the head of state is chosen from a cabal or junta of military officers, who have significant influence over policy decisions. The fact that it is the military and not civilians who are in charge of running the country has unique implications for how and when the armed forces will support democratic transitions. Compared to other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations, military rule is unusually divisive, and, while

these divisions often lead military leaders to choose to leave power, they also make for short-lived democracies. I refer to the pathway that military regimes typically take as one of democratic instability.

Like the scholars of comparative politics, my argument hinges on the insight that there are fundamental differences in the nature of civil-military relations when the military rules as an institution versus when power is concentrated into the hands of a civilian political party or single autocrat, even one with a military background.¹⁷² As Barbara Geddes argues:

A military regime, in contrast to a personalist dictatorship led by a military officer, is one in which a group of officers determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy. In an institutionalized military regime (many are not), senior officers have agreed on some formula for sharing or rotating power, and consultation is somewhat routinized. Military hierarchy is respected, perhaps as an initial purge of supporters of the previous government.¹⁷³

Like Geddes and others, I define the military regime, which is also known as collegial military rule, as “a group of officers that determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy.”¹⁷⁴ I argue that the military regime is distinct from other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations, with unique implications for the

¹⁷² Barbara Geddes, Erica Frantz, and Joseph Wright, “Military Rule,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 17, no. 1 (2014), p. 152-155. See also Guillermo O’Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973) and Karen Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America* (Unwin Hyman, 1989).

¹⁷³ Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2.1 (1999), p. 124.

¹⁷⁴ Geddes et al, “Military Rule,” Op Cit. See also Nam Kim, and Alex Kroeger. “Regime and Leader Instability under Two Forms of Military Rule.” *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 1, pp. 3-37.

circumstances under which soldiers within military regimes will support or oppose regime change.

The first crucial difference between the military regime and other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations lies in the nature of the cleavages that characterize them. Though the choice to rule as an institution concentrates political and coercive power within the armed forces, it also leads to unique inter-military cleavages, between soldiers who serve in political roles and soldiers that do not. From the moment the army seizes power, military leaders must divide their attention between governing the country and defending it. To govern the country, officers who have demonstrated their loyalty to the junta are rewarded with political roles or sensitive strategic positions. The promotion of officers based on political loyalty rather than battlefield performance, seniority or merit divides the military between praetorian officers who focus on seeking and wielding power, and traditional officers devoted to the traditional mission of maintaining order and defense.¹⁷⁵ The number of political positions compared to the overall number of traditional military roles is few, so the majority of the armed forces is left on the outside and can become resentful of the privileged clique of soldiers. This argument is consistent with the broader scholarship on military rule, which argues that military regimes are

¹⁷⁵ According to Perlmutter, among the first to popularize the term, praetorian states are those in which “the political processes of the state favor the development of the military as the core group and the growth of its expectation as a ruling class” (1969, p. 383). Here, I use the word praetorian at times to refer to the group of military officers responsible for governing in a military regime. See Amos Perlmutter, “The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Politics,” *Comparative Politics* 1, no. 3 (1969), p. 383. See also Samuel Huntington, “Political Development and Political Decay,” *World Politics* 17, no. 3 (1965), pp. 386-430.

characterized by unique divisions between soldiers who rule and those in more traditional military roles.¹⁷⁶

Yet members of the cabal of officers with political power struggle not only against the traditional military establishment, but also against one another. As officers who seize power by force seek to maintain it, they retire, imprison or even execute those in the military they suspect of being disloyal. If given the opportunity, soldiers seeking to improve their position will not hesitate to turn their knowledge of the art of the military coup against those they helped bring into power. And soldiers outside of the junta and those immediately associated with it will attempt to harness their personal, professional and political grievances into plots of their own. In addition, in most cases, disagreements over who ought to govern the military and thus the state falls not just along personal, but also along ethnic lines. In a typical African military regime, the ruling clique of soldiers also recruits co-ethnics into top military positions in order to assure their loyalty. Usually, officers and soldiers of other ethnic groups become alienated from the ruling clique. The arguments concerning the personal and ethnic divisions that characterize military regimes is more consistent with the Africanist literature.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ See Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?"; Geddes et al, "Military Rule"; Kim and Kroeger, "Regime and Leader Instability."

¹⁷⁷ See Samuel Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military Style* (Yale University Press, 1976); Jimmy Kandeh, "What Does the 'Militariat' Do When It Rules? Military Regimes: The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia." *Review of African Political Economy* 23, no. 69 (1996); Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in the Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1997); Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Coups Traps: Why Does Africa Have so many Coups d'Etat?" (Oxford University, 2005).

This polarization over wielding power and along ethnic lines makes military regimes uniquely divided and factionalized forms of civil-military relations. The result is that the armed forces tend to fracture at critical junctures when military regimes comes under internal or external pressure to liberalize. In such circumstances, the traditional faction of the military, concerned above all with preserving the military's corporate integrity, tends to prefer to leave power, as argued by Geddes, Nordlinger, and others.¹⁷⁸ They are opposed by many of the senior group of praetorian officers, who prefer to remain in power. The preferences of more junior officers in the praetorian clique is more ambiguous; they may remain loyal to their seniors, but they also might seek power for themselves, either by a coup or by forcing the resignation of the military leadership. Similar divisions exist among officers whose ethnicities are not shared with the ruling class; many prefer to leave power to preserve the military's institutional interests, but some may organize plots in an attempt to seize power for themselves.

The existence of so many factions, each with competing and potentially contradictory assessments of their interests, makes democratic transition following military rule a contingent and uncertain process. At times, fearful that military rule will negatively impact internal discipline, the military will follow the wishes of the traditional faction and come to a consensus to leave power. This is particularly true in cases where the armed forces briefly intervene to resolve civilian disputes and then exits before the ruling group of soldiers becomes accustomed to the accoutrements of office, the so-called

¹⁷⁸ See Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization?" and Eric Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments*, (Prentice Hall, 1976), pp. 65-71.

“moderator” or “guardian” types of military regimes.¹⁷⁹ In Dahomey (present-day Benin), for example, the military under General Christophe Soglo assumed power in October 1963 amidst a political crisis generated by the arrest of trade union leaders, and left after being assured that the country had averted the threat of civil war in 1964.

However, the decision to withdraw from power is not always a strictly consensus driven-affair in which officers in power agree to put the corporate interests of the military above personal self-interest. In other instances, democratic transitions in military regimes are achieved only through struggle, after politically ambitious military officers and their supporters are assassinated or overthrown. In Cote D’Ivoire, a non-commissioned officer by the name of Tuo Fozie led the country’s first coup, ending a democratic government in 1999. Refusing to step down, he lasted just days before he was overthrown by another coup. To guide the country back to democracy, former army commander Robert Guéï was called back from retirement. He organized and then proceeded to run in elections, which he lost to Laurent Gbagbo in the year 2000. Guéï, however, refused to concede and was forced to flee to a remote region of the country. He eventually recognized the election result, but was killed under mysterious circumstances in 2002.¹⁸⁰

Finally, at least some members of the praetorian class of officers often stands to benefit from a transition to democracy, either because a return to the barracks allows current or former officers to run for political office, or because it presents a future

¹⁷⁹ Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 193-263; Christopher Clapham and George Philip, *The Political Dilemmas of Military Regimes* (Barnes and Noble, 1985), pp. 8-15; First, *The Barrel of a Gun*, pp. 206-222; and Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*, p. 22.

¹⁸⁰ See Daniel Chirot, "The Debacle in Côte d'Ivoire." *Journal of Democracy* 17, no. 2 (2006), pp. 63-77.

opportunity for officers who remain in the army to benefit by seizing power. Both factors were present in Niger's democratic transition, when the military-led National Movement of the Development of Society (MNSD) transmuted itself into a civilian political party that narrowly lost elections in 1993. When the MNSD and opposition parties could not reach a compromise to share power in 1996, the military used the opportunity to strike.¹⁸¹ The man responsible for the coup was Colonel Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara, who had served as chief of staff to the country's previous military dictator and held various ambassadorships before being promoted to the sensitive position of army chief in Niger's young democracy.

Thus, transition periods in military regimes are fraught both with opportunity and danger. Opportunity, in the sense that a retreat to the barracks can allow the traditional faction within the army to orchestrate a transition to democracy while allowing their praetorian colleagues to keep their jobs. Danger, in the sense that corporate disunity in the military combined with social unrest provide good opportunities for disaffected factions within the army to seize power and continue to rule. The praetorian, traditional and ethnic cleavages that characterize military regimes make a democratic transition a likely, but far from certain outcome. Whether or not a military regime ends in democracy depends to a large degree on the size of various factions, the degree of their control over the political system, and their assessment of their interests.

¹⁸¹ Jibrin Ibrahim and Abdoulaye Souley, "The Rise to Power of an Opposition Party: The MNSD in Niger Republic," in *The Politics of Opposition in Contemporary Africa*, edited by Adebayo Olukoshi (Nordic Africa Institute, 1998).

Unfortunately, the same cleavages that make military regimes likely to result in democracy also give democracies that succeed military rule poor chances of survival. The distinguishing feature of military regimes compared to other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations is the existence of a robust praetorian class of officers accustomed to ruling and experienced in the art of coup-making. It is the persistence of these politically-minded officers within the military after returning to the barracks that explains why democracies that succeed military rule rarely last. Following military rule, soldiers are likely to re-enter politics through a variety of mechanisms that are less common in other regimes.

First, previous military heads of state can re-seize power after retreating to the barracks. As the ruler and not a client, the military has tremendous leverage in determining the course of a future transition. Often, the price of a democratic transition is that officers who serve as heads of military regimes and may harbor continuing political ambitions remain, like Soglo did in Benin's army after the 1964 transition. In fact, Dahomey is a case in point: Benin's democracy only lasted another year before Soglo intervened again, seizing power in 1965. Similar cycles of military intervention, disengagement, and re-intervention have occurred across the continent, including Sudan in the 1960s, Ghana in the 1970s and 1980s, Niger in the 1990s, and the Central African Republic in the 2000s.

The retreat and re-entry option may be even more appealing for junior officers with praetorian inclinations. By allowing a democratic transition, junior officers can force the retirement of more senior colleagues and mentors without having to resort to a coup.

Instead, they bide their time, wait several years, and launch a coup against the civilian regime, often with more seniority and a greater likelihood of success.¹⁸² Such was the case with Colonel Ignatius Acheampong of Ghana, who served as chairman of the committee governing Ghana's Western region when the military left power in 1969. Three years later, he used his position as an infantry brigade commander to instigate a coup that toppled the civilian government of Kofia Busia.¹⁸³

Finally, military regimes in emerging democracies tend to possess more expansive corporate interests and a greater capacity to intervene. When the military rules, it controls not only policy, but also access to state resources, contracts, and other forms of wealth. A pre-condition for democratic change can be that the military gets to retain some of those sources of wealth and a privileged political position. In Egypt, the military insisted on being granted significant autonomy in shaping the country's defense and national security policy after the 2011 revolution and retained a vast stake in the country's economy. The 2013 coup which ended Egypt's emerging democracy was due in part to attempts by elected leaders to curtail the military's power and influence.¹⁸⁴

The ability to retreat to the barracks that makes a democratic transition a probable outcome is also the same mechanism through which democracies that succeed military rule die prematurely. More often than not, the military dictates the terms of the political

¹⁸² See Naunihal Singh, *Seizing Power: The Strategic Logic of Military Coups* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

¹⁸³ See Dennis Austin, "The Ghana Armed Forces and Ghanaian society." *Third World Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (1985), pp. 90-101.

¹⁸⁴ See Hicham Bou Nassif, "Coups and Nascent Democracies: The Military and Egypt's Failed Consolidation," *Democratization* 24, no. 1 (2017), pp. 157-174.

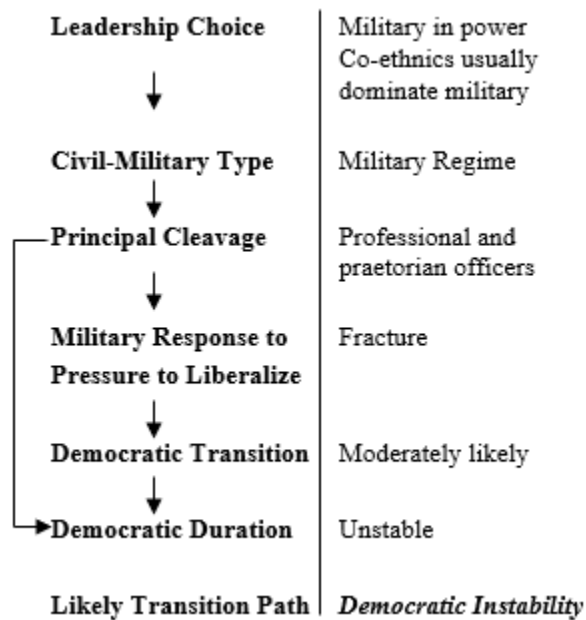
transition, and ambitious, privileged networks of officers remain within the armed forces, awaiting further opportunities to intervene.

This argument makes an important contribution to the academic literature on military rule because it helps to reconcile the differences between the scholars who observe that military regimes are more likely to transition to democracy with those that argue that the legacy of militarism in Africa is one diametrically opposed to democratization. Like more recent comparative scholars, I argue that the divisions created within the military as a result of collegial military rule makes such regimes fairly likely to democratize. I differ from these scholars, however, in maintaining that the praetorian officers who govern and serve in political roles do not just permit democratization out of fear of a civil war or because they care for the army's corporate well-being. Rather, democratization is often in the political interest of the praetorian faction as well, because it provides opportunities for officers to try their hand at civilian politics and can allow the next generation of politically-minded officers a future opportunity to rule.

Figure 3.3 illustrates how military regimes fit into this dissertation's theoretical framework. The choice by the armed forces to rule collectively is what defines a military regime. The principal cleavage in military regimes is between traditional soldiers who value the military's institutional interests and praetorian soldiers who govern and seek power, a cleavage that is not shared in other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations. When a dictatorship comes under pressure to liberalize, the armed forces fracture, making a democratic transition a possible but uncertain outcome. However, the

persistence of praetorian officers within the armed forces after a transition means that emerging democracies face poor prospects for survival. The moderate transition but unlikely survival prospects mean that military regimes are most likely to follow a transition path of democratic instability.

Figure 3.3: The Transitional Politics of Military Regimes



From this framework, I derive two hypotheses with observable theoretical implications to further investigate in this dissertation’s empirical chapter. My argument indicates that military regimes have a probable but not certain chance of transitioning to

democracy, but that any democracy that follows military rule should have poor prospects of survival. Stated more formally, this implies:

H1A: Military regimes will have an approximately average chance of transitioning to democracy.

H1B: Democracies that succeed institutionalized military rule are less likely to survive than other types of democracies.

3.3: The Second Pathway: Ethnic Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Obstruction

In some authoritarian regimes, the military chooses not to rule as an institution, but hands over power to a civilian or military officer who rules at the head of a personalist or single party regime. In such cases, I argue it is the ethnic composition of the armed forces and how they are manipulated by the ruling elite that determines the conditions under which the military will support democracy. Most of the time, authoritarian elites recruit co-ethnics to serve as top officers in their armies and or in other parallel military institutions, a practice referred to as ethnic stacking.¹⁸⁵ Civilian-led dictatorships that ethnically stack their armies define ethnic civil-military relations, the second authoritarian civil-military relation type considered in this dissertation. Armies in such regimes are most likely to block attempts to democratize, but in the rare

¹⁸⁵ Kristen Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State," p. 594.

cases that they do transition, emerging democracies face moderate prospects for survival. I refer to the likely transition path of civilian-led dictatorships with ethnic armies as one of democratic obstruction.

It is important to specify precisely what is meant by a “civilian” regime. I adopt a broad definition of a civilian-led dictatorship, referring to any authoritarian regime that is not collectively ruled by a group of military officers. In contrast to military-led regimes, the armed forces in civilian-led regimes do not select or control the ruler and do not have an extensive role in making and implementing non-national-security-related policy. Civilian led dictatorships, therefore, can be led by a single current or former military officer, so long as they are unconstrained by their military colleagues. A brief example, drawn from the work of Geddes, Frantz and Wright, can help clarify how this distinction is made. In a 1982 coup, the officers responsible for the putsch chose Captain Thomas Sankara as their leader, but remained heavily involved in government and retained considerable control over top political appointments. In 1987, Sankara was assassinated and replaced by another military officer, Blaise Campoaré, who marginalized the military’s political influence in politics by creating a broader, more inclusive government.¹⁸⁶ Under Geddes, Frantz and Wright’s schema, which is adopted by this dissertation, Burkina Faso under Sankara is considered a military regime, but Campoaré a personalist dictatorship.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Geddes, Wright, and Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions.”

¹⁸⁷ Geddes, Frantz and Wright refer to personalist regimes led by a current or former military officer as “military strongmen” and argue that they differ from other kinds of military regimes. See Geddes, Frantz, and Wright, “Military Rule.”

Next, it is important to specify precisely what ethnic stacking is and how it is practiced. Following the work of Kristen Harkness, I associate ethnic stacking with two non-mutually exclusive strategies.¹⁸⁸ First, dictators recruit officers into the regular army on the basis of ethnicity rather than merit, seeking to shore up the loyalty of the armed forces by privileging co-ethnics and placing them in sensitive or strategic positions. Second, they recruit co-ethnics into parallel military institutions such as presidential guards and militias that usurp some of the traditional functions of the army. An example of the former strategy occurred in Togo in 1963. Immediately following the assassination of head of state Sylvanus Olympio, the Togolese army expanded from 250 to 1,200 soldiers, 80 percent of whom were recruited from Kabré and other northern ethnic groups, where less a quarter of the country's population resides.¹⁸⁹ An example of the latter occurred during the 1972-1991 dictatorship of Mathier Kerekou in Benin, where the dictator's presidential guard was recruited nearly exclusively from the northern elite and comprised the country's most highly trained and best equipped military force.¹⁹⁰

The combination of civilian rule and ethnic stacking leads to different civil-military cleavages than those that are found in other authoritarian regimes. In such regimes, the principal cleavages fall along ethnic lines. As a matter of tautology, there are inherent cleavages between officers who are co-ethnics of the authoritarian elite and officers who are not. In regular armies and parallel military institutions that are at all

¹⁸⁸ Kristen Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State," p. 594.

¹⁸⁹ Samuel Decalo, *Civil-Military Relations in Africa* (Florida Academic Press, 1998).

¹⁹⁰ Mathurin Hounnikpo and Samuel Decalo, *Historical Dictionary of Benin* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), p. 57.

multi-ethnic, officers that share co-ethnicity with the elite form the privileged class, and are rewarded with more rapid promotion, better jobs, and access to additional benefits not available to the typical soldier of a different ethnicity. In some armed forces, and particularly in parallel military institutions, soldiers from other ethnicities can be barred from service altogether. Moreover, if the regime is not exclusively controlled by the ethnic groups that dominate the army, officers will tend to favor the policies and establish patron-client relations with members of their own ethnic group.

I argue that the ethnic nature of the cleavages in civilian dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies makes the armed forces more likely unite in support of hardliners when the regime is faced with pressure to liberalize. Because ethnic identity becomes the army's principal means of access to patronage, promotions and career advancement, the institutional interests of top military officers are more directly tied to the fate of the regime. Already in the barracks, the army cannot simply negotiate its way back and keep its institutional privileges intact. In addition, officers in ethnic armies usually stand to lose exclusive access to state patronage as a result of a transition. At worst, officers could lose their jobs, be forced into rebellion, or executed if forces from a rival ethnic group seize power or are elected into office. Finally, the dictatorship's civilianized status makes the military more of a client, allowing authoritarian leaders more leverage over policy, top appointments, and greater leeway to shape security institutions in ways that secure their rule.

As a result, soldiers in ethnic armies favor action to block or foreclose transitions to democracy. Perhaps the most common mechanism through which such armies

demonstrate their support of the dictator is through repression, either precluding any form of political resistance entirely or allowing authoritarian leaders to give themselves an impossible electoral advantage. In Chad, President Déby's Republican Guard composed exclusively of Zaghawa co-ethnics committed "intermittent massacres" in the country's south at the same time that the country's 1993 constitutional conference was taking place.¹⁹¹ With full control over the country's means of coercive violence, Déby ensured himself victory during 1996 presidential elections in a vote that was neither free nor fair, and has since become the longest serving dictator in Chad's history.

In addition, the military's role as a client rather than a ruler in civilian dictatorships makes authoritarianism more resilient by lessening the probability of a successful coup. In dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations, fewer officers than in military regimes are able to form connections and build coalitions with civilian elites, making coup plots less likely to succeed. In addition, civilian dictators may have an easier time building powerful parallel military institutions than leaders in military regimes, where officers are wary of the concentration of power in the hands of a single individual or institutional rivals. As recent scholarship by Erica De Bruin argues, parallel military institutions (especially ethnic ones) increase the loyalty of the armed forces to the authoritarian regime by ensuring that at least some members of the security sector will rally to the leader's defense in the event of a possible coup, making them less likely

¹⁹¹ Decalo, *Civil-Military Relations*, p. 123.

to succeed.¹⁹² That Chad's Republican Guard was the unit responsible for the massacres during Chad's elections, for example, illustrates the degree to which parallel military institutions composed exclusively of a dictator's co-ethnics are willing remain loyal at extreme cost.

Finally, when coups against civilian dictators with ethnically stacked armies are successful, I posit that the most likely outcome is simply that one ethnically-stacked dictatorship gets replaced by another. In cases where the authoritarian leadership is divided, the armed forces are more likely to favor the hardline faction because of the risks associated with liberalization. In Rwanda, for example, the Hutu-dominated regular army is rumored to have brought down the plane of then-president Juvenal Habyarimana precisely because the president was on the verge of implementing the Arusha accords, a power sharing agreement that sought to end a civil war through free and fair elections.¹⁹³ Instead, after Habyarimana's death, the Rwanda army infamously organized and collaborated closely with co-ethnic *interhawame* militias to perpetrate the 1994 genocide, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Tutsi civilians and sympathizers.

Thus, civilian-led dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies tend to go to great lengths to prevent political liberalization. More than in other regimes, the armed forces are willing to obey orders by authoritarian elites to commit violence against protestors

¹⁹² Erica De Bruin, *War and Coup Prevention in Developing States* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Yale University, 2014).

See also James Quinlivan. "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East." *International Security* 24, no. 2 (October 1, 1999), pp. 131–65.

¹⁹³ See Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families* (MacMillan, 1998), p. 113.

and other members of the opposition. Authoritarian leaders have greater latitude than in military regimes to manipulate the army to its liking, preventing soldiers from forging the kind of political connections they would need to organize a coup and creating powerful parallel military institutions likely to support them in the event of a crisis. When coups against authoritarian elites do succeed, the result is usually not liberalization, but the continuation of the same regime with a new leader or the rise of another authoritarian regime more willing to preserve the status quo.

In the cases where authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies do transition, what might the consequences for the political settlement be? I argue that democratic settlements following regimes with ethnic military institutions are moderately likely to last. In part, this may be because fewer democratic settlements emerge following dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations, and those that do tend to preserve the previous ethnic balance of power. Moreover, ethnic armies have fewer soldiers with previous political experience, less institutional knowledge of how to enact a coup, and are more divided between the regular army and parallel military institutions than soldiers following military regimes. These are each likely to be somewhat stabilizing factors.

Rather, as argued by Harkness, the greatest threat to emergent democratic regimes following dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations comes when the founding authoritarian leader is replaced by another a leader from a different party or ethnic group or over attempts to re-integrate the military.¹⁹⁴ For example, when Cameroonian

¹⁹⁴ Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State"

president Ahmadou Ahijdo left power in 1982, he left in place an army that was largely composed of his Peul and Fulani co-ethnics. In 1984 Ahijdo's successor, Paul Biya, attempted to move against soldiers loyal to the former regime by transferring top soldiers from the Fulani/Peul dominated Republican Guard, triggering a coup attempt that had to be violently put down. Biya presides as dictator of Cameroon until this day, and the Cameroonian army is now dominated mostly by the Bulu and Beti ethnic groups, each of which have close ties to Biya.¹⁹⁵ This example illustrates that we might expect democratic stability to result following dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations so long as the army's ethnic basis remains little changed or if co-ethnic politicians retain considerable power.

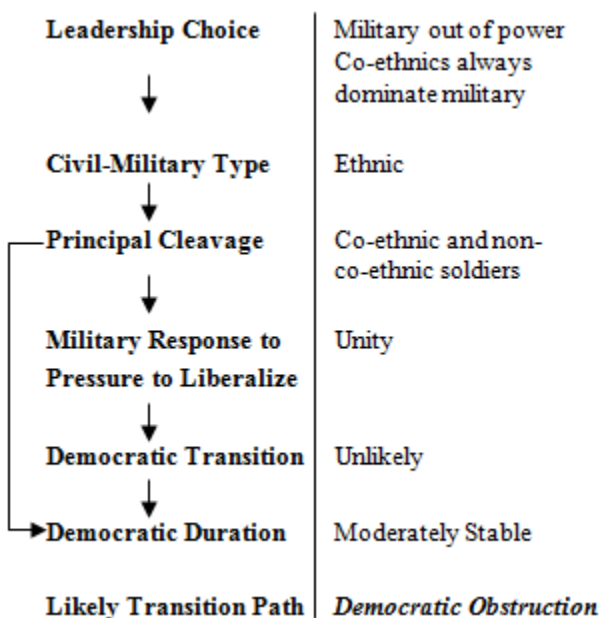
In terms of the contribution to the overall literature, this project follows some of the more recent scholarship by Bratton and van de Walle, Harkness and others in arguing that ethnic stacking makes the armed forces more likely to block a democratic transition. Yet it differs in arguing that a crucial distinction is to be made between military regimes, which in Africa have tended to be riven by professional, political and ethnic cleavages, and civilian-led dictatorships, where the principal cleavage in the armed forces tends to fall along ethnic lines alone. With the regime as its patron, officers in ethnic armies have little to gain and everything to lose from a democratic transition, instilling in them a high tolerance for being used as instruments of repressive violence. Moreover, the existence of powerful parallel military institutions and the lack of a political role makes revolt against authoritarian leaders risky, further strengthening the bonds of co-ethnic loyalty and

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 597-599.

reinforcing patron-client relationships. Compared to other types of armed forces, ethnic militaries are more willing to commit violence in order to ensure the regime remains in power and their institutional privileges unthreatened. Under these conditions, peaceful democratic change is supremely challenging.

Figure 3.4 illustrates how civilian dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies follow this dissertation's theoretical framework. Ethnic civil-military relations occur when the military chooses to remain out of power and when the authoritarian leaders privilege the recruitment of soldiers from one or several ethnic groups. The principal cleavage in ethnic civil-military relations is between ethnically privileged soldiers and between soldiers or authoritarian elite from non-privileged groups. When the dictatorship comes under pressure to liberalize, the co-ethnic soldiers will unite in their support of the regime or hardline factions within it. As a result, opportunities to democratize tend to get blocked by intimidation, repressive violence, or, in some cases, military coups. Though transitions to democracy are rare, the military's status as a client rather than a former ruler makes emerging democracy moderately likely to last. The poor transition but moderate survival prospects means that military regimes are most likely to follow a transition path of democratic obstruction.

Figure 3.4 The Transitional Politics of Ethnic Civil-Military Relations



From this framework, I draw two further observable hypotheses with testable implications. I argue that dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations face poor democratic transition prospects, but democracies that succeed such dictatorships face moderate survival chances. Stated more formally, this implies:

H2A: Authoritarian regimes with ethnic military institutions are less likely than other authoritarian regimes to transition to democracy

H2B: Democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with ethnic military institutions will have an approximately average chance of survival.

3.4: The Third Pathway: Representative Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Stability

A relatively small number of authoritarian regimes in Africa have managed to keep the armed forces out of power and refrain from stacking their armies with co-ethnic soldiers. These dictatorships possess what I call representative civil-military relations. The most notable feature about representative militaries is their absence of either ethnic stacking or experience with military rule. Without either a core of officers who seek power or maintain ethnic privilege, representative armed forces tend to avoid political interference. As a result, I argue, authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions are far more likely than other regimes to transition to democracy, which is more likely to survive.

Despite the fact that the defining feature of representative civil-military relations is an absence of military rule or ethnic stacking, the choice to cultivate armies that are representative of society is often a deliberate one. By ethnically stacking their armies or drawing them into politics, authoritarian leaders fear that they will stoke divisions within their armed forces, and thus seek alternative means to cultivate military loyalty. In some cases, such as the single-party authoritarian regimes that existed in Senegal and Tanzania, the regime seeks to cultivate military loyalty by taking measures to incorporate and subordinate the military into the regime's ruling structure. In Tanzania, for example, though the army was nationally representative, it was also tightly integrated into the machinery of the ruling Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). All of Tanzania's

soldiers were required to be party members, and the structure of the military was modelled off of the structure of the party.¹⁹⁶

In other cases, the mixing of the military and of politics is banned altogether, a product of a more deliberate attempt by authoritarian leaders to marginalize the military out of fear of a regime-ending coup. Like other civilian-led regimes, dictatorships with representative armies will often invest heavily in the intelligence, police or parallel military institutions to counterbalance the regular army. These institutions are often used to monitor military officers and serve as the regime's primary mechanism of internal coercion and maintaining order. In Zambia, for example, a centralized intelligence apparatus operated undercover at the Ministry of Defense and was crucial in identifying and neutralizing anti-party activity.¹⁹⁷ In Malawi, a youth militia known as the Malawi Youth Pioneers (MYP) recruited from regime loyalists counterbalanced the regular army and was the primary institution responsible for defending dictator Hastings Banda from his political enemies.¹⁹⁸

The civil-military cleavages that exist in dictatorships with representative armies are also distinct from other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations. On the one hand, the marginalization from political power and lack of ethnic divisions fosters armies that are unusually cohesive and unconcerned with the political sphere. Because officers

¹⁹⁶ Stefan Lindemann, "Civilian Control of the Military in Tanzania and Zambia: Explaining Persistent Exceptionalism," *Crisis States Research Center Working Paper* 80 (2010), p. 6. Available at <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/121648/WP80.2.pdf> [accessed March 9, 2017].

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁹⁸ E.L Mandiza, "Civil-Military Relations in Malawi: A Historical Perspective," in., *Ourselves to Know: Civil-Military Relations and Defence Transformation in Southern Africa*, edited by Rocklyn Williams, Gavin Cawthra, and Diane Abrahams (Institute for Security Studies, 2003), p. 123.

neither seek political power nor are ethnic patrons of the regime, they tend to have little active interest in overthrowing it. Moreover, counterbalancing institutions can and often do serve as a deterrent to military intervention. Therefore, most regimes with civil militaries tend to be relatively stable and less coup prone than average. Some of Africa's longest-standing dictatorships, such as those in Morocco and Angola, have cultivated representative civil-military relations.

On the other hand, because the army tends to remain free of divisions, when cleavages do occur it is usually between the armed forces and the authoritarian leadership. The army's marginal political role and status as a representative institution can lead it to identify more with opposition groups than as part of the coercive apparatus. Less likely than armies of other authoritarian regimes to be used as an instrument of authoritarian repression, soldiers in representative military institutions are more sensitive to the regime's excesses. In addition, the regular army can come to view the police, intelligence and parallel security institutions that are charged with maintaining order as institutional rivals and become resentful of the perks they receive. If the internal security apparatus is used to monitor and repress soldiers, the armed forces is likely to further develop a corporate identity that defines itself in opposition to the regime.

Therefore, the armed forces cannot be reliably counted on to side with the regime in cases where it comes under significant pressure to liberalize, particularly from domestic opposition groups. Without political or ethnic patronage, soldiers in representative armies are more likely to be indifferent to whether or not the regime remains in power. Because the army is not called on as often to maintain internal order,

representative armies will at the very least prefer to remain neutral in the face of mass protest. And if the army possesses significant institutional or personal grievances against the authoritarian regime, it may see some benefit in acting to oppose it.

The result is that, when authoritarian regimes with representative civil-military relations do transition, they become democracies. In some cases, democracy results less because of military intervention, and more because the military has no preference with respect to who rules and no reason to oppose moves by authoritarian leaders to liberalize. This characterizes the military's role in the transitions to democracy of both Cape Verde and Senegal, which were drawn out, mostly peaceful affairs in which the military had very little role.

In other cases, the representative armies have a much clearer preferences *in favor* of democratic change. For some countries, representative armies do not support or choose to defect in cases where their participation in mass violence against the political opposition would save the regime. This was clearly the case in Mali, when elements of the army balked at being used to repress violent protests in which one hundred were killed and seven hundred injured in 1991. Days after the confrontation, security forces took over the country, arrested the president, and presided over a transition to electoral democracy. These actions greatly enhanced the prestige and status of the military in the eyes of Malian civilians, paving the way for the future political career of the paratroop commander who led the takeover, Amadou Toumani Touré.¹⁹⁹ For other countries,

¹⁹⁹ See Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments*, pp. 212-213.

military defection is motivated by a clearer sense of institutional grievance against parallel military institutions. Such grievances were a significant factor in Malawi's transition to democracy. There, the army acted to prevent political intimidation by the MYP movement by attacking the movement's headquarters and burning the houses of its members. When it became clear that the military did not support Banda's continued rule, the dictator was forced to step down and hold free and fair elections.²⁰⁰

In sum, the bargain that authoritarian leaders strike in fostering representative civil-military relations over the long run results in democracy. The lack of factionalism or exposure to politics tends to lessen the desire and ability of officers to attempt a regime-ending coup, leading to relatively stable authoritarian regimes. Yet, if the regime ever faces significant pressure for popular reform, the military's loyalty cannot be counted on. When mass popular protests overwhelm the ability of domestic security institutions to effectively control them, representative armed forces will usually side with the protestors against the authoritarian regime. In essence, authoritarian leaders can ensure relatively stable rule, but only by significantly lessening the willingness of the armed forces to repress. The result is usually a transition to democracy.

And what might be expected concerning the duration of democracies that emerge from authoritarian regimes with civil-military institutions? If the duration of Ghanaian, Malawian, Tanzanian, Zambian and Malian democracies are any indication, democratic regimes that emerge in the aftermath of authoritarian regimes with representative civil-

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 214.

military relations are quite stable. The democratic stability that characterizes democracies with representative militaries is caused by the same mechanisms that lead representative armies to support democratization. The lack of extensive experience in politics like soldiers in military regimes and a lack of ethnic patronage makes soldiers in representative armies less likely to cultivate power for themselves and less likely to be aligned with a particular political party. Unlike military regimes, representative armies lack networks of ambitious, politically experienced soldiers plotting to seize power through extra-constitutional means. And unlike ethnic armies, they lack co-ethnic allegiances to deposed autocratic rulers. Without the same political or ethnic motivations for seizing power, coups are less frequent, and when they do occur, tend to be for other reasons. The coup that ended Mali's democracy in 2012, though it might appear to contradict the argument, is actually a case in point. The soldiers who launched the coup did not actively seek power, and they did not act on behalf of a particular ethnic group. Instead, they were furious over the Malian regime's inability to supply and equip them properly in their fight against northern separatists and al-Qaeda affiliated insurgents. They decided to mutiny in protest of poor condition of the army, and the mutiny turned into a coup only when Touré and his entourage decided to flee.²⁰¹

Moreover, in the cases where the military played an active role in fostering democratization, the army can benefit from democratic rule. The benefits can be in terms

²⁰¹ Baz Lecocq, Gregory Mann, Bruce Whitehouse, Dida Badi, Lotte Pelckmans, Nadia Belalimat, Bruce Hall, Wolfram Lacher. 2013. "One Hippopotamus and Eight Blind Analysts: A Multivocal Analysis of the 2012 Political Crisis in the Divided Republic of Mali," *Review of African Political Economy* 40, no. 137 (2012), p. 348.

of prestige, if opposition groups and civil society view the army as a national savior as a result of refusing to go along with the dictatorship. In Malawi, the army's refusal to assume total political control during the political transition won it widespread popularity within the country, as well as international recognition.²⁰² If the transition involved the marginalization or dismantlement of a power internal security apparatus, then the military stands to gain more direct corporate and institutional benefits through higher funding or a more high-profile role in the security sector. Not only did the Malawian military achieve recognition through its role in the country's democratization, it also saw the complete demobilization and disarmament of the Malawian military's chief institutional rival: the MYP. A return to military rule or other forms of dictatorship would likely jeopardize the high regard in which Malawians place the military, as well as the institutional benefits the military has reaped from democratic rule.

There are no direct parallels to dictatorships with representative civil-military relations as I have conceptualized them here in the academic literature. Nevertheless, some of the arguments made here are implicit in the works of other scholars. In his notable analysis of the politics of transition from military rule in Brazil, for example, Alfred Stepan argued that similar institutional grievances between the internal security apparatus and the regular armed forces were a crucial factor in leading the army to support the transition.²⁰³ Moreover, other scholars have highlighted the importance of

²⁰² Mandiza, "Civil-Military Relations in Malawi," p. 128.

²⁰³ Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (Princeton University Press, 1971).

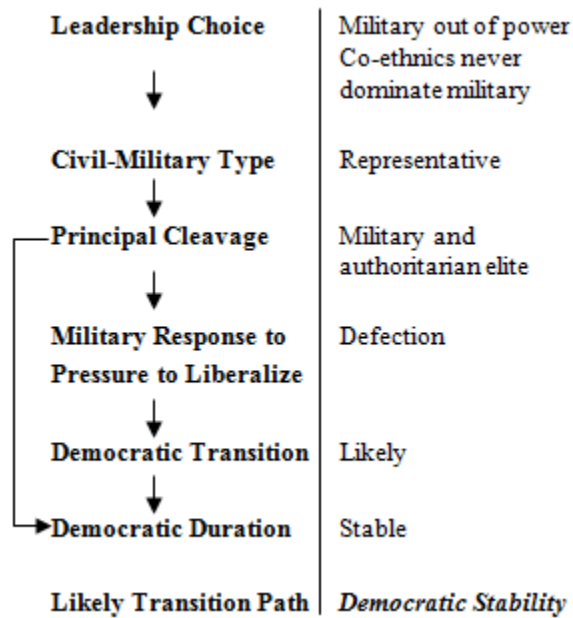
fostering ethnically integrated institutions²⁰⁴ or liberal political narratives²⁰⁵ in preventing political instability and violence.

Figure 3.5 illustrates how civilian dictatorships with representative armies follow this dissertation's theoretical framework. Representative civil-military relations occur when the military chooses to remain out of power and when the authoritarian leaders decide to adopt meritocratic recruitment processes in the armed forces. Though soldiers in regimes with representative civil-military relations have little incentive actively seek to overthrow the dictatorship, the most common cleavage in such regimes is between the armed forces and authoritarian elite. When the dictatorship comes under pressure to liberalize, soldiers in representative armies will remain neutral or defect from the authoritarian regime by refusing to participate in the repression of opposition groups. As a result, dictatorships with representative civil-military relations tend to end with transitions to democracies that are quite resilient. The good prospects for democratic transition and survival transition means that dictatorships with representative civil-military relations are most likely to follow a transition path of democratic stability.

²⁰⁴ Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State."

²⁰⁵ Ibid; see also Scott Straus, *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in modern Africa* (Cornell University Press, 2015).

Figure 3.5 The Transitional Politics of Representative Civil-Military Relations



The observable implications of my argument are that dictatorships with representative militaries are more likely to transition to stable democratic than other kinds of regimes. Formally, my hypotheses are:

H3A: Authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions are more likely than other authoritarian regimes to transition to democracy

H3B: Democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions are more likely than average to survive.

3.5: Summary of Analytical Approach

Table 3.1 combines my observations from the previous sections to summarize my argument in full. The argument offers a significant contribution to the existing literature by providing an integrated theory on how authoritarian civil-military relations impact the military's role in transitional politics. It demonstrates how contingent choices made by authoritarian leaders shape the cleavages and interests that structure civil-military relations throughout the duration of the authoritarian regime and beyond. These cleavages condition how the military responds at critical junctures during the democratization process, when the military's role monopoly on violence becomes most useful but also most dangerous to the continuation of the dictatorship.

Table 3.1: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Predicted Transition Paths

Leadership Choice	Authoritarian Civ.-Mil Relation Type	Principal Cleavage	Military Response to Pressure	Dem Transition	Dem Survival	Likely Transition Path
Military in power Co-ethnics at times dominate military	Military Regime	Professional and Praetorian officers	Fracture	Moderately likely	<i>Least stable</i>	Democratic Instability
Military out of power Co-ethnics dominate military	Ethnic Army	Co-ethnic and non-co-ethnic soldiers and civilians	Unity	<i>Unlikely</i>	Moderately stable	Democratic Obstruction
Military out of power Co-ethnics do not dominate military	Representative Army	Army and authoritarian leadership	Defection	<i>Most likely</i>	<i>Most stable</i>	Democratic Stability

The argument further contributes to literatures on military rule and military ethnicity, illustrating how neither choice begets a straightforward path to consolidated democracy. While military regimes are fairly likely to transition to democracy, the democracies that succeed them are unlikely to survive. Regimes with ethnic civil-military relations on the whole fare worse, on balance never democratizing in the first place. This study's central outcomes and hypotheses concerning them can thus be condensed into three core propositions, each with observable implications:

- 1) Democracies which succeed military regimes are unlikely to last long,*
- 2) Civilian-led regimes with ethnically stacked armies will tend to block democratic transitions, and*
- 3) Civilian led authoritarian regimes without ethnically stacked armies will be most likely to transition to stable democracy.*

The remainder of this dissertation is devoted to empirically investigating the theory proposed here. In the next chapter, I test the observable implications of the theory laid out here using an original database of democratic transitions in Africa between 1990 and the present day. Though the analysis provides strong evidence in favor of the idea that the types of civil-military relations I identify are associated with the transitional outcomes argued, the cross-country analysis is not sufficient to identify the precise causal mechanisms at work. Instead, qualitative assessments are needed to confirm the extent to which the civil-military cleavages I specify, through their impact on the military's behavior at critical junctures, cause the transitional outcomes in the theory. Therefore, the

fifth, sixth and seventh chapters extend my argument and use process tracing methods to identify the causal mechanisms in three cases with varying democratization outcomes and differences in authoritarian civil-military relation type: military regimes in Nigeria, ethnic civil-military relations in Sudan, and representative civil-military relations in Tunisia.

Chapter 4

Authoritarian Militaries in Africa and their Discontents: Cross-National Patterns of Democratization since 1960

This chapter draws an original database of transitions to and from democracy in Africa from 1945 to the present to investigate the core claims of my theory. The descriptive statistics and confirmatory analyses largely confirm this project's hypotheses. Military rule and ethnic stacking strongly influenced democratization patterns. Where about two-thirds of military regimes resulted in democracy, democracies that succeed such regimes last only eight years on average, half the length of other democracies. The relationship is evident based on descriptive statistics and statistically significant in every regression model used. Likewise, non-military led regimes with ethnic armies transitioned to democracy only 20 percent of the time. Depending on the specification, regression models indicated that such regimes were between 30 and 60 percent less likely than average to permit transitions than other kinds of armies in other authoritarian contexts, a finding also robust to every regression specification used. Democracies succeeding regimes with ethnic armies lasted 11 years, about average for all new democracies in Africa. Finally, Africa's autocratic regimes with representative armed forces have the surest path to stable democracy. These regimes transition to democracy four-fifths of the time, more frequently than other regimes, and democratic settlements last nearly 20 years, almost twice as long as average.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses how the database was constructed, the central variables used, and how these variables reflect the key concepts in the rest of the dissertation. The second section examines the core tenets of the theory using descriptive statistical analysis of authoritarian civil-military relations and democratization outcomes. The final section tests the hypotheses made in Chapter 3 with cross-country regression analysis, using a full set of controls and a combination of models selected to account for various forms of bias and provide easily interpretable results.

4.1: Data Collection and Coding Procedures

To test my core theoretical claims, I compiled and expanded on existing data relating to *democratic transitions*, *democratic duration*, *military rule*, *ethnic stacking*, *military institution type*. The data was culled principally from pre-existing data sets, but supplemented by scholarly accounts, newspaper articles, and reference books. Table 1 indicates the study's independent, dependent, and control variables, offering a brief description of each and stating the principal scholarly source, if applicable. In this section, I describe the key concepts, definitions, and coding techniques associated with the study's independent, outcome, and control variables. The two major outcome variables of interest to this study include *transition percentage*, which denotes whether an authoritarian regime resulted in democracy, and *democratic duration*, which measures the length of emerging democratic regimes. The independent variables of interest include *military capabilities* and *military institution type*, which are coded based on the

interaction of institutionalized military rule and ethnic stacking. Control variables included *per capita income* and *income growth*, *oil and mineral wealth*, *colonial status*, *transitional conflict*, *previous coup attempts*, and *ethnic fractionalization and dominance*.

Table 4.1: Independent, Outcome and Control Variables

Variable	Description	Source(s)
<u>Independent Variables</u>		
Ethnic Stacking	Whether authoritarian leaders attempt to create co-ethnic armed forces	Harkness 2016
Institutionalized Military Rule	Whether a group of military officers is responsible for decision-making	Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014
Military Institution Type	Categorical variable measured with categories including: institutionalized military rule, civilian dictatorship w/ ethnic army, civilian dictatorship w/ civil army	Harkness 2012; Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014; various scholarly accounts, reference and news sources
<u>Outcome Variables</u>		
Democratic Transition (%)	Whether authoritarian regime resulted in a democratic transition or a blocked transition	Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2016); Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014; various scholarly accounts, reference and news sources
Democratic duration (yrs)	Duration of democratic regime succeeding transition	Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2016); Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014; various scholarly accounts, reference and news sources
<u>Control / Conditioning Variables</u>		
Military Capabilities	Measured as: 1) military expenditure as a percent of GDP, and 2) military expenditure per soldier	International Institute for Strategic Studies, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
Economic growth / size	GDP or one-year change in GDP at time of transition / end of democratic regime	World Bank 2016 World Development Indicators
Oil/Mineral Wealth	Whether or minerals constitutes “major” or “principal” export of a given country	Harkness 2016
Colonial Status	Indicator based on whether country was former French or British colony	

Transitional Conflict	Indicator based on whether deaths occurred during the transition	Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014
Previous Coup Attempts	Number of coup attempts in past ten years	Marshall and Marshall 2016
Ethnic Fractionalization	Probability that two randomly selected individuals belong to different ethnic groups	Alesina et al 2003
Ethnic Dominance	Percentage of population of largest ethnic group	Alesina et al 2003

4.1.1: The Outcome Variables: Democratic Transition and Duration

To code transitions to and from democracy, I draw primarily on the work of the Polity IV project and the recent database of Barbara Geddes, Erica Frantz and Joseph Wright on authoritarian transitions. To define and measure democracy, I relied on the Polity IV project, which defines democracy as “1) the presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express effective preferences about alternative policies and leaders and 2) in which there exist institutionalized constraints on the executive power by the executive.” The Polity IV uses a composite indicator to measure both the expression of citizen preferences and constraints on the executive on a twenty-point scale. Democracies receive a positive score; autocracies receive a negative score.²⁰⁶

I chose to use Polity IV for two principal reasons. First, Polity IV contains data on democracy dating back to 1800, making it the most historically comprehensive database available. Other commonly used measures of democratization, such as the *Freedom*

²⁰⁶ See Monty Marshall, Ted Gurr and Keith Jagers. “Polity IV Project: Dataset Users’ Manual,” (Center for Systemic Peace, 2016).

House rankings, do not have anywhere near the same level of historical coverage.

Second, Polity IV's primary focus on political participation and constraints creates a considerable amount of variation on the dependent variable in Africa. Since few African countries meet more maximalist definitions of democracy that include civil and political liberties or economic rights such as health care and universal education, a more minimalist definition of democracy is appropriate.

The use of the Polity data allowed the adoption of straightforward coding procedures to measure transitions to and from democracy. A transition is coded as a "democratic transition" in one of two cases: 1) a country previously receiving a negative polity score during one year receives a score of zero or above the following year; or 2) a country with a previously negative polity score enters a period of interregnum or transition, followed by a positive polity score.²⁰⁷ The democracy is coded to have begun the first year of the "transition" and after the interregnum. The reverse is true for democratic collapse. A democracy is coded to have ended if 1) a country previously receiving a positive polity score during one year receives a score of negative one or below the following year; or 2) a country with a previously positive polity score enters a period of interregnum or transition, followed by a negative polity score. In these cases, the democracy is considered to have ended at the onset of the interregnum or transition

²⁰⁷ The Polity IV codebook identifies three cases in which it does not assign a Polity score: interruption, interregnum, and transition periods. Interruption periods occur in the case of occupation by foreign powers or during the establishment or attempted establishment of ethnic, religious or regional federations. Interregnum periods refer to the total collapse of centralized political authority. A "transition" is a period during which new institutions are planned, legally constituted, and put into effect. See Marshall et al, "Polity IV Project," p. 19.

period. In a small number of cases, a democracy was also considered to have collapsed if the government falls to an insurgency.

Ghana is a country that has experienced each of the kinds of transitions to and from democracy outlined above. After the 1996 elections, won by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, the country received a Polity score of 2, up from the score of -1 it received during the 1992 elections, also won by Rawlings. Ghana is therefore coded as having transitioned from authoritarianism to democracy after the 1996 elections. In 1969, Ghana entered a period of interregnum as the military government held the country's first competitive elections since 1956. Upon Kofia Busia's assumption of power in 1970, the regime became a democracy, with a Polity score of 3, up from the -7 it received prior to the period of interregnum. After Busia fell victim to a coup in 1972, Ghana's Polity score plummeted back down to -7 in 1972, ending democracy.

I code a "blocked" transition as occurring in one of two cases: 1) a country with a previously negative polity score enters a period of transition or interregnum and emerges with a negative polity score; or 2) one authoritarian regime is replaced by another. The first type of case was coded using Polity data. An example is Gabon, when authoritarian president Omar Bongo was elected to a third term as president after a period during which elections were organized and the country undertook some political reform. The change in Polity score from -9 to -4 after a one-year transition period in 1993 was not enough to change Gabon's status as an authoritarian regime. The transition was thus coded as "blocked."

To code instances where one authoritarian government is replaced by another, I relied on the dataset of Geddes, Frantz and Wright, which measures regime changes to and from democracies and between different forms of autocracy as changes between the small “leadership group” who makes a country’s most important decisions.²⁰⁸ As Geddes and her colleagues argue, making this distinction, which is responsible for a little less than half of all transitions, is crucial to understanding why autocracy leads to democracy in some cases but not in others. I manually extended to 2015 the database of Geddes and her colleagues, which previously ran to 2010. An example of this type of transition is Libya, Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi’s 1969 coup replaced the monarchy of Idris I. Because the leadership group of the authoritarian regime changed without resulting in democracy, the transition is considered “blocked.”

The resulting dataset yields 92 cases of transition in Africa since 1960, 44 of which resulted in transitions to democracy and 48 of which resulted in blocked transitions. As of the end of 2016, 8 current regimes in Africa have never experienced a transition in Africa and are considered “founding” regimes.²⁰⁹ These regimes are included in calculations on democratic transitions, but not transitions. Due to data limitations and the manifestly different nature of colonial rule, this article does not consider transitions immediately following the collapse of colonialism, instead considering such regimes to be founding governments.

²⁰⁸ Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. “Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set.” *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 2 (2014), p. 315.

²⁰⁹ These include Eritrea, Botswana, Mauritius, Swaziland, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, and the Gambia. See Appendix B for full list of countries and transitions.

4.1.2: Independent Variables: Military Rule, Ethnic Stacking and Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations

Two key concepts, military regimes and ethnic stacking, are central to my project and are used to derive the *authoritarian civil-military relations (authoritarian CMR)*, this study's main independent variable. This project follows Geddes in defining military rule as "a group of officers that determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy," and in arguing that the distinction between military and other forms of rule has important consequences for a regime's prospects and opportunities for democratization.²¹⁰ The coding for this variable is mostly drawn from the work of Geddes, Frantz and Wright, and extended to cover from 2010 to 2015 as well as countries with fewer than one million people.

To define and measure the degree of ethnic imbalances within the armed forces, I draw on and extend the data of Kristen Harkness, who examines the role of ethnic armies in African politics post-colonialization and in constitutional transfers of power. Harkness identifies two strategies that African leaders use to build co-ethnic armed forces: 1) restructuring the officer corps of an existing army along co-ethnic lines or 2) constructing co-ethnic parallel military institutions, such as presidential guards and militias, and

²¹⁰ Geddes, Barbara Geddes. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2.1 (1999), p. 124. Some border-line cases exist, which the authors cross-coded as combinations of different categories of authoritarian regimes. One example is Egypt from 1952-2011, which Geddes and her colleagues coded as "t-threat" to indicate that the regime combined elements of institutionalized military, single party, and personalist rule. For consistency's sake, I chose to always code such cases as "institutionalized military regimes." See Geddes, Wright, and Frantz. "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set."

disarming the regular military.²¹¹ Following Harkness, I refer to either of these two strategies “ethnic” or “sectarian” stacking. Harkness’ data extends from only from 1960 to 2010 and covers a limited number of countries, so additional efforts were made to fill in missing data through consulting other scholars, news sources, and archives around the time of the transition periods in question.

Authoritarian civil-military relation type, my primary independent variable, was coded based on Table 2, which characterizes all authoritarian regimes in Africa since independence based on whether the armed forces were in power or whether they were subject to ethnic stacking. The characterization was based on an expanded dataset drawn from the work of both Harkness, Polity IV, and Geddes and her colleagues. Ethnic stacking accompanied by civilian rule is most common form of civil-military relations under authoritarianism in Africa, comprising 41 different authoritarian regimes. I refer to these as *ethnic civil-military relations* or *ethnic armies*. The next most common regime type was the *military regime*, which occurred in 35 cases.²¹² In 16 regimes, a civilian has ruled without creating co-ethnic military institutions, creating *representative civil-military relations* or *representative armies*. A full list of regime-spells included, their coding, and transition outcomes can be found in Appendix B.

²¹¹ Kristen Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State: Explaining Coup Traps and the Difficulties of Democratization in Africa.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 4 (June 1, 2016), p. 594.

²¹² Note that in nearly all cases of military rule, sectarian stacking occurred as well. This makes military rule without sectarian stacking in Africa for all intents and purposes an empty set, occurring in only three cases: Egypt, Mali during the most recent interregnum from 2012-2013, and Sierra Leone from 1994-1996.

Table 4.2: Ethnic Stacking and Military Rule under Authoritarianism in Africa, 1945-Present

		Military Rule	
		Yes	No
Ethnic Stacking	Yes	<u>Military Regimes</u> n=32 n=3	
	No	<u>Ethnic CMR</u> n=41	<u>Civil CMR</u> n=21

Source: Frantz, Geddes and Wright 2014; Harkness 2016; Marshall and Jagers 2016; author's own coding

I contend that by treating each of the types of armies I identify above as distinct analytical categories, we gain significant analytical leverage and concerning under what circumstances the armed forces is likely to support democratic transitions and allow democracies to survive.

4.1.3: Control Variables

In the cross-country regression analysis, I adopted a series of controls selected both for theoretical significance and for common use in other studies of both democratization and military intervention. These control variables include: 1) Military capabilities; 2) GDP per capita and GDP growth, commonly found by scholars to be strongly associated both with democratic transition and democratic collapse; 3) whether

or not the country had significant oil or natural mineral wealth, commonly found to impede democratization; 4) former colonial status; 5) number of coups in the previous ten years; and 6) whether the period of transition was accompanied by conflict.

I adopt two variables with which I proxy for military capabilities. The first is military spending as a percentage of GDP, drawn from the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI) 2016 database. This measure is fairly commonly used in previous studies in Africa and elsewhere that have attempted to examine the relationship between military resources and political transitions.²¹³ The second variable included is military spending per soldier, with estimates on the number of soldiers per country drawn from the *International Institute for Strategic Studies* (IISS) 2016 global military balances data. This second measure is far less commonly used.²¹⁴ It is, however, argued by some scholars to be a good measure of military professionalism, reflecting the idea that modern armies tend to rely more on equipment, technology and training than on raw manpower.²¹⁵ The data on military capacity only extends back to 1988, so it is not used in all regressions.

²¹³ See, for example, Gavin Kennedy, *The Military and the Third World* (Duckworth and Co., 1974); Robert Jackman, "The Predictability of Coups d'Etat: A Model with African Data." *The American Political Science Review* 72.04 (1978), pp. 1262 - 1275; Craig Jenkins, and Augustine J. Kposowa. "The Political Origins of African Military Coups: Ethnic Competition, Military Centrality, and the Struggle over the Postcolonial State." *International Studies Quarterly* 36.3 (1992), pp. 271–291; Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Coups Traps: Why Does Africa Have So Many Coups d'État?" Centre for the Study of African Economies, Department of Economics, University of Oxford.

²¹⁴ For two exceptions, see Jonathan Powell, "Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 6 (2012) and Harkness, "The Ethnic Army and the State."

²¹⁵ See Powell, "Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'État."

One of the most well-established findings in the literature is that economic prosperity and democratization are closely related processes. Cross-nationally, democracy is strongly correlated with income.²¹⁶ Higher-income countries are both more likely to transition to democracy, and more likely to remain democracies.²¹⁷ Low-income democracies are particularly vulnerable to collapse if they fail to achieve consistent economic growth²¹⁸ or as a result of an economic crisis.²¹⁹ Therefore, this study uses both GDP per capita and GDP growth as control variables. Income-related variables are measured at the time of transition for the models on democratic transition, and at the time of collapse or using the most recent information available for the models on democratic duration.

Another well-established finding in the literature is that significant oil and mineral wealth impede democracy, a phenomenon known as the “resource curse.” Numerous cross-national studies find strong linkages between oil and mineral wealth and authoritarianism²²⁰ among other negative outcomes including civil war²²¹ and low

²¹⁶ Seymour Martin Lipsett, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy,” *American Political Science Review* 53.01 (1959), pp. 69–105; Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, “Modernization: Theories and Facts,” *World Politics* 49, no.2 (1997), pp. 155–83.

²¹⁷ Przeworski and Limongi, “Modernization.”

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Mark Gasiorowski, “Economic Crisis and Political Regime Change: An Event History Analysis” *American political science review* 89, no. 04 (1995), pp. 882-897; Jan Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World, 1972–2006*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²²⁰ See, for example, Hazem Beblawi, “The Rentier State in the Arab World,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* (1987), pp. 383-398; Terry Karl, *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Univ of California Press, 1997); Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53, no. 3 (2001), pp. 325–61; Nathan Jensen and Leonard Wantchekon. “Resource Wealth and Political Regimes in Africa.” *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no. 7 (2004), pp. 816-841.

²²¹ James Fearon and David D. Laitin, “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 01 (2003), pp. 75-90. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “Greed and Grievance in Civil

economic growth.²²² For the purposes of this study, a country was considered a major oil or mineral exporter if, according to the most recent publicly available figures, oil or mineral exports constituted greater than five percent of GDP. As with the income controls, these figures were measured either at the time of transition, collapse, or using the most recent data available.

Third, a common argument in the Africanist literature is that patterns of state formation have been uniquely influenced by Africa's colonial history.²²³ The French, with the development of the West Africa currency union and a persistent pattern of military support for intervention, have remained particularly economically and militarily active in former colonies. This project follows a wide range of scholars studying both military intervention and democratization in Africa and controls for the unique influences of former colonies by including a dummy variable indicating whether the country was a former British or French colony.

Finally, I included controls for the number of coup attempts in the previous ten years and a dummy variable to denote whether the transition was accompanied by

War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56.04 (2004), pp. 563-595. Michael L. Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41.03. 3 (2004), pp. 337-356.

²²² Carlos Leite and Jens Weidmann, "Does Mother Nature Corrupt? Natural Resources, Corruption, and Economic Growth" (International Monetary Fund, 1999). Richard Auty (ed.), *Resource Abundance and Economic Development* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

²²³ See Ali Mazrui, "Francophone Nations and English-Speaking States: Imperial Ethnicity and African Political Formations," In Donald Rothchild and Victor Olorunsola (eds.), *State versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas* (Westview Press, 1983) and Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (Yale University Press, 1994).

conflict to account for reverse causality.²²⁴ The literature on military intervention establishes a strong relationship between present and past coup attempts.²²⁵ Likewise, emerging democracies are far more likely to succumb to conflict than other regime types. It is therefore possible that transitions to and from democracy could be influenced by previous coup history or by transitional conflict rather than pre-existing military institutions. The coup data was drawn from Monty and Marshall's data, which covers from 1945-2015.²²⁶ The data on transitional conflict was drawn from Geddes, Frantz and Wright, who denote whether the transitions in their database resulted in any deaths.²²⁷

4.2: Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In this section, I examine the relationships between military rule, ethnic stacking and democratization in Africa using descriptive statistics. This project's hypotheses are reproduced in Table 1 below. The key implications of my theory are: 1) African countries with ethnic armed forces are unlikely to transition to democracy, 2) that democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with political armies are unlikely to survive, and 3) authoritarian regimes with civil-military institutions will be both more likely to transition

²²⁴ For more on the tendency of emerging democracies to become engaged in conflict, see Mansfield, Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder. *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (MIT Press, 2005).

²²⁵ Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer. "Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47, no. 5 (2003), pp. 594-620; Collier and Hoeffler, "Coup Traps."

²²⁶ Monty Marshall, "Coup D'État Events, 1946-2015" (Center for Systemic Peace, 2016).

²²⁷ See Geddes, Wright and Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown."

and to survive. These hypotheses are tested on an original database of African transitions dating back to 1960.

Table 4.3: Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Predicted Transition Paths

Authoritarian CMR	Key features	Most Likely Transition Path	Likelihood of Transition to Democracy	Democratic Durability
Military Regimes	Military divided along personal, professional and ethnic lines	Democratic Instability	Moderately likely	Least durable
Ethnic	Military divided along ethnic lines favoring one or several ethnic groups	Democratic Obstruction	Unlikely	Moderately durable
Representative	United military little used in internal police action	Democratic Stability	Most likely	Most stable

The descriptive results concerning the effect of military rule and ethnic stacking on democratization outcomes are illustrated in Table 4.4. Countries experiencing military rule transitioned to democracy two-thirds of the time, whereas those with ethnic stacking in their military institutions transitioned somewhat more than one-third of the time. By contrast, institutionalized military rule resulted in democracy two-thirds of the time; the average was half. Democracies that succeeded countries experiencing military rule or ethnic stacking also lasted between two and three years less on average.

Table 4.4: Democratization Outcomes of Countries Experiencing Military Rule & Ethnic Stacking, 1945-2015

Armed Forces Type	Democratic transition (%)	Democratic survival (yrs)
Military Rule (n=35)	66%	8
Ethnic Stacking (n=75)	41%	9
Average (n=92)	49%	11

Though these results support my hypotheses overall, they understate the magnitude of the effects of pre-existing military institutions on democratic change. The main reason for this is that ethnic stacking, which occurred in over 80 percent of all cases, is far too common to provide meaningful variation on the outcomes of interest. When the descriptive statistics are further disaggregated to reflect this project’s central hypotheses, which represent military rule and civilian institutions with ethnic stacking as distinct analytical categories, the results are even more compelling.

Table 4.5 presents descriptive statistics describing democratization patterns of authoritarian regimes disaggregated by the typology of military, ethnic, and representative civil-military relations. The results confirm my hypotheses and assert a powerful association between authoritarian military institutions and democratic transition patterns. 23 of the 35 regimes in Africa (66 percent) that experienced military rule ended in democracy. However, these 23 regimes have lasted only eight years on average, three years less than average and half as long as authoritarian regimes with civil-military institutions. These results provide strong evidence to support my argument that

authoritarian regimes with political militaries tend to follow transition paths of democratic instability.

Likewise, the descriptive evidence supports my argument that the most frequent outcome for civilian-led authoritarian regimes with ethnic stacking is to foreclose democratization before it begins. Only seven of the forty-one authoritarian regimes (17 percent) with ethnic armed forces ended in a democratic transition, three times less than the average and with four or five times less frequency than other authoritarian regimes. Despite the small sample size, the seven democracies that succeeded such regimes lasted an average of 11 years, the same as the average length for democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes of all kinds. This renders democracies following regimes with ethnic civil-military relations more likely to survive than democracies that succeed military rule and less likely to survive than democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with representative-military institutions.

The 16 cases where the military managed to stay out of power and avoid polarizing the armed forces along ethnic lines had by far the easiest path to democracy. 13 out of 16 authoritarian regimes (82 percent) with representative civil-military institutions transitioned to democracy. Democratic settlements that result from regimes with representative armies last 16 years on average, five years longer than those that succeeded regimes with ethnic military institutions and eight years longer than those that succeeded military rule. If the founding extant democracies with representative civil-military relations of Mauritius, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, and Liberia are included, the average duration rises to over 20 years.

Table 4.5: Democratization Outcomes of African Armed Forces Under Authoritarianism, 1945-

Present					
Authoritarian CMR	Path	<u>Hypotheses</u>		<u>Outcomes</u>	
		Likelihood of Transition to Democracy	Democratic Durability	Democratic transition	Democratic Survival (yrs)
Military Regime (n=35)	Instability	Little/ no effect	Least durable	66%	8
Ethnic (n=41)	Obstruction	Least likely	Little/no effect	17%	11
Representative (n=21)	Stability	Most likely	Most durable	82%	21
Average (n=97)				49%	13

Sources include: Harkness 2016; Geddes et al 2012; Marshall and Jagers 2016

The descriptive statistics, then, are consistent with my argument that military regimes tend to follow paths of democratic instability, regimes with ethnic civil-military relations paths of democratic obstruction, and regimes with representative civil-military relations paths of democratic stability. We now examine whether these descriptive relations are able to withstand the scrutiny of more rigorous forms of analysis.

4.3: Regression Analysis

This section tests my theory through cross-country regression analysis of the relationship between military institutions under authoritarianism and subsequent

democratization patterns. Several different measurement strategies were applied to each outcome of interest. First, both ordinary least squares (OLS) and logistic regression were employed to test hypotheses concerning democratic transition. Each model employs a binary outcome denoting whether the transition to democracy was successful or blocked. The coefficients on the OLS model can therefore be interpreted as probabilities.

For the hypotheses on democratic duration, it is not appropriate to use OLS with a count of years as the outcome variable. This is because the data includes 40 extant African democracies for which information about their ultimate prospects for survival is incomplete. Therefore, hypotheses are tested using a 1) a linear probability model with a binary variable denoting whether the democracy lasted ten or more years; and 2) a right-censored duration (Weibull) model, with the outcome variable denoting the number of years a democracy survived or is likely to survive. The use of each of these models has benefits and drawbacks. Though an improvement over OLS, the linear probability model may still produce biased results for the nine democracies within the dataset that have democratized within the previous ten years. The survival model, by contrast, estimates the likely survival time for extant democracies by treating surviving democracies as right-censored. It should produce the least biased estimates that retain the most information, and has been employed by several previous scholars interested in measuring democratic survival.²²⁸

²²⁸ See Harkness, "Coup Traps" and Michael Bernhard, Timothy Nordstrom, and Christopher Reenock, "Economic Performance, Institutional Intermediation, and Democratic Survival." *Journal of Politics* 63, no. 3 (2001), pp. 775-803.

The independent variables in the analysis are indicator variables constructed from Table 4. For all models, I used categorical dummies to denote authoritarian regimes under military rule (*military*); civilian-ruled authoritarian regimes with ethnic stacking (*ethnic*); and civilian-led regimes without ethnic stacking (*representative*). About half of the models include military expenditure as a percentage of GDP and the log of military expenditure per soldier. This data is only available post-1988, so it is not included in all regressions.

The results confirm the findings of the descriptive statistics. Authoritarian regimes with ethnic armed forces are far less likely to transition to democracy than authoritarian regimes with different military institutions. The OLS model indicates that ethnic armed forces are between 47 to 64 percent less likely to permit transitions to democracy than representative military institutions, the significance of which is also confirmed in the logistic regressions (see Table 4.6). The coefficient is strongly statistically significant and robust to the inclusion of military expenditures and other controls. The small decrease in the magnitude of the coefficient when military spending is included is likely due to the smaller number of post-1988 observations included in the regressions with military spending. Unsurprisingly, Wald tests further confirmed that democratic transitions were significantly less likely to occur in authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies than when following military rule.²²⁹ The evidence is therefore quite

²²⁹ For both OLS and logistic regression models, the Wald statistic was above 6 and significant at a one percent level.

convincing that ethnic armies are less likely to countenance transitions to democracy than their counterparts in military regimes and representative-military institutions.

The results also support the argument that military regimes are less likely to permit transition to democracy than representative ones. Though the difference between representative civil-military relations and military regimes is statistically significant at the 10 percent level only when the full-set of non-military expenditure controls are included, the co-efficient is negative in every model. In the models with more than 70 observations, military regimes are between 16 and 28 percent less likely to support democratic transitions than regimes with representative civil-military relations. In sum, the regression results confirm this dissertation's central hypotheses: authoritarian regimes with representative armies are most likely to transition to democracy, followed by military regimes, followed by authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies, who are by a considerable margin least likely to be succeeded by democracy.

Oil production, military spending as a percentage of GDP, GDP per capita, GDP growth, previous coup history, ethnic fractionalization, and whether the transition was accompanied by a civil war show no relation to the probability of a democratic transition in either model. French and British colonial rule are associated with a stronger probability of transition to democracy in the model without military expenditure data included but have little relation post-1988. Though the coefficient on military expenditure as a percentage of GDP is positive in all models, it is not statistically significant in both the OLS and the logit models when the full set of controls are included. This association

would indicate, quite reasonably, that British and French colonial policy had a stronger influence on democratization patterns shortly after independence.

The main findings from the cross-country analysis on democratic transitions are illustrated in Figure 4.1, which is a dot-whisker plot showing the point estimates and 90 percent confidence intervals for the OLS regressions with a fully specified set of controls (model 4 in Table 4.6).²³⁰ The coefficients whose confidence intervals do not touch zero are statistically significant at the 10 percent level. The small sample size does, however, lead to high variances and confidence intervals. Even the confidence interval on ethnic armies, for example, is wide—between approximately 30 percent and 90 percent. Nevertheless, support for the study’s central argument is evident. Regimes with ethnic armies are significantly less likely and regimes with military governments marginally less likely than representative military institutions to permit democratic transitions. Former British colonies are significantly more likely to democratize, and all other factors are insignificant.

²³⁰ The 90 percent confidence interval is 1.65 times the standard error, which are in parentheses in Table 7. This model included data from 1960-2015, which meant leaving out the military expenditure data.

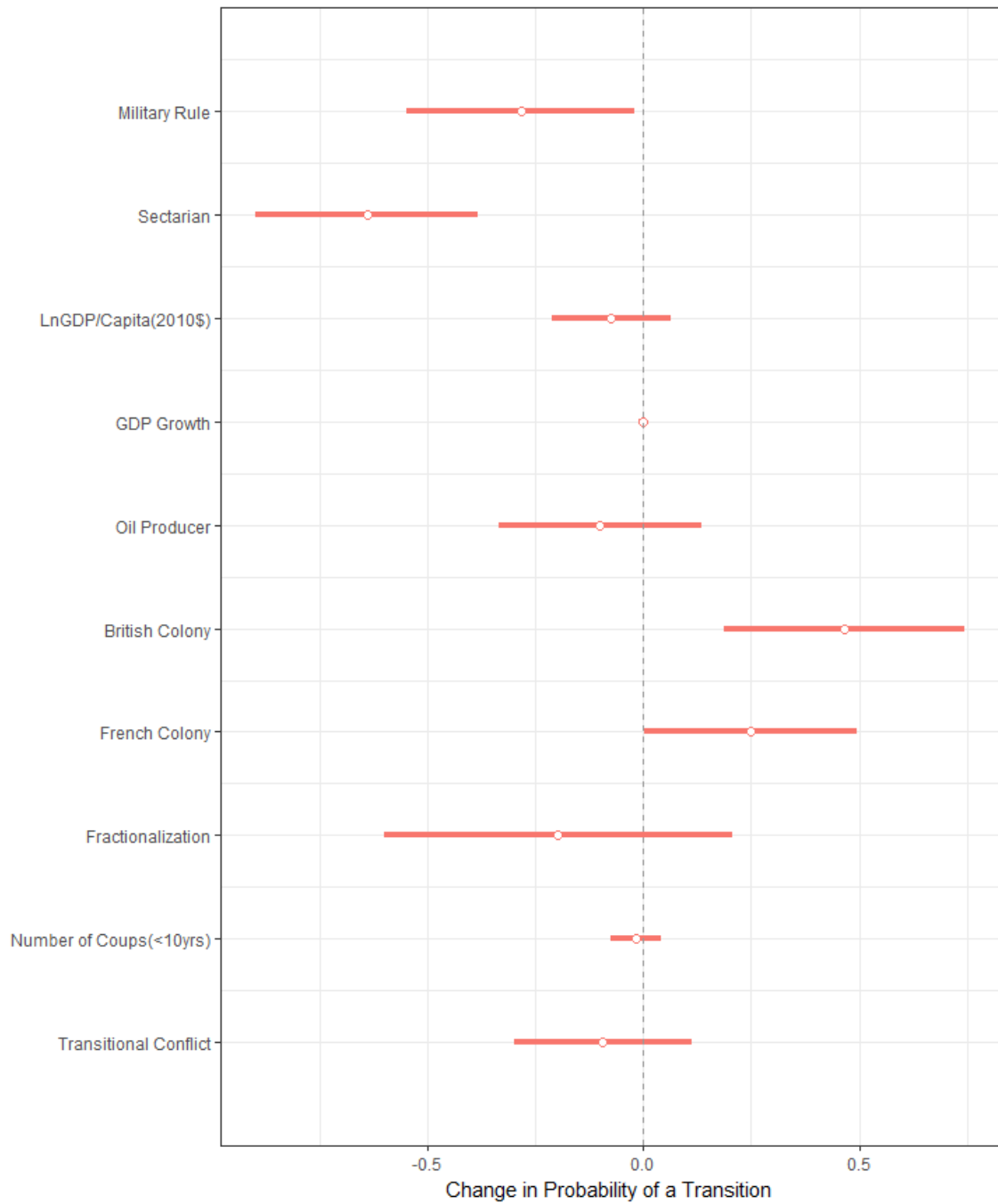
Table 4.6: Determinants of Democratization in Africa, 1960-2015

<i>Independent variable:</i>	<i>Dependent variable: Probability of Democratic Transition</i>						
	<i>OLS</i>				<i>logistic</i>		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ethnic	-0.593*** (0.130)	-0.474** (0.196)	-0.640*** (0.157)	-0.490** (0.229)	-2.937** (1.420)	-3.636*** (1.226)	-5.111* (2.625)
Military Rule	-0.146 (0.132)	-0.159 (0.168)	-0.284* (0.161)	-0.013 (0.223)	-1.522 (1.355)	-1.969 (1.218)	-1.114 (1.610)
Military Expenditure/GDP		-0.082* (0.044)		-0.017 (0.066)	-0.493* (0.272)		-0.383 (0.394)
Military Expenditure/Soldier		0.016 (0.078)		-0.013 (0.134)	0.094 (0.484)		0.203 (0.704)
LnGDP/Capita(2010)			-0.074 (0.083)			-0.156 (0.489)	
GDP Growth			-0.002 (0.005)	-0.006 (0.011)		-0.007 (0.032)	-0.021 (0.059)
Oil Producer			-0.100 (0.142)	-0.318 (0.189)		-0.994 (0.848)	-2.876 (1.757)
British Colony			0.466*** (0.169)	0.185 (0.306)		1.977** (0.869)	1.106 (2.134)
French Colony			0.250* (0.150)	0.111 (0.273)			1.639 (1.937)
Fractionalization			-0.198 (0.245)	0.181 (0.388)		-0.475 (1.319)	2.300 (2.394)
#Coups(<10yrs)			-0.017 (0.035)	-0.030 (0.056)		-0.105 (0.196)	
Transitional Conflict			-0.094 (0.125)	-0.223 (0.217)		-0.877 (0.692)	
Constant	0.813*** (0.110)	0.939 (0.666)	1.404** (0.569)	1.028 (1.097)	2.919 (4.305)	4.488 (3.479)	1.329 (6.084)
Observations	93	35	72	34	35	72	35
R ²	0.249	0.305	0.364	0.467			
Adjusted R ²	0.232	0.212	0.260	0.200			
Log Likelihood					-15.977	-34.908	-12.772

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 4.1: Dot-Whisker Plot of Linear Regression on Authoritarian Civil-Military Relations and Transitional Probabilities (Model 4)



The data on democratic consolidation in Africa also lends support to the findings of the descriptive statistics. Democracies that succeed military regimes last far shorter than democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions (see Table 4.7). Democracies that succeed military regimes are between 30 and 40 percent less likely to last more than 10 years compared to other democracies. The finding that democracies that succeed military rule in Africa are fated to end early was robust to every specification. Monte Carlo simulations run using the survival model (Model 7 in Table 4.7) predicts particularly vast differences; in 100,000 simulations, the average length of survival drops by close to 60 years when a regime changes from military to non-military rule while holding other variables constant at their means (see Figure 4.2). Only in the linear probability model, when included with the limited data on military expenditure (n=24), does the significance drop below the one percent level.

The empirical results offer somewhat more qualified support for the argument that democracies that succeed military regimes last less long than those that succeed authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies. In all but the regression model with the post-1988 expenditure data, the co-efficient on ethnic armies is less than the co-efficient on military rule. In the bivariate model with the full set of controls (Model 5), the coefficient on military regimes, while slightly smaller than that on ethnic armies, is not significantly different. In the hazard model, the coefficient on military rule is substantially smaller and the difference is significant (Model 7).²³¹ Likewise, the results offer qualified support for

²³¹ In the linear probability model, the Wald statistic was 0.15 and the p value was only 0.69. For the hazard model, the Wald statistic was 9.6 and the p-value was 0.0019.

the argument that democracies that succeed ethnic armies last less long than those succeeding authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions. In all OLS models and the bivariate hazard model, the coefficient on ethnic is negative and significant. In the hazard model with the full set of controls, the coefficient remains negative but is statistically insignificant (Model 7).

In sum, the empirical results offer strong support for the argument that democracies that succeed military regimes are less likely to survive. They offer more qualified support for the predictions on the relative difference in survival probabilities of democracies following dictatorships with representative and ethnic armies in relation to one another and in relation to military regimes. In most but not all models, democracies succeeding authoritarian regimes with representative civil-military relations last longer than regimes with ethnic civil-military relations, which themselves last longer than those succeeding military regimes. These latter differences were in turn not always significant.

As with the models on democratic transition, few of the controls are statistically significant, and the controls that are significant are not robust to specification. In the linear probability model but not the hazard model, former British and French colonies are positively associated with the length of democracy. Likewise, the military expenditure per soldier appears to have a positive effect on the duration of democracy in the hazard but not the linear probability model. The number of coups in the past 10 years also has a borderline statistically significant positive correlation in the OLS models. Given the lack of consistency for each of these variables, their robustness is suspect. None of the other

controls influence democratic duration patterns, and none of the controls are statistically significant in any of the survival models.

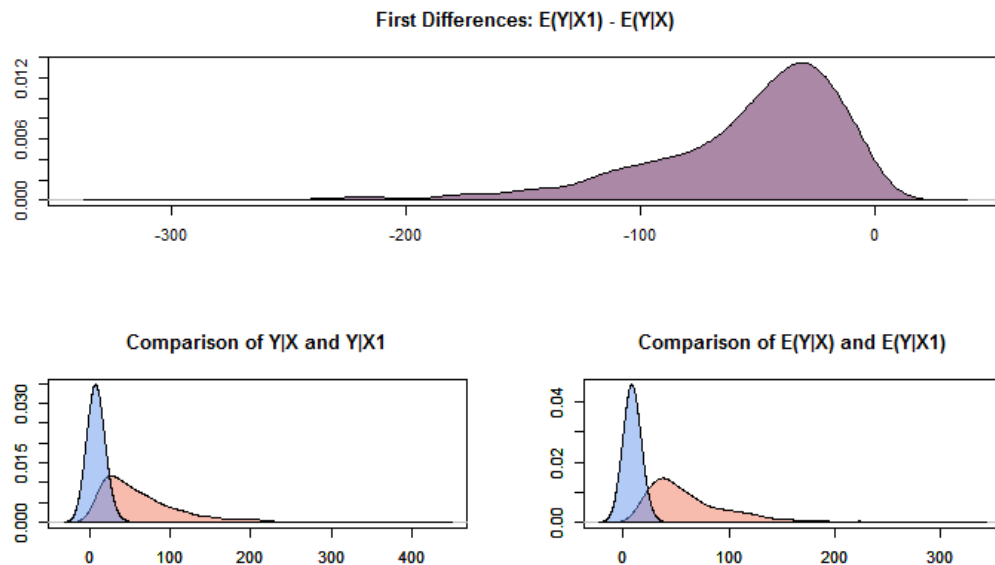
To conclude, despite very different assumptions and the high degree of variance in the models used, there is robust empirical support for this project's argument concerning the relationship between authoritarian civil-military relations and democratic survival. Cross-national regression analysis indicates that democracies that succeed military regimes have the shortest lifespans, those that succeed regimes with ethnic armies last a moderate length of time, and democracies that succeed regimes with representative military institutions tend to last far longer than average.

Table 4.7: Determinants of Democratic Duration in Africa, 1960-2015

	<i>Dependent</i>								
	<i>variable:</i>								
	Duration /years (OLS)	Democracy>10 years (OLS)				Hazard Ratio			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
Ethnic	-9.611** (3.781)	-0.500*** (0.173)		-0.798** (0.343)	-0.512** (0.219)	-2.028** (0.810)	-1.121 (0.858)		
Military	-12.722*** (2.914)	-0.548*** (0.134)		-0.404* (0.207)	- 0.611*** (0.198)	-2.602*** (0.896)	-1.873*** (0.878)		
Military Exp/ GDP			0.014 (0.085)	0.032 (0.080)				-0.191 (0.500)	0.0126 (0.607)
Military Exp/ Soldier			0.159 (0.100)	0.125 (0.097)				0.848*** (0.225)	0.819*** (0.283)
LnGDP/Capita (2010)					-0.025 (0.131)		.0003 (.0002)		
GDP Growth					-0.006 (0.009)		0.025 (0.021)		0.001 (0.062)
Oil Producer					-0.169 (0.207)		-0.263 (0.514)		-0.323 (0.924)
British Colony					0.770*** (0.277)		0.111 (0.795)		
French Colony					0.670** (0.256)		-0.126 (0.855)		
Fractionalizi on					0.301 (0.308)		1.194 (1.333)		0.736 (1.823)
#Coups(<10yr s)					0.087* (0.050)		0.202 (0.129)		
Transitional Conflict					0.283 (0.186)		-0.772 (0.708)		
Constant	20.722*** (2.183)	0.722*** (0.100)	-0.978 (0.937)	-0.481 (0.910)	-0.023 (0.880)	5.257*** (0.784)	3.287*** (1.162)	-2.877 (1.906)	-3.145 (2.209)
Log(scale)						0.014 (0.132)	-0.136 (0.182)	-0.202 (0.301)	-0.229 (0.352)
Observations	50	50	25	25	40	50	38	25	24
R ²	0.294	0.281	0.105	0.361	0.408				
Adjusted R ²	0.264	0.250	0.024	0.233	0.204				

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 4.2: Predicted Duration of Democracies Following Military Rule (Y|X) and Other Authoritarian Regimes (Y|X1) Holding Other Variables at Means, 100,000 Simulations



To verify the findings in the previous section, Table 4.8 displays the results of four series of robustness checks. First, I re-ran the transition regressions with the outcome variable as the absolute change in polity score pre-and post-transition. The change in specification of the outcome variable adds information on how different authoritarian military institutions affect the quality rather than just the presence of democracy in regimes that succeed them. As expected, regimes with ethnic civil-military relations have the most negative coefficient and are succeeded by regimes that are more than six points less democratic than average on the polity scale.

Second, I adopted a more restrictive definition of democracy, dropping the use of polity scores altogether and instead measuring transitions to and from democracy from

Geddes, Wright and Frantz's 2012 data. This resulted in a net loss of 18 cases from the data on democratic transition and 12 cases from the data on democratic duration. For both the transition and duration models, the results were the same; authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies were far less likely to result in democracy, whereas democracies succeeding military regimes were far less likely to survive. Taken together, the first two series of results provide strong evidence that my findings are robust to different conceptualizations and measures of democracy.

Third, I further restricted the sample to remove any cases where I added new data or where I modified data from original sources due to suspected coding errors. This resulted was the removal of an additional 18 cases from the transitions data and nine cases from the duration data, both due to unavailable or unclear data on ethnic stacking, military rule, or democratic outcomes. The results remain unchanged: authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies are less likely to democratize, and democracies following regimes are less likely to remain democracies. The results of these robustness checks suggest that the results found were not due to differences in coding procedures between this study and previous ones or due to suspected coding errors.

A final series of robustness checks was run adopting the restrictive definition of democracy and the restricted sample. Though the results are the same, small sample sizes limited the number of controls I was able to include in the analysis. The duration result in particular, with the very high coefficient on political armies and a sample size of only 21, should be interpreted with caution.

Table 4.8: Robustness Checks

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	Change in Polity Score	GWF Coding		No additional cases		GWF coding + No add. cases	
	(1)	Trans% (2)	Hazard Ratio (3)	Trans% (4)	Hazard Ratio (5)	Trans% (6)	Hazard Ratio (7)
Ethnic	-6.412*** (1.833)	-0.767*** (0.182)		-0.605*** (0.186)		-0.641** (0.242)	
Military	-3.366* (1.875)	-0.228 (0.190)	-2.017*** (0.653)	-0.285 (0.183)	-3.768*** (1.130)	-0.172 (0.249)	-20.520*** (2.808)
LnGDP/Capita (2010)	0.115 (0.975)	-0.047 (0.121)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.123 (0.101)		-0.178 (0.155)	
GDP Growth	0.061 (0.060)	-0.007 (0.008)	-0.205 (0.175)	-0.002 (0.005)		-0.006 (0.009)	
Oil Producer	-1.970 (1.658)	-0.059 (0.167)	-2.373 (1.151)	0.040 (0.156)	0.3565 (1.009)	0.015 (0.192)	0.385 (0.556)
British Colony	4.723** (1.969)	0.309 (0.192)	0.740 (2.069)	0.532*** (0.192)	0.774 (1.739)	0.474* (0.236)	0.198 (1.278)
French Colony	1.985 (1.746)	0.028 (0.174)	1.410 (3.421)	0.205 (0.165)	0.0813 (1.764)	0.176 (0.214)	-0.455 (1.202)
Fractionalization	1.914 (2.860)	0.232 (0.343)	1.300 (4.596)	-0.230 (0.315)	-2.788 (2.499)	0.103 (0.411)	-0.544 (1.811)
#Coups(<10yrs)	-0.113 (0.408)	-0.022 (0.039)	-0.042 (0.282)	-0.010 (0.039)	-0.075 (0.434)	-0.018 (0.046)	
Transitional Conflict	-0.391 (1.455)	-0.100 (0.143)	-1.467 (1.472)	-0.113 (0.137)	-0.317 (1.450)	-0.179 (0.173)	
Constant	6.280 (6.648)	0.990 (0.767)	2.037** (0.921)	1.641** (0.708)	7.747*** (1.675)	1.740* (0.981)	22.712 (3.250)
Log (scale)			-0.569 (0.309)		0.2172 (0.161)		-0.083 (0.159)
Observations	72	54	22	54	29	43	21
R ²	0.332	0.459		0.413		0.421	
Adjusted R ²	0.223	0.333		0.277		0.240	

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

4.4 Conclusion

Overall, the descriptive and cross-national regression analysis presented in this chapter is strongly supportive of the three central arguments I advance in this dissertation. Consistent with my argument that regimes with ethnic civil-military relations lead to patterns of democratic obstruction, such regimes are far less likely to transition to democracy than other kinds of authoritarian regimes. Consistent with the argument that military regimes engender democratic instability, such regimes are fairly likely to transition to democracy, which are far more prone to collapse. Finally, consistent with the argument that regimes whose armies neither rule nor are ethnically stacked have the surest path to democracy, authoritarian dictatorships with representative military institutions are both more likely to transition and to endure than either authoritarian regimes with ethnic institutions or those following institutionalized military rule.

First, though the empirical analysis confirmed this project's central arguments, small sample sizes and significant differences between model assumptions precluded the confirmation of less central predictions. The empirical evidence is strongly suggestive, but not fully supportive, of the notion that when controlling for other factors, authoritarian regimes with representative armies are more likely to transition than military regimes. Likewise, the evidence was suggestive, but not fully supportive, of the idea that democracies that succeed dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies tend to endure longer than those following military regimes and shorter than those following dictatorships with representative armies.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the crude measures used here are not sufficient to gain insight into causal mechanisms. The argument that in Africa military regimes tend to result in democracy more often than other regime types because divisions between praetorian and traditional officers condition the military's response at critical junctures cannot be verified here. Neither can the claim that acts of ethnic stacking by civilian rulers make the armed forces more unified and resilient in the face of pressure to liberalize. In the subsequent chapters, I draw on intensive case analyses of military regimes in Nigeria, ethnic civil-military relations in Sudan, and representative civil-military relations in Tunisia to more closely trace processes, verify causal mechanisms, and suggest avenues for future research.

Chapter 5. Military Rule and Democratic Instability in Nigeria

Most transitional coups in Nigeria have revolved around the following; the late Brigadier General Ibrahim Bako, a brilliant Armoured Corps officer who died in unexplained circumstances in the 1983 coup d'état that sent Shehu Shegari packing. Others were, General Murtala Mohammed, Major General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, an accomplished strategist of vast resources and the hero of the Onitsha campaign. General Ibrahim Babangida and General Sani Abacha. These were the carpetbaggers, the first tier of coup merchants.

Chris Alli, The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army (2001), p. 62

Babangida's own words betrayed his motives: 'We in the military waited for an opportunity. There was the media frenzy about how the election was, massively rigged, corruption, the economy gone completely bad, threat of secession by people who felt aggrieved. There was frustration within society and it was not unusual to hear statements like, the worst military dictatorship is better than this democratic government. Nigerians always welcome military intervention because we have not yet developed mentally the values and virtues of democracy.'

'You admit you were waiting for an opportunity?' I asked.

'You see we are very smart people. We don't intervene when we know the climate is not good for it or the public will not welcome it. We wait until there is frustration in the society. In all the coups, you find there has always been one frustration or the other. Any time there is frustration, we step in. And then there is a demonstration welcoming the redeemers.'

Karl Maier, This House Has Fallen (2000), p. 58

The period from 1983, when the armed forces seized power after four years of civilian rule, to when they exited power in 1999 was the most traumatic period of authoritarianism in Nigerian history. During military rule, Nigeria suffered through three successful coups and as many as four failed coup plots, averaging a coup, coup attempt, or coup plot once every two years.²³² As Nigeria's elite enriched themselves off of the

²³² Successful coups include the 1983 coup that brought Muhammadu Buhari to power, the 1985 coup that replaced Buhari with Ibrahim Babangida, and the 1994 coup where Sani Abacha seized power from the

country's abundant oil resources, Nigeria's economy shrank by one third and poverty grew to afflict more than half of the population. Tens of thousands were detained, tortured and killed for speaking out against the regime, including democracy activist Ken Saro Wiwa; Moshood Abiola, a business tycoon who decisively won the annulled 1993 election; and the former vice president, General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua. Ultimately, after annulling the 1993 election and orchestrating a 1994 coup, the Nigerian military remained in power for another five years until it orchestrated a transition back to civilian rule. Remarkably, Nigeria's Fourth Republic has now lasted almost two decades, making it the longest-standing government in Nigeria's history.

It is my contention that Nigeria's history of military governance and the cleavages it created within the armed forces are crucial to understanding Nigeria's lurches between authoritarianism, democracy, and more recent democratic stability. As is characteristic of African military regimes, the Nigerian military splintered into factions from virtually the moment it seized power in 1983. The most prominent of these factions was a group of several dozen officers who were responsible for the coup, most of whom had served in political roles in previous military governments and whom actively cultivated power. Yet these officers represented only a small fraction of the country's one hundred thousand--

Interim National Government of Ernest Shonekan. The period also suffered one confirmed failed coup attempt in 1990 from disgruntled officers mainly from Nigeria's south, as well as three suspected coup plots in 1985, 1995, and 1997 that led to public charges. Some suspect that these plots were in fact instigated by the government. For more on classifying how various sources have classified coups and coup attempts, see Monty G. Marshall and Donna Ramsay Marshall, "Coup D'État Events, 1946-2014 Codebook." *Center for Systemic Peace* (2015); Jonathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne, "Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010 a New Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 2 (2011), pp. 249-259; and Patrick J. McGowan, "African Military Coups D'État, 1956-2001: Frequency, Trends and Distribution" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 41, no 3. (2003), pp. 339-370.

strong army, most of whom never served in political roles and had few political ambitions. Ultimately, the cleavages between praetorian and traditional officers and between officers jockeying for rank and power within the praetorian fraction created a series of coups, retirements, and counter-coups, leading to a “cyclical game of self-destruction” that cannibalized nearly every institution in the country, including the military.²³³

The Nigerian military’s internal cleavages and inability to overcome them help explain one of the central puzzles posed in this chapter: why the armed forces acted to block a transition to democracy between 1993 and 1994, and then presided over a successful transition to Nigeria’s Fourth Republic a mere five years later, in 1999. In both instances, the removal of a military dictator sparked a struggle for power within the military and elevated demands both within civil society and in the international community for democratic change. In the former instance, these demands fell upon deaf ears, as a coup led by General Sani Abacha plunged Nigeria headlong into five additional years of military dictatorship. Abacha’s coup was strongly but not uniformly supported by a substantial number of high-ranking soldiers that had served in the country’s military government. Five years later, when Abacha died, it was the more traditional faction of the Nigerian military that found itself in power, and this faction helped engineer a transition to democracy. These inconsistent democratization outcomes, as well as the factionalism

²³³ Said Adejumobi. “Beyond the Politics of the Gun: The Search for Democratic Stability in Nigeria.” DPMF Publications, 1999.

that helped cause them, confirms this project's argument concerning the tendency of military regimes to result in uncertain and varying transition outcomes.

These cleavages further help to explain the Second Republic's premature demise and the Fourth Republic's enduring democratic stability. The end of the Second Republic, a democracy which lasted only four years between 1979 and 1983, likewise confirms this project's argument that the cleavages between praetorian and traditional factions of the military dampens the survival prospects for democracies that succeed military regimes. The group of officers that seized power in 1983 had served in senior political roles during the previous military regime that ended in 1979. The transition to democracy benefitted them through the retirement of many senior officers whom they had served under and by providing them the opportunity, four years later, to seize power for themselves as more senior officers. It is no coincidence that these same officers have been involved in every successful coup in Nigerian history.

Yet the fact that the Fourth Republic has proved so durable provides a challenge to this study's observation that military regimes tend to result in democratic instability. Nevertheless, a closer look at the circumstances that have contributed to the current regime's resilience provide further evidence to support the causal mechanisms advanced here. At least two important series of civil-military changes have helped Nigeria escape the legacy of military government. First, in the immediate aftermath of the transition, the Nigerian military, in collaboration with civilian officials, changed the military's incentives and recruitment structure by prematurely retiring officers that had served in

political roles and adopting more meritocratic recruitment practices. Second, these changes were made possible in part by the fact that many civilian politicians, including President Olusegun Obasanjo, had former military backgrounds. Civilian rule became attractive in part because it allowed retired or expelled officers the opportunity to use their connections, military knowledge, and wealth to continue to seek power.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. The second section provides basic information on Nigeria and situates the country within this study's sample of cases. The following sections use process tracing methods to investigate the extent to which the Nigerian military regime's role in the country's transitional politics reflects the central arguments advanced in the dissertation. The third section discusses the institutional context behind the Nigerian military's seizure of power in 1983, explaining the army's choice to rule as a collective and their decision to prematurely end democracy after just four years. The fourth section examines the political and ethnic cleavages that arose within the Nigerian military as a result of military rule. The fifth section demonstrates how those cleavages led the Nigerian military to fracture in the lead up and aftermath of the 1993 annulment, and how praetorian officers were able to capitalize on the military's internal divisions to extend military rule. The sixth section briefly considers how military government under Abacha differed from the previous military regime. The seventh examines the military-led transition in 1999, and considers why it succeeded despite the failure five years earlier. The eighth section examines the internal changes within the Nigerian armed forces in the aftermath of the country's transition to democracy, arguing that both the forced retirements of officers with previous political

experience and the continued political influence of retired officers are crucial factors in the Fourth Republic's resilience. The final section of the chapter summarizes how the causal processes behind the Nigerian military's role in the country's transitional politics reflect this dissertation's theoretical framework.

5.1: Nigeria in Context: Background and Case Selection

Home to over 180 million people, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh largest country in the world (see Figure 5.1). Nigeria is home to over 500 different ethnic groups, the three largest being the Hausa, who dominate the mostly Muslim North, and the predominantly Christian Igbo and Yoruba, who dominate the South and West, respectively. As a former British colony, English is the official language, but other languages, including those of the three major ethnic groups, are widely spoken. Rich in oil, the country's GDP per capita is around \$3,000, though wealth distribution is highly unequal (see Table 5.1). According to the World Bank, roughly 86 million people, or close to half of the population, live in extreme poverty, making less than \$1.90 per day.

Table 5.1: Select Summary Statistics for all Cases

Country	Civil Mil Relation	Transition Outcome	Dem Duration (yrs)	GDPk	Ethnic Groups	Religions	Pop.	Life Exp (yrs)
Nigeria	Military	Blocked & Successful	4,17	\$3,005	Hausa (25%) Yoruba (21%) Igbo (19%)	Muslim (50%) Christian (40%) Other (10%)	186 mn	52
Sudan	Ethnic	Blocked	N/A	\$1,753	Arab (39%) Dinka (10%) Beja (6%)	Muslim (70%), Christian (19%) Other (11%)	52 mn	62
Tunisia	Represen tative	Successful	6	\$4,317	Arab (98%)	Muslim (99%)	11 mn	75

Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators and CIA World Factbook

Following Nigerian independence in 1960, the Nigerian First Republic lasted just six years before it experienced back-to-back military coups that divided the country along ethno-regional lines. Between 1967 and 1970, a brutal civil war was waged between the North and West and the Igbo-dominated South, in which between 1 and 3 million people were killed.²³⁴ After the war, which the Igbo lost, the country experienced an oil boom, and the Nigerian military remained in control until 1979, when it voluntarily ceded power to the Second Republic. The Second Republic lasted only four years before it to

²³⁴ Helen Metz, *Nigeria, A Country Study* (Library of Congress, 1992), p. 60.

succumbed to another military coup in 1983. After an annulled election followed in 1993 aborted a transition to a Third Republic, the Nigerian military remained in power until 1999. By the time the Nigerian armed forces relinquished control to the current Fourth Republic, they had ruled Nigeria for nearly 30 out of this country's 40 years as an independent nation.

Due to time and space constraints, this chapter will focus primarily on Nigeria's latter period of military rule from 1983 to 1999. In this dissertation's quantitative database, this period consists of two observations; one for the 1983 to 1993 period, which is coded as a military regime followed by a blocked transition to democracy, and one from 1993 to 1999, which is coded as a successful transition to democracy. The primary aim of the remainder of this chapter will be to employ standard process tracing methods to identify the causal mechanisms through which this project's independent variables—authoritarian choices and civil-military relations—facilitate the dependent ones, democratization outcomes. This dissertation's process tracing approach will be implemented by paying particular to the military's motivations for choosing military rule, the primarily civil-military cleavages in Nigeria, the impact these cleavages had on the Nigerian military's response to popular pressure at critical junctures in 1993 and 1999, and how these responses did or did not facilitate political transitions. Other qualitative chapters will follow a similar structure. By identifying the intervening causal processes, these chapters reinforce the findings of the quantitative analysis, which only illustrated correlations between authoritarian civil-military relations and democratization outcomes

without examining the intervening steps proposed in my argument's theoretical framework.²³⁵

However, this chapter differs slightly from the two chapters following it in that its structure allows it to make two series of comparisons. First, it parses the differences between the 1993 and 1998 transition outcomes to investigate why the military chose to block the former transition, but facilitated the latter. Given that the annulled election and the successful transition took place within five years of one another, within the same country, and facing a comparable context with respect to the internal and external pressure placed on the regime, the two different choices are not easily explained. Though this dissertation does not explicitly take up the question of what causes some military regimes to transition to democracy when others do not, the insight from this analysis could aid in future research.

Second, the chapter examines the sources of resilience in contemporary civil-military relations to determine why the military has remained out of politics during the Fourth Republic. The Fourth Republic has lasted close to 20 years, which makes it an outlier both in Nigeria's history as well as among African military regimes more broadly, whose average length, according to this country's dataset, has been only eight years. By comparing Nigerian civil-military relations at the end of the Second Republic to the beginning of the Fourth, this chapter will provide insight as to why the military has refrained from intervening in the Fourth Republic after governing the country for so long,

²³⁵ See, for example, Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 206.

and, more generally, to speculate on how democracies following military regimes can escape the legacy of military rule.

Figure 5.1 Political Map of Nigeria



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section (2014)

5.2: The Choice: The Nigerian Military Regime's Seizure of Power

In his December 31, 1983 broadcast announcing the military's re-assumption of power after just four years on the sidelines, Brigadier General Sani Abacha cited a litany of abuses perpetrated by the country's civilian leaders. Under democracy, Abacha claimed, Nigeria's economy had been "hopelessly mismanaged," its hospitals reduced to "consulting clinics without drugs, water and equipment," and unemployment figures had reached "embarrassing and unacceptable proportions." Nigeria's leaders, he said, "revel in squandermania, corruption and indiscipline, and continue to proliferate public appointments in complete disregard of our stark economic realities."²³⁶

Abacha's colorful descriptions of the state of Nigeria's political and economic affairs were for the most part accurate. The government of the civilian president Shehu Shagari had managed to squander much of the oil wealth they had inherited from Nigeria's previous military regime, which had ruled the country from 1966 to 1979. From 1980 to 1983, Nigeria's GDP shrunk by nearly half, the government budget went from a \$7 billion surplus to a \$10 billion-dollar deficit, and inflation may have approached 100 percent.²³⁷ The straw that broke the camel's back was the 1983 elections, which Shagari's party won by a substantial margin amidst allegations of corruption, fraud, waste and

²³⁶ Sani Abacha, "Broadcast Announcing the Military's Return to Power," Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, December 31 1983.

²³⁷ See Shehu Othman, "Classes Crisis and Coup: The Demise of Shagari's Regime," *African Affairs* 83, no. 333 (1984), pp. 452-453. For Nigerian GDP figures, see the World Bank 2016 Databank.

blatant vote-rigging. The sorry state of affairs meant that the military was welcomed back into government with open arms.

Political crisis and popular support may have been necessary factors in precipitating the Nigerian military's return to power after four years in the wilderness. But they were far from the only factor, and possibly not the most significant. After he was removed from office, Shehu Shagari accused opposition politicians of engaging in 'coup-baiting,' which describes "the deliberate preparation of civil and military political opinion for a coup."²³⁸ To a large degree, the atmosphere of political crisis and popular support for military rule that permeated Nigerian society in 1983 was strongly encouraged and deliberately instigated by a segment of the armed forces that had designs on returning to power ever since it left in 1979. It is this segment of the army that retired Major General Chris Alli, who served in prominent roles in the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha, called "the first tier of coup merchants," and it played a prominent role in the founding of every Nigerian military regime, beginning with the cabal of officers that brought Yakubu Gowon to power in August of 1966.²³⁹

At the time of the 1983 coup, there were approximately 30 senior officers who had served at high levels in the previous military regime.²⁴⁰ During the Shagari administration, at least three different groups of these officers independently plotted to

²³⁸ Max Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune: Nigerian Politics from Buhari to Babangida* (Cassava Republic Press, 2016), p. 10.

²³⁹ M. Chris Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army: The Siege of a Nation* (Malthouse Press, 2001), p. 62.

²⁴⁰ Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, p. 7.

seize power. They coalesced into one group in early 1983, and, according to General Babangida, who served as head of Nigeria's military government from 1985 to 1993, deliberately decided to strike after the elections so that they could not be accused of sabotaging the electoral process.²⁴¹ "The military was more educated, more aware, and smarter than us," observes Babagana Kingibe, a civilian politician at the time. "In the contest for control over the political space, they had the upper hand."²⁴² In fact, the legacy of the previous military regime was explicit, with fledgling military administration acknowledging itself as an "offshoot" of the military government of Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo that had governed the country between 1976 and 1979.²⁴³

Given this legacy, it is of little surprise that the engineers of the 1983 coup chose a government of institutionalized military rule. Upon the military's assumption of political power, all civilian political appointees lost their jobs and were placed in collective detention.²⁴⁴ The Federal Military Government (FMG) that replaced Nigeria's Second Republic was a near replication of the previous military government. The government's lead decision-making body was the Supreme Military Council (SMC), composed entirely of top military officers who held strategic posts. The SMC had confirming authority for cabinet positions, usurped the traditional functions of the legislature, and controlled decision-making at the federal level through military decrees

²⁴¹ Dan Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida: The Military, Politics and Power in Nigeria* (Adonis and Abbey, 2012), p. 168.

²⁴² Interview with Babagana Kingibe, Abuja, July 20 2016.

²⁴³ Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, p. 26.

²⁴⁴ Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, p. 177.

and edicts. State-level governance was supervised by the National Council of States, which was made of most of the higher-ranking members of the SMC and military governors, who replaced civilian ones. Decrees issued by both federal- and state-level military administrations were immune from judicial oversight.²⁴⁵

In other words, the Nigerian military's 1983 seizure of power did not occur by happenstance and was not solely because of the Shagari government's ineptitude. Rather, Nigeria's previous legacy of military rule led to the formation of a politically experienced class of officers who sought and competed with civilians in order to wield political power. The military government that began in 1983 owed its existence to the strategic choices, coordination, and planning of these officers. In Babangida's own words: "At the risk of being called immodest, if there is any military government that prepared itself before it went in, it's our government. We knew what we wanted."²⁴⁶ The clear choice of the Nigeria's authoritarian leaders was the military regime.

5.3: Cleavages Between Praetorian and Traditional Officers Under Military Rule

According to this project's argument, military regimes are uniquely factionalized forms of civil-military relations because of the cleavages that exist between officers who serve in a ruling capacity and cultivate power, and the rest of the military, which tends to serve in more traditional roles. The Nigerian experience with military rule is reflective of

²⁴⁵ Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, pp. 23-25.

²⁴⁶ Karl Maier, *This House Has Fallen: Nigeria In Crisis* (Basic Books, 2000), p. 61.

these cleavages. From nearly the moment the Nigerian military seized power, its officers became deeply divided over how and when to leave. These divisions manifested themselves in two primary ways: as a violent struggle for power, and as a more open and less contentious conversation within broader military circles. On one side of this divide were soldiers such as Salihu Ibrahim, Domkat Bali, and Abdulsalami Abubakar, three senior military officials in the Buhari, Babangida and Abacha administrations who never participated in a coup and never served in political roles. In his memoirs, Alli remarks of Ibrahim: "By his nature, I knew that coup-making was not his cup of tea, even if he drank a lot of tea; indeed, he abhorred it and all that it stood for."²⁴⁷ On the other side of this divide were coup merchants such as Abacha and Babangida, who once admitted to having a hand in every single successful coup in Nigeria history.²⁴⁸ A good number of officers, such as Alli himself, fell on a spectrum somewhere in between.²⁴⁹

The divisions within the praetorian clique of officers were self-evident. They may have agreed on seizing power, but the coup merchants within Nigeria's military did not agree on who was to wield it. Between 1983 and 1993, Nigeria suffered four coup attempts, three of which were the designs of officers within the clique. When it first took control of the government, the army settled on Major General Mohammadu Buhari, the

²⁴⁷ Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 72

²⁴⁸ Tell Magazine, August 31 1992. Quoted in Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, p. 75.

²⁴⁹ The spectrum of opinion was illustrated among the serving and retired soldiers I interviewed. According to one: "I thought the military was cool, that military leadership was better than civilian leadership, and maybe one day I'd be a governor." Interview with senior military officer who did not wish to be named, Abuja, June 2016. According to another: "I was rarely aware of the political nature of the armed forces until I became a Lt. Colonel in 1993 and had to work beyond an operational level." Interview with Major General Joseph Lartey (rtd.), Lagos, June 23 2016.

most senior officer among the core network of coup plotters. Almost immediately, however, fissures opened up between Buhari and Ibrahim Babangida, who held the sensitive post of the Chief of Army Staff and who himself had designs on power.²⁵⁰ In response to an inquiry into the financial dealings of Babangida's key associates and amid rumors that Babangida's forced retirement was imminent, Babangida seized power in a bloodless coup, 20 months after Buhari came to office. Babangida's changes to Buhari's government were mostly cosmetic, renaming the Supreme Defense Council the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) and expanding its membership to include more Babangida loyalists.

Though Babangida remained in power for eight years, the next coup plot came a mere four months into his administration, and was possibly motivated by the desire to purge the armed forces of officers that remained loyal to Buhari.²⁵¹ A second coup attempt, which almost cost Babangida his life, occurred five years later in 1990 and was masterminded by mid-ranking officers from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Where the two previous coups were mainly struggles for power within the dominant Northern and Middle Belt clique of officers, the Niger Delta coup was the first and only coup within the period to be explicitly ethnic in character. Driven by personal animus towards Babangida, frustration at the government's neglect of the Delta, and personal and

²⁵⁰ Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, pp. 173-191.

²⁵¹ Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, pp. 94-98.

professional grievances against their colleagues, the coup plotters tried to expel the northern states of Bauchi, Borno, Katsina, Kano and Sokoto from Nigeria.²⁵²

The prospect of a *putsch* was not the only serious source of division within the armed forces generated as a result of military rule. Though the officers in the armed forces who seized power might have liked to have completely marginalized their more traditional counterparts, the reality was not so simple. In the Buhari and Babangida regimes, the military's involvement in the day to day governing of Nigeria was as expansive as it ever was. Nevertheless, no more than several hundred out of several thousand officers and roughly one hundred thousand active soldiers ever served in any kind of political capacity.²⁵³ Nigeria's "coup merchants" needed at least the tacit support and compliance of traditional officers whose experiences and inclinations were more broadly representative of the military. Even many officers who actively supported Babangida's coup had done so with the understanding that, like previous military regimes, the current military administration would be temporary and corrective in nature. Alli, for example, remarks that he advised Babangida that, in his estimation, the army should stay in power for a period of no greater than two years.²⁵⁴ Indeed, it was Buhari's

²⁵² Gideon Orkar. "Coup Announcement," Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, April 22 1990. Though not mentioned directly in the coup announcement, a number of soldiers I spoke with mentioned that they believed the principal motivating factor behind the Niger Delta coup was resentment at the excessive lifestyle of some of the more privileged, politicized class of officers. Interview with Senator and General John Shagaya, Abuja, July 15 2016.

²⁵³ Ibid, pp. 200-201.

²⁵⁴ Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 66.

own refusal to put a timetable on the return to democracy that may have pushed some of the more professionally inclined soldiers loosely into Babangida's orbit.

Nevertheless, when, early in 1986, Babangida attempted to correct Buhari's mistake by inviting the military to submit its opinion on the timing for a return to civilian rule, attitudes were so divided that it was unable to present a consensus view.²⁵⁵ To thread the needle between those in his officer corps who might have preferred a more rapid exit from power and those who preferred an extended stay, a decree issued in 1987 advocated for a slow transition to civilian rule in the form of diarchy.²⁵⁶ The idea was for Nigeria to transition from military to civilian rule in stages, reconstituting the political process through "political learning, institutional adjustment, and a reorientation of political culture at sequential levels of politics and governance, beginning with the local governments and ending at the federal level."²⁵⁷

Yet the closer the regime got to the transition date the more it delayed. Initially the date of the transition was to be October 1, 1990, which was subsequently moved to October 1, 1992, then to January 1, 1992 and, finally to August 27, 1993. The delays were accompanied by an array of tactics that politically-minded officers in the Nigerian military used to confuse, divide, and play the country's civilian politicians off of one another. The rules governing the constitution and composition of political parties were frequently changed; the electoral system was continually manipulated, in one case

²⁵⁵ Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, p. 205.

²⁵⁶ Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, p. 378.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

producing some 286 candidates for president, the country's highest ever; the results of elections were declared invalid on account of corruption or because of reservations the military government had about a particular candidate.²⁵⁸

Over time, the regime's excuses began to wear thin. For many, the determination of at least some faction of the Nigerian military to cling on to power became evident after the regime annulled the results of the 1992 presidential primaries. These primaries were won convincingly by Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, himself a former senior military officer who retired from the military and became one of Nigeria's principal advocates for civilian rule. The military government annulled Yar'Adua's victory on account of corruption and with the excuse that it was politically unacceptable for a northerner to win the presidency after so many years of northern domination of the country's political system. The problem with this excuse was that by that time, it was clear that many in the armed forces were themselves benefitting from massive corruption, and that Yar'Adua's superior organization and broad support from across the country would likely have led to a convincing victory for him and his party, the SDP.²⁵⁹ According to General Jon

²⁵⁸ Eghosa Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence* (Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 224-225.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Mohammed Haruna, Abuja, July 21 2016. In addition to the postponement and the menace posed by Yar'Adua's candidacy, Haruna cited intelligence blunders as another reason the annulment occurred. Babangida's administration may have been expecting Abiola's opposition, Bashir Tofa, to win, which would have allowed the military government to annul the election on the same grounds it annulled Yar'Adua's candidacy: because the military wanted a southern president. According to Babangida: "we also knew from our analysis that [Tofa] was a much simpler person to be disqualified than Abiola. If Bashir had won that election, honestly, we wouldn't have given it to him." Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, 393.

Temlong, who served in the Babangida administration, many in the armed forces counseled Babangida to let Yar'Adua come to power.²⁶⁰

For eight years, Babangida's extended transition process managed to hold the central factions in the military's officer corps in check. For much of the period, officers who were sincere about the desire to hand over power to civilian rulers labored under the assumption that the military's stay in power would be temporary. For those who preferred military rule, Babangida's strategy of continual delay allowed them to continue to enjoy the benefits of governance. Ultimately, it was the events leading up to and in the aftermath of the 1993 annulled elections that shattered the perception held by more traditional officers that Babangida wanted the military's stay in power to be temporary, while providing officers with more praetorian inclinations another chance to strike.

5.4: The First Critical Juncture: The 1993 Annulment and Abacha's Coup

According to this dissertation's analytical framework, one of the central mechanisms through which civil-military relations influence democratic transitions is by their impact on the military's response when the regime comes under pressure to liberalize. These pressures mounted throughout Babangida's tenure as head of state,

²⁶⁰ Interview with Jon Temlong, Jos, July 8 2016. Temlong added that the annulment of the primaries would later come back to haunt Babangida when he Abiola won the 1993 presidential elections: "Babangida came under lots of pressure from the military because Abiola, his friend, rigged the election even worse than Yar'Adua rigged the 1992 primaries. It was asked what the moral justification was for stopping Yar'Adua when Abiola was allowed to get away with it, and Babangida had no answer to that question."

coming to a climax during and in the aftermath of the 1993 annulment. As predicted in my argument, the Nigerian military fractured in the face of this pressure. After nearly eight years of delay that, by one count, included over 41 modifications to the transition program, more and more military officers were becoming convinced that the Babangida regime had no intention of leaving.²⁶¹ The hardliners, however, remained as determined as ever to continue military governance. Ironically, though Nigeria's officers agreed on little else, they did agree on the need for Babangida's removal. In the ensuing chaos, the praetorian officers, led by Sani Abacha, were able to collectively organize a coup and ensure the continuation of military rule.

Babangida's regime managed to use the crisis generated by the annulled 1992 primaries to extend the military's time in office to August 27, 1993, with elections to be held in June of that year. However, under mounting internal and external pressure, it was the last delay the regime was able to affect. The international community, which had previously been enamored of Babangida's charm and commitment to implementing Washington consensus-style austerity measures, began to put increasing pressure on the military to hand over power. Nigerian civil society became increasingly assertive, leading to mass protests, demonstrations, and a more hostile media environment. Under considerable pressure, Babangida first signaled his intentions to potentially leave power by setting up a Transition Council to replace the Armed Forces Ruling Council. Members of the junta were "violently divided by the turn of events."²⁶² Babangida called it "a very,

²⁶¹ Momoh and Adejumobui, *The Nigerian Military and the Crisis of Democratic Transition: A Study in the Monopoly of Power* (Civil Liberties Organization, 1999), p. 45.

²⁶² See Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, pp. 377-378.

very tough meeting, one of the toughest [he] had handled in [his] seven years as president."²⁶³ The military was able to reach a consensus on the timetable, but only after 48 hours of intense negotiations.

Weeks before the election, the coalition within the military that undergirded Babangida's rule, already under considerable strain, began to openly split. According to Senator John Shagaya, a close confidante of Babangida's, the consensus among most senior officers at the time was to go forward with the elections.²⁶⁴ By early June, however, an unsettled and sleepless Babangida informed Colonel Umar Dangiwa, another confidante who had pressed for elections, that hardliners within the regime, led by Minister of Defense Sani Abacha, were pressing for him to use a court injunction to prevent the elections from taking place.²⁶⁵ Though the injunction was granted, Babangida, to the fury of the hardliners, nevertheless ordered the National Electoral Commission to allow elections to proceed as planned.

In what was widely considered to be the freest and fairest Nigerian election conducted up to that point in time, the SDP candidate Moshood Abiola, who emerged as the consensus candidate to replace Yar'Adua, cruised to a convincing victory. The outcome of the election put considerable pressure on Babangida both from civil society and from the more traditional soldiers within the Nigerian armed forces to allow the

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Senator and Brigadier General John Shagaya (rtd.), July 15 2016.

²⁶⁵ Abubakar Umar, "Vagabond in Power: The Story of Abacha's Coup Against Babangida, Shonekan and Abiola," *Tell Magazine*, August 10 1998.

election results to stand and Abiola to succeed him as head of state. In the estimation of both Dangiwa and Alli, the majority of military officers supported the installation of Abiola.²⁶⁶ Alli recalls that most of the army's ranks were "bored by the continued dominance of a clique of officers in the affairs of the nation" and "wanted to return to their professional roles."²⁶⁷ On the other hand, the praetorian faction of the Nigerian military, led by Abacha and constituting much of the senior officer corps, was implacably opposed and began immediately putting pressure on Babangida to annul the results. Multiple senior officers, including Director of Military Intelligence Hailu Akilu and National War College Director David Mark, threatened violence if Abiola was to become president.²⁶⁸

Ultimately, the officers who favored continued military rule won out. On June 26, 1993 the results of the Nigerian election were annulled via an unsigned, undated memo, a clear sign of just how divided the military government was over the decision. As Benjamin Nwabueze observes: "it is known that the annulment was not a 'collective' decision, that most members of the council only knew of it afterwards, and that it split the NDSC and the top echelon of the military. The Transitional Council which was supposed to oversee the final phase of the transition was not consulted at all."²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ See Umar, "Vagabond in Power" and Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 285.

²⁶⁷ Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 288.

²⁶⁸ See Omo Omoruyi, *The Tale of June 12: The Betrayal of the Democratic Rights of Nigerians* (Press Alliance Network Limited, 1999), p. 166.

²⁶⁹ Benjamin Nwabueze, *Nigeria '93: The Political Crisis and Solutions* (Spectrum Books, 1994), p. 33.

In subsequent interviews, Babangida took "full responsibility" for the decision to annul the 1993 elections, a decision widely regarded as the biggest mistake of his presidency.²⁷⁰ If it was indeed Babangida's intention to try to remain on, then he badly miscalculated. By ceding to the demands of the hardline elements within the military to annul the election, he infuriated those that were encouraging him to abdicate. For these same hard-liners, the annulment rendered him as vulnerable as he had ever been and a clear political liability. For the first time in his presidency, those in the military who wanted to remain in power and those in the military who wanted to leave were united in the opinion that Babangida must go. Serious plots to remove Babangida began to be discussed in both the middle and senior ranks of the Nigerian military.²⁷¹ Babangida, who was uncertain of the loyalty of those around him and mindful that continuing in power might have cost him his own life, chose to leave on August 23, the date he had laid out earlier in the year, appointing an interim government (ING) under President Ernest Shonekan to oversee the transition.

When he abdicated power, Babangida was first set on removing his entire senior staff from government. In a last-minute decision, however, he assigned the post of Secretary of Defense of the ING, with the power to terminate the government in the case of a crisis, to Abacha. There exists some debate as to whether this decision was motivated by a Northern conspiracy to stay in power, opposition from military hard-liners to the return of civilian rule, or a personal relationship or agreement that existed between

²⁷⁰ Agbese, *Ibrahim Babangida*, p. 394.

²⁷¹ See Umar, "Vagabond in Power"; Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, pp. 244-278 and Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, pp. 251-252.

Abacha and Babangida as a result of the former's loyalty. Babangida's advisor and friend Omo Omuruyi, quoting from a series of meetings he had with an increasingly morose President, portrays all three factors as salient:

“Sani is opposed to a return to civilian rule... Sani seems to rally the northern elders to confront me on this matter. Where do I go from here? They do not trust me. Without Sani, I will not be alive today; without the North, I would not have become an officer in the Nigerian Army and the president of Nigeria... I don't want to appear ungrateful to Sani; he may not be bright upstairs but he knows how to overthrow governments and overpower coup plotters. He saw to my coming to office in 1985 and to my protection in many coups I faced in the past, especially the Orkar coup of 1990 where he saved me and my family including my infant daughter... if he says that he does not want Chief Abiola, I will not force Chief Abiola on him... That is the way I feel now. I cannot kill myself for the sake of what the country wants. I am sorry.”²⁷²

Babangida's appointment of Abacha as the sole military representative on the Interim National Government stamped Sani Abacha's ticket to power. Following Babangida's August resignation, a familiar series of events repeated themselves. The Nigerian polity viewed Shonekan's tenure with suspicion. The political class became increasingly divided between those who wished see Abiola sworn in as president (mainly from the South) and those who wished to hold a subsequent round of elections (mainly from the North). The country became paralyzed by strikes, riots, protests, and unrest. As it had done twice in 1966, in 1975, 1983, and 1985, the 'coup-baiters' in the military capitalized on the environment of economic and political uncertainty. In mid-November, the government announced a 700 percent hike in the price of oil, a decision that

²⁷² Omoruyi, *The Tale of June 12*, p. 165.

according a former minister in Abacha's government, was encouraged by Abacha with the intention of causing political chaos.²⁷³ The National Labor Congress responded with an immediate strike after Abacha offered to pay the salaries of demonstrating workers from his own personal bank account.²⁷⁴ Three days later, on November 17, 1993, Sani Abacha forced Shonekan's resignation after a mere three months of transitional civilian rule.

Many, including Babangida, did not think Abacha's tenure would last.²⁷⁵ He ended up ruling for close to five years, very nearly succeeding in making himself a dictator for life. His opponents consistently underestimated his cunning, misread his intentions, and mistook his taciturn nature for artlessness. For example, in the process leading up to the annulment and Babangida's resignation, Abacha played the role of a democrat. He gave substantial sums of money to support protests against military rule, which convinced some civilian politicians and activists that his interest in democracy was genuine.²⁷⁶ Abacha convinced Abiola to flee the country shortly after Babangida's resignation in August, warning the president-elect that his security could not be guaranteed.²⁷⁷ In November, Abacha convinced Abiola to return, assured by a promise from Abacha that he was going to hand over power. After waiting for seven more

²⁷³ *Shehu Musa Yar'Adua: A life of Service* (Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation, 2004), p. 240.

²⁷⁴ Interview with Babagana Kingibe, July 21 2016. See also Peter Lewis, "From Prebendalism to Predation: The Political Economy of Decline in Nigeria." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 34, no. 1 (March 1996), p. 96.

²⁷⁵ Obasanjo, *My Watch*, vol. 1 (Prestige Books, 2014), p. 397.

²⁷⁶ Interview with Babagana Kingibe, July 21 2016.

²⁷⁷ Interview with A.B. Borisade, January 18 2000. Quoted in Farris and Boimoi, eds. *Shehu Musa Yar'Adua*, p. 231. See also Osaghae, *Crippled Giant*, p. 276.

months, Abiola declared himself President from Lagos in June 1994, under the possible illusion that doing so would cause some in the military to rally to support his cause.²⁷⁸ Instead, he was charged with treason and would up in a prison cell.

Abacha played a similarly deceptive game within the military. Given his position as both Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense, Abacha was at the forefront of efforts within the army to remove Babangida. Initially, as the army's most senior officer, he was able to enlist the support both of officers who preferred that the military remain in power as well as those who were hopeful for a way out. One by one, however, the officers agitating for a return to democracy were retired or forced to leave. Abacha talked Colonel Dangiwa out of tendering his resignation under the assurance that he would hand over power to Abiola, only to accept Dangiwa's resignation letter and nearly try the colonel for coup plotting shortly after Abacha's assumption of power.²⁷⁹ Major General Ishola Williams resigned in protest three days after Abacha's coup, the only officer of his rank to do so.²⁸⁰ Within a year of Abacha's assumption of power, General Williams was followed by forced retirement of half a dozen other prominent members of the Nigerian armed forces who had either expressed preferences for a return to democratic rule or whose loyalty could not be counted on, including

²⁷⁸ Obasanjo, *My Watch* Vol. 1, p. 384.

²⁷⁹ Umar, "Vagabond in Power."

²⁸⁰ According to Williams, the main reason many more officers didn't retire was that while they were opposed to the military staying power, they did not want to abandon "the lifestyle." He tried to convince several of his colleagues to retire with him. Phone interview with Ishola Williams, August 7 2016.

Generals Chris Alli, Aliyu Mohammed Gusau, John Shagaya, Josh Dogonyaro, David Mark and Sambo Dusuki.

Abacha's double game lasted just long enough for him to consolidate power. In an explosive interview with *Newswatch* in April 1994, Mark revealed that the actual plan within the armed forces was to stay in power for "at least five years," a disclosure which shocked the nation and led the editors of the article to be briefly jailed on treason charges.²⁸¹ With the imprisonment of Abiola, there could be no doubt with respect to the direction in which the regime was headed. In response to Abacha's refusal to specify a timetable for return to democracy, pressure on his government mounted. The political opposition that refused to be co-opted organized into a unified political coalition known as NADECO, and organized, strikes, protests, and civil disobedience opposing Abacha's continued rule. The United States and other Western countries actively supported these pro-democracy groups and imposed sanctions on the regime, further isolating it. Abacha responded by further tightening the regimes' fist, arresting, imprisoning, and killing hundreds of pro-democracy agitators.²⁸²

The evidence from Nigeria confirms the argument laid out in this dissertation that cleavages between traditional and praetorian officers in military regimes make transitions contingent and uncertain processes. In the leadup to and in the aftermath of the 1993 annulled elections, top officers within the Nigerian military lost any pretense of unity

²⁸¹ *Newswatch*, "Hope Betrayed," April 22 1994.

²⁸² See, for example, U.S. Department of State, "Nigeria Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998," February 26 1999. Available at http://www.waado.org/nigerian_scholars/archive/docum/humanrights.html (accessed January 28 2018).

they once shared about whether to stay in power or to leave. Under pressure from many top officers, Babangida went ahead with elections, only to annul the results after receiving even more pressure from hardliners. Both hard- and soft-liners briefly united around the need to remove Babangida from power. But, in this particularly instance, control over the Nigeria was won by Abacha, who used his position as Defense Minister to abort a transition to democratic rule before it began, stage a military coup under the guise of returning order, dismiss the remaining top officers he perceived as disloyal, and re-institute military rule, which lasted another five years.

5.5: Abacha in Power: The ‘Pariah’ Dictator Hollows Out the Military

Upon Abacha's assumption of power, professional divisions and personal animosities continued to permeate the upper echelons of the Nigerian officer. A small cabal of high-ranking officers, including Generals Jerry Useni and Ahmed Abdullahi, remained personally loyal to Abacha, but even after Abacha's initial purges, he appears to have remained deeply paranoid and mistrustful of his fellow soldiers, the majority of whom at this juncture probably favored a return to the barracks. In order to consolidate power, Abacha relied heavily on his chief security officer, Major Hamza al-Mustapha, who oversaw a relatively small unit of middle and lower ranking soldiers.²⁸³ These same men served as Abacha's enforcers, and were heavily involved in the killings, torture, imprisonment and other illegal activities that came to characterize his regime. According

²⁸³ Osa Director, “The Evil Ones,” *Tell Magazine*, May 3 1999.

to one general during the time, officers within the military and public services were so afraid of Abacha's enforcers that they at times refrained from engaging in fraudulent practices.²⁸⁴ Babangida had ruled both formally, through the Armed Forces Ruling Council and informally, by consulting a "kitchen cabinet" of the 20 to 30 officers of different ranks who were responsible for bringing him to power. Abacha formally ruled through a Provisional Ruling Council dominated by military officers, but ended up marginalizing the body by eschewing regular meetings and acting without consultation.²⁸⁵

Abacha's coercive methods succeeded in entrenching the dictator in power for a time. But they also shattered what was left of the army's *esprit du corps*, from its lowest ranks to its most accomplished officers. A key turning point for many in the armed forces was when former generals and civilian politicians Olusegun Obasanjo and Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, who were campaigning for a return to civilian rule, attempted to use the constitutional assembly meeting of 1995 to maneuver Abacha out of power.²⁸⁶ For their efforts, they were thrown in jail on trumped up charges of coup plotting. Yar'Adua later died in prison, likely of poison administered to him during a health check-up.²⁸⁷

Abacha's ire was by no means restricted to retired soldiers. Officers and enlisted men at all levels in Abacha's regime had to constantly watch their backs for fear that one

²⁸⁴ Interview with Ishola Williams, August 7 2016.

²⁸⁵ Interview with Babagana Kingibe, July 20 2016. See also Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 282.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Mohammed Haruna, July 21 2016.

²⁸⁷ Obasanjo, *My Watch* Vol. 1, pp. 441-444.

wrong word or utterance could send them to prison, jail, or worse. According to one faculty member at the Nigerian Army School of Finance, “officers would at times not even go to the mess because they were wary that their words might be used against them.”²⁸⁸ For some, it did not matter how careful they were. For example, the government's key witness in the coup plotting case was an officer by the name of Bello Fadilie. Tortured by Abacha's henchmen, he was forced into testifying against Nigeria's former leader, accusing him of crimes he did not commit.²⁸⁹

In the 1970s and 1980s, Nigeria had one of the more professionalized armies and officer corps in Africa. By the mid-1990s, there was not much of a professionalized army left. In a poignant testimony to just how badly the officer corps had been eviscerated, Chris Alli claims that of the 53 graduates of his NDA course in 1967, by early 1994 only two had survived long careers in the army; the other officers in his class had either died during the civil war, retired, or been caught up in the dozens of purges that wracked the army during its time in power, which at that point had ruled for over 20 of the country's 30 years as an independent country.²⁹⁰ Between 1995 and 1998, close to 400 officers were summarily dismissed or forced to retire, with officers of non-northern origin singled out.²⁹¹ Between 1993 and 1996, the chiefs of army, air and naval staffs were changed 10 times in order to prevent rivals from staying too long in sensitive positions.²⁹² In 1997,

²⁸⁸ Interview with Stella Ahunanya, Lagos, June 23 2016.

²⁸⁹ Obasanjo, *My Watch*, vol. 1, pp. 440-445.

²⁹⁰ Alli, *The Federal Republic of the Nigerian Army*, p. 58. The officers were himself and Major General Abdulsalami Abubakar, who was appointed Chief of Defense staff.

²⁹¹ Peter Lewis, Pearl Robinson and Barnett Rubin. *Stabilization Nigeria: Sanctions, Incentives and Support for Civil Society* (Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), pp. 66-67.

²⁹² Osaghae, *Crippled Giant*, pp. 315-316.

Abacha imprisoned Oladipo Diya, his effective number two, on what may have been trumped up coup charges, initiating yet another round of purges.

The toll that military rule exacted on the army's physical capabilities was equally as great, and likely a mixture of deliberate neglect to prevent the potential for a coup as well as an effect of the country's dire economic straits. Despite commitments to peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the size and spending devoted to the armed forces continued to stagnate, with direct consequences for the material welfare and military preparedness of the rank and file. By the late 1990s, pay and benefits had declined in real terms, and as few as 10 percent of the army's barracks were fit for habitation.²⁹³ Up to 75 percent of the army's equipment was broken or missing vital parts. The navy had eight serviceable ships, six times less than the number of admirals. The Air Force continued to be in a state of dismal disrepair, with 10,000 men and 20 functioning aircraft, a combat readiness ratio of perhaps 15 percent.²⁹⁴

If there had existed genuine divisions within the Nigerian armed forces over whether it ought to have left power in 1993, by the mid-late 1990s it is safe to conclude that the cumulative effect of the purges, the neglect of the armed forces as a professional institution, the near total loss of *esprit du corps*, and the considerable amount of social and international pressure left most of Nigeria's service members exasperated with

²⁹³ Interview with Retired Senior Military Officer who did not wish to be named, Abuja, June 2016.

²⁹⁴ Mair, *This House Has Fallen*, xxi-xxii; HR Mohammed, *Aircraft Maintenance and Combat Readiness in the Nigerian Air Force: An Appraisal*, National Defence College Thesis (National Defence College of Nigeria, 2009), p. vi.

military rule. As one retired senior soldier who was a middle ranking officer during the time of military rule recalls: “Military government was not helpful to the military, which led to a loss of support within the military for military rule.”²⁹⁵

Nevertheless, by the middle of 1998, it appeared that Abacha was on the verge of success in his plot to transmute himself into a dictator for life. His grip on his security forces appeared airtight, as those who remained in service were motivated by a mixture of ambition to continue to enjoy the fruits of military rule and fear of being accused of treason by al-Mustapha and company. His major sources of political and media opposition had been exiled, jailed, or had disappeared. A large number of politicians had been co-opted, and the tightly-controlled state press was agitating for the head of state to run in an election in which he would have been the only viable candidate. According to some news sources at the time, Abacha’s announcement that he would retire from the armed forces and stand for President was weeks away.²⁹⁶

5.6: The Second Critical Juncture: Abacha’s Death and the Transition to the Fourth Republic

At approximately 3:00 a.m. the morning of June 8, 1998, Abacha suddenly died of a heart attack. The precise cause and his death was and remains extremely

²⁹⁵ Interview with Maj Gen Abiodun Role (rtd.), Lagos, June 22 2016.

²⁹⁶ See Sunday Dare, Bamidele Johnson and Goodluck Ebelo, “How Abacha Was Poisoned” *TEMPO Magazine*, February 2 2000 and “Military Ruler Dies Suddenly,” *Daily Telegraph*, June 9 1998.

controversial, in part because the late general was buried, according to Islamic tradition, within hours of his death and without an autopsy.²⁹⁷ On the one hand, Abacha had known health problems,²⁹⁸ and it is not inconceivable that his death was due to natural causes, which was and remains the official government account of his death.²⁹⁹ On the other hand, in the aftermath of his death, rumors emerged from multiple sources that Abacha was killed by members of the Nigerian Armed Forces.³⁰⁰ This view was the consensus of most U.S. military and intelligence officials, speaking off the record at the time,³⁰¹ and is also hinted at by former U.S. Ambassadors John Campbell: “individual oga [leader] grabs for power has led to network realignments that can suddenly bring down the head of state. That was the fate of Abacha.”³⁰²

Senior officials within the Nigeria’s military government met the day after Abacha’s death. In one of the few instances in which a Nigerian head of state was chosen by consensus within the armed forces rather than from among a cabal of officers who had conspired to forcibly seize power, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, Abacha’s Chief of

²⁹⁷ In a 1998 interview, Abubakar Abdulsalami, the military head of state at the time, insisted that an autopsy report, which has never been made public, confirmed the cause of death was a heart attack:

“Newswatch: They didn’t give you any briefing as to what happened?

Abubakar Abdulsalami: Of course they told me he had a heart attack and so on, but later there was an autopsy and a post-mortem and they confirmed it was a heart attack.

Newswatch: So, there really was an autopsy?

Abubakar Abdulsalami: Yes there was.”

Quoted in “Rescued by Fate,” *Newswatch*, December 7 1998.

²⁹⁸ Phone interview with Max Siollun, June 28 2016.

²⁹⁹ Tim Weiner, “Abacha: He May Have Been Murdered,” *The Observer*, June 14 1998.

³⁰⁰ For a particularly lurid account, see Sunday Dare, Bamidele Johnson and Goodluck Ebelo, “How Abacha Was Poisoned” *TEMPO Magazine*, February 2 2000.

³⁰¹ Tim Weiner, “Abacha: He May Have Been Murdered.”

³⁰² John Campbell, *Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), p. 29. Nigerians often use the word “oga” to refer to “chief” or “boss.”

Defense Staff (CDS) and the least politicized among Nigeria's senior military leaders, was selected. Abubakar had remained loyal to every regime he served and had never been involved in coup plotting or "military politics."³⁰³ The choice illustrates the degree to which even most senior officers within the military were ready to leave power, an observation confirmed by the insight that Abubakar was also not the most senior officer in the army at the time. That title belonged to Jerry Useni, who was probably Abacha's closest associate of the army's general officers and who was deliberately overlooked by the council because they were suspicious of the role he may have played in Abacha's death.³⁰⁴

Though Abubakar's ascension was met with initial skepticism, his regime embarked on a nine-month transition program that saw the country return to democracy in May 1999 after over fifteen years of military rule. Though the transition was swift, the military played an enormous and underappreciated role in dictating the terms. In the first place, the annulment, its aftermath, and Abacha's oppressive reign had stoked ethnic tensions to a higher degree than at any point since the 1967-1970 Biafran civil war. The Niger Delta coup, the annulment of Abiola's election to the presidency, and the brutal repression enacted against peaceful protest movements such as Ken Saro -Wiwa's Movement for the Emancipation of the Ogoni People, generated real fear that much of Nigeria's south would have supported secession had the next Nigerian president not been from the region. Though Nigeria's military leaders were prepared to cede power, they

³⁰³ Umar, "Vagabond in Power."

³⁰⁴ See Dare, Johnson and Ebelo, "How Abacha Was Poisoned."

were wary of what it might mean to elect a candidate with little ties to the military and an axe to grind against the north.

The stability of the Nigerian polity began to look even more tenuous just after the death of Abacha when, prompted by millions of supporters, Abiola continued to refuse to give up his 1993 mandate and insisted on being installed as president. This presented Nigeria's military government, which had promised to free him and had already released most other high profile political prisoners, with a dilemma. Then, on July 7, 1998, the day of his expected release and one month after the death of Abacha, M.K.O. Abiola died, also of a heart attack. A subsequent autopsy report, conducted by a team of independent experts but the details of which have never been fully released to the public, concluded that Abiola, who was in poor health due to bad treatment in prison, died, like Abacha, of natural causes. Abiola became ill during a meeting with U.S. diplomats Thomas Pickering and Susan Rice, and rumors have persisted that he also was poisoned or killed, by the Nigerian military in collusion with the U.S.³⁰⁵

With Abiola out of the picture, Olusegun Obasanjo quickly emerged as the armed forces' preferred candidate for president. Given his former military background, pro-democracy credentials and ethnic identity as a Yoruba from the south-west, Obasanjo was a man who, in Babangida's words, the armed forces felt "it could do business with."³⁰⁶ In fact, the idea for an Obasanjo presidency did not originate with the man

³⁰⁵ *BBC News*, "Africa Opposition Alleges Foul Play," July 7 1998.

³⁰⁶ *Newswatch*, "A Teeming Crowd," November 23 1998. According to the article, there was further speculation that Babangida actively funded Obasanjo's campaign.

himself, but with former President Ibrahim Babangida and his Chief of Army Staff, Aliyu Mohammed Gusau.³⁰⁷ According to Obasanjo: “later on I was made to understand that Babangida and Gusau were concerned for Nigeria. I believe that if left to the politicians I wouldn’t have been the choice.”³⁰⁸ Babangida and Gusau managed to enlist the support of Abubakar, as well as TY Danjuma, an influential and wealthy retired soldier who had served under Obasanjo as Nigeria’s Army Chief of Staff from 1975-1979.

Together, these serving and former soldiers were not only instrumental in convincing Obasanjo to run, but also in convincing “the politicians” to support him and in clearing his path to the presidency. As members of the People’s Democratic Party were in the process of selecting a candidate, Gusau, on behalf of Babangida and Abubakar, approached PDP leaders about the possibility of Obasanjo running as the party’s nominee. According to former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, who was a senior PDP leader at the time:

My belief is that there were the hands of the military behind Obasanjo’s presidency. When we were considering who we wanted to nominate, Obasanjo was never mentioned as a potential candidate. But on the night we were to make a final decision, I had to briefly step out of our meeting in order to see Aliyu Mohammed Gusau, who requested to speak with me in my hotel room. At the time I adjourned the meeting, we had decided to concede the presidency to the south. And then here came General Aliyu Gusau. He said ‘Sir, I brought you a message on behalf of myself, General Ibrahim Babangida, General Abudsalami Abubakar and General TY Danjuma. We understand you have decided to support a southern candidate. We are your senior brothers. We know all these candidates

³⁰⁷ Interview with Atiku Abubakar, Abuja, July 14 2016; Interview with Mohammed Haruna, July 21 2016 and Interview with John Dara, Abuja, August 1 2016.

³⁰⁸ Interview with Olusegun Obasanjo, Abeokuta, June 21 2016

because we have worked with them. The best candidate who will now unite this country and bring stability to it is Olusegun Obasanjo.’

I went back to the meeting and had to call its adjournment in order to talk to the PDP’s key members one on one. After an all-night meeting, we decided to nominate Obasanjo as the party’s nominee. Four of us were mandated to fly to Lagos to meet Obasanjo. We met him at his farm in Ota, just after he had gotten out of prison, and said we wanted him to join and were giving him the ticket. At first he rejected it outright. He said ‘You’ve come to send me back to jail again! Who told you I wanted to be president?’ He said you can go and come back. We came back after a couple of days. He said he prayed to God and decided to join the PDP.³⁰⁹

Finally, the military under Abubakar's leadership subtly influenced the process through which Nigeria’s main political candidates were nominated. Late in the contest, the military government approved the merger of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) and All People’s Party (APP) into a joint platform to oppose Obasanjo's PDP, which under the election rules ought not to have been allowed.³¹⁰ Furthermore, the candidate that ultimately ended up representing this platform was the AD’s Olu Falae, who, like Obasanjo, was a Yoruba Christian. The choice of Falae as these two political parties’ main presidential candidate is all the more curious considering the APP was the bigger party and that his running mate, Umaru Shinkafi, was from the north and likely would have garnered broader appeal.³¹¹ Obasanjo, being of the same ethnicity as Falae but also trusted by the broader establishment, cruised to easy electoral victory.

³⁰⁹ Interview with Atiku Abubakar, July 14 2016. This account is confirmed by Obasanjo’s memoirs, who mentions that the Yar’Adua group was one of the first to visit him to see if he might be interested in running for president shortly after he was released from prison. See Olusegun Obasanjo, *My Watch*, vol. 2 (Presige Books, 2015), pp. 8-10.

³¹⁰ Interview with Jon Dara, August 1 2016.

³¹¹ Interview with Mohammed Haruna, July 21 2016

Thus, the key difference between 1993 and 1998 transition processes appears to be that, in 1998, traditional officers within the Nigerian military were able to seize power and guide the country towards democracy. No doubt, the choice of Obasanjo as the military's favored candidate helped assure officers on the fence that the military's corporate interests would be taken into account during the transition process. In addition, Abacha's attempts to personalize power after the 1993 elections appeared to have turned much of the senior officer corps against him. In 1993, a visible struggle between the hard-liners and much of the rest of the Nigerian military had led to a continuation of military rule. By 1998, there were few, if any hard-liners left to put up such a struggle. The most innocuous interpretation of the events is that Abacha's conveniently timed death provided to the military the opportunity to stand aside. Another possible interpretation, with considerable circumstantial evidence to support it, is that senior officers inside and outside the military planned Abacha's death in order to prevent him from becoming a permanent dictator and orchestrated a transition that allowed the armed forces to exit power on the most favorable possible terms.

5.7: Democratic Resilience in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

From Nigeria's independence in 1960 to the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999, Nigeria suffered 10 military coups or coup attempts, good for one every four years. In eighteen years of democratic rule, Nigeria has yet to suffer a military coup or coup attempt, despite rumors of various plots that appear to have advanced little beyond the

planning stage. To date, Nigeria's democracy has lasted two and a half times longer than the average length of a democracy that succeeds a military regime. This fact is all the more remarkable considering the political instability and turbulence that has marked much of the Fourth Republic. The death in 2010 of President Umaru Yar'Adua or the upheaval caused by Boko Haram were both moments where, in past eras, the military might have taken advantage of the turbulence and uncertainty to seize power.

The fact that the Nigerian Fourth Republic has proved so stable offers a tough test to the theory advanced here. In examining several competing explanations for the military's support of Nigerian democracy, I find most convincing support for the argument that the military's lack of political interference is a result of the retirement of the praetorian officers out of the Nigerian military, which ended the cycle of political instability. Unlike the democratic transition of 1979, the 1999 transition was followed by a mass purge of senior officers that served in prior political roles. The retirement of these officers was actually the last of a long series of purges and retirements that drew former military officers such as Obasanjo, Yar'Adua, and Babangida into civilian politics. Despite the Fourth Republic's democratic resilience, the fact that stable democratic rule in Nigeria was only possible after the retirement and marginalization of serving military officers who cultivated power is highly consistent with the causal logic of the theory advanced here.

Though the decision to leave power may have been collective, Nigeria's democratic leaders inherited an army that was demoralized, deprived of operational

capabilities, divided along ethnic lines, and with a substantial network of officers who had joined with the intention of seeking political power. At the time, concern was rife that the Fourth Republic would suffer the same fate as the First, Second, and Third Republics and succumb to the ambitions of the next generation of coup merchants. No leader was more conscious of the need to keep the military out of power than Obasanjo and his closest advisors, including vice President Atiku Abubakar and former General T.Y. Danjuma, who became his defense minister. These leaders adopted a series of policies have been widely cited as crucial in explaining the military's loyalty to the Fourth Republic.

The first series of policies concerned efforts to improve the military's capabilities. When Obasanjo took office, his administration promised to undertake reforms to "down-size and right-size" the military, upgrade soldiers' welfare, and re-equip the services.³¹² These efforts were only partially successful. Programs to upgrade soldier welfare appear to have been met with the most success, in part because the administration felt it was a good strategy to ensure the army's loyalty to civilian rule. According to Obasanjo, "I knew that simple things like car loans, staff housing, barracks, officers' messes would go a long way if you did not join the military for political reasons."³¹³ From 1998 to 2007, pay and benefits of both soldiers and officers were increased multiple times, making

³¹² Address by Vice President Atiku Abubakar, quoted in International Crisis Group, "Nigeria: The Challenge of Military Reform," Africa Report no. 237, June 2016, p. 4.

³¹³ Interview with Olusegun Obasanjo, June 21 2016

military service a highly competitive and attractive profession.³¹⁴ However, the plans to “down-size” the army went awry from the very beginning, with Obasanjo and Danjuma publicly disagreeing over whether a force reduction from 80,000 to 50,000 service members was appropriate at all.³¹⁵ In the end, it was decided to leave the number of service-members unchanged, a concern that was partially driven by the fear of the security consequences of discharging so many men.³¹⁶

The consequences of prioritizing the welfare of individual soldiers while minimizing the military budget was a continued decline in the military’s operational capacity. With so much money devoted to recurrent expenditures such as staff salaries and pensions, a pitifully low amount of money was devoted to capital investment.³¹⁷ For many years, the military made no major acquisitions; according to a former army chief of staff, the last time the military was well equipped and had a deliberate procurement process was under the Shagari administration, which ended in 1983.³¹⁸ Very little of the equipment that the Nigerian military did have was serviceable.³¹⁹ In a press release, the Nigerian government revealed that an appalling seven aircraft were in operational

³¹⁴ Interview with Chinedu Udeh, Abuja, June 1 2016; Interviews with Senior Military Officers who did not wish to be named, Abuja, June 2016.

³¹⁵ *Newswatch*, September 6 1999.

³¹⁶ “Danjuma Explains Plan to Trim the Armed Forces,” *The Guardian* (Lagos), March 29 2001. Qtd. in International Crisis Group, “Nigeria: The Challenge of Military Reform,” p. 6.

³¹⁷ See Julius Osifo, *Defense Budgetary Allocation and Military Operational Capability in Africa: Evidence from Nigeria* (Swiss Management Centre University Doctoral Thesis, 2015), pp. 80-84. According to Osifo, On the average, between years 2008 and 2014, 85.4 percent of defense budgetary allocations went to recurrent expense while 14.6 percent went to capital expenditure.

³¹⁸ Interview with Lt. General Azubuike Ihejirika, Abuja, July 1 2016.

³¹⁹ See, for example, AM Sabo, *Defense Management and Military Capabilities: A Case Study of Nigeria*, National Defense College Thesis (Nigerian National Defence College, 2010), p. 37.

condition as of May 2015.³²⁰ If true, this represents a decline even from the end of Nigeria's military dictatorships. This neglect of investment in material capabilities has hindered the Nigerian military's performance in combat. During the 2012 peacekeeping mission in Mali, Nigerian soldiers were so poorly equipped that they "did not have the capability to carry out even the most basic maneuvers necessary for forward operations."³²¹ In the early days of the Boko Haram insurgency, units with little food rations, poorly maintained vehicles, and magazines equipped with 30 to 60 bullets were thrust out to face an enemy with anti-aircraft weapons and rocket-propelled grenades.³²² It is actually somewhat remarkable these conditions did not spur more widespread mutiny.

Because efforts to improve the material conditions and operational capabilities were at best only partially addressed, it is unlikely they have had much influence in preventing a military re-seizure of power. As Figure 5.2 indicates, between 1988 and 2014, overall defense spending fluctuated between .5 and 1.5 percent of GDP and slightly

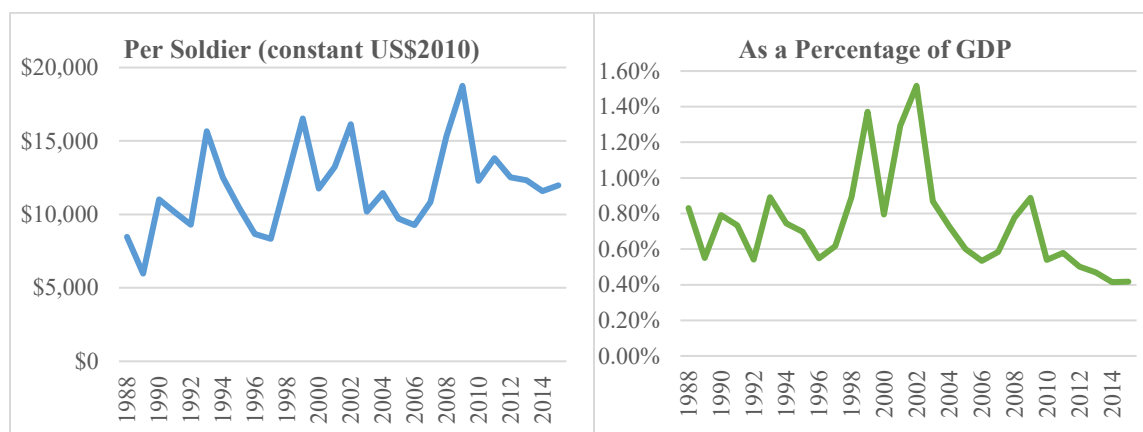
³²⁰ Festus Owete, "EFCC Detains ex-Chief of Air Staff, Adesola Amosu, over N29 billion Arms Deal" *Premium Times*, January 28 2016.

³²¹ International Crisis Group, "The Challenge of Military Reform," p. 14.

³²² Senior officers and lower-ranking soldiers I spoke with were nearly uniform in their agreement that the army's problems with supply and equipment were the central obstacles in confronting Boko Haram. According to one senior military officer: "Equipment would sometimes come, but not at the right quantity, and the appropriations were there for everyone to see. You can't ask a soldier to fight for you if they don't have equipment. That's what makes them a soldier." Interview with Senior Military Officer who did not wish to be named, Abuja, June 2016. Confirming this officer's sentiment, one former enlisted soldier in the Nigerian Army described being ambushed and unable to effectively retaliate due to expired bullets and a lack of ammunition and vehicles. The unit lost nearly two dozen men and ended up being court-martialed for retreating. Phone interview with former Private who did not wish to be named, Nigerian Army, June 28 2016.

declined overall; spending per soldier has increased slightly, but much of the increase is likely due to increases in expenditures on salaries and other administrative expenses.

Figure 5.2: Nigerian Military Expenditure Per Soldier & Relative to GDP, 1988-2015



Sources: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database 2016; World Bank World Development Indicators 2016; International Institute of Strategic Studies 2016

It is therefore difficult to attribute Nigerian democratization to changes in the military’s operational capabilities. Under both authoritarian and democratic regimes, equipment fell into disrepair and was not replaced, and a culture of prebendalism permeated through the ranks. Nigeria’s soldiers, which in the 1960s fought a civil war against another using fairly sophisticated conventional warfare tactics, was rendered incapable of conducting basic forward operations during peacekeeping missions in the 1990s and 2000s. All of Nigeria’s rulers, both under democracy and under military rule, systematically neglected investing in improving the armed forces’ operational

capabilities. Yet Nigeria suffered through three irregular transitions of power and seven coup attempts in fifteen years of military government, and no irregular transitions and zero coup attempts in nineteen years of democracy.

The next series of reforms undertaken by democratic leaders was to attempt to redress ethnic stacking. Shortly after Obasanjo was elected, many officers from the highly politicized echelon of the military that was dominated by Northern and Middle Belt were retired. The new administration was further supported by 1999 constitutions, which stipulated that high-level government appointments needed to have a federal character. The officer recruitment process is also fairly well balanced, with each state selecting 22 officers to serve annually.³²³ The armed forces have generally promoted officers that have served more as bureaucrats and less as commanders during the Abacha and Babangida era, which had had the effect of increasing representation of among the army's higher ranks of officers from Southern regions and minority ethnic groups.³²⁴ High level appointments within the military during the Fourth Republic are indicative of a far more even balance than under authoritarianism. Since 1999, 40 percent of Nigeria's Defense Ministers and Army Chiefs of Staff, the two most sensitive positions in the Nigerian military, have hailed from the South. Nevertheless, some imbalances may

³²³ According to senior officers I spoke to, the process is not perfect. 7 out of the 22 slots are not based on merit, and civilian officials do at times interfere with promotions, but always in the name of "maintaining federal character." How bad civilians interfere with such appointments has depended on the civilian in charge. This reform apparently dates back to the Armed Forces Act of 1993, though the effects have taken their time to work their way through the ranks. Interview with Senior Military Officials, Abuja, June 2016.

³²⁴ Interview with Matthew Page, Washington, D.C., April 25 2016.

persist among rank and file soldiers, due to the prestige and the history of the military profession in Nigeria's North.³²⁵

It is more difficult to dismiss this evidence. The domination of the military by officers of Northern and Middle Belt were a prominent source of civil-military tension during military rule, particularly in aftermath of the Niger Delta coup attempt. In addition, the reluctance that some officers had over the candidacy of Moshood Abiola – a southern Yoruba – directly contributed to the annulment of the 1993 election, a fact which was admitted by Babangida himself. During the 1998-1999 transition, Nigeria's transitional government and retired former officers worked assiduously to avoid the election of a southern candidate that they felt might have acted against their interests. During this period, their dislike of Abiola may have cost him his life. The efforts to restore ethnic balance to Nigeria's military do appear to have gone some way to restoring the Nigerian military's internal cohesion and acceptance of civilian rule.

It is one thing to consider the ethnic imbalances within the Nigerian armed forces an important factor in explaining support for democratization within the ranks. But were these imbalances really the pre-dominant source opposition to democracy within the Nigerian military? In the first place, it is difficult to decipher whether the officers in the Niger Delta coup were motivated by genuine ethnic resentments or merely by the desire

³²⁵ Interview with Major General Joseph Lartey (rtd.), June 23 2016. According to one prominent Nigerian journalist that has extensively covered the military, Northerners are still overrepresented among Nigeria's enlisted ranks, and have at times been known to disobey the commands of Southern officers. Despite the history of coups and retirements motivated by clear ethnic considerations, the fact that the Nigerian military has long tried to maintain the appearance of a nationally representative institution has likely made these reforms easier than if it had adopted a policy of institutionalized exclusion. Interview with Dapo Olorunyomi, Silver Spring, MD, May 3 2016.

to seek power for themselves. Likewise, were the Northern and Middle Belt officers who for so long dominated Nigeria's military motivated by the desire to preserve the North's institutional status, or were they driven by the baser motivation of ambition and the exigencies of maintaining power? The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but the fact that, of Nigeria's seven coup attempts during military rule, all but one was led by predominantly Northern and Middle Belt officers against fellow predominantly Northern and Middle Belt officers, attests to the importance of the struggle for power as an end in itself. In addition, not all mid- and high-ranking officers of southern origin in the military were involved in the Niger Delta coup plot, but a number of officers from the Middle Belt were.³²⁶ Similarly, not all of the Northern and Middle Belt officers within the military supported the 1993 annulment. Even if redressing ethnic stacking within Nigeria's military may have been a necessary condition for democratization, it was clearly not sufficient.

A final explanation is that the military became more supportive of democracy because the mass retirement of some 116 military officers who held political offices since 1985. Most of these officers were from the North and the Middle Belt, but they were retired not because of their ethnic origin, but because of their prior political service; many officers from these regions remained. The announcement was enacted only two weeks

³²⁶ According to a senior military officer who was familiar Orkar, one of the main plotters of the Niger Delta coup: "Though I was from the south the main reason I never really knew the officers involved was because of lifestyle: they weren't married and I got married at a young age. If not, things might have turned out differently. Under military rule, some set of officers were prominent ahead of others, and this is what dissatisfied Orkar. Primary game in the military had become to seek power at the expense of troops, and this was the principal justification for Orkar. You can always come up with excuses depending on what side you're on." Interview with Retired Senior Military Officer who did not wish to be named, Abuja, June 2016.

after Obasanjo was sworn in as president and was one of his first official acts. By deliberate design, it caught many of the more politically ambitious officers off-guard, before they would have had a chance to organize or form a strategy to maintain their positions. Though Obasanjo clouded the timing of the decision itself in some degree of secrecy, the idea was proposed and gained traction among many officials beforehand.³²⁷ A transition panel, chaired by Danjuma, endorsed the decision to retire officers who had been military administrators, ministers, governors and prominent task force chairmen.

There is compelling evidence for this explanation. First, the retirements sent a signal that ambition for political office was no longer going to be tolerated within the Nigerian military. It was clearly essential in shifting the balance of power in the military's middle and senior ranking officers decisively towards the traditional, non-political officers who represented the majority of the military. The decision was met with "jubilation" in the barracks and established a clear precedent to discourage soldiers from seeking political office or interfering with Nigeria's political affairs.³²⁸ The precedent has at times been acted on by subsequent administrations. In June 2016, for example, dozens of senior Nigerian Army officers were fired for professional misconduct in election matters.³²⁹

³²⁷ According to Atiku Abubakar, the idea was discussed and accepted in meetings he'd conducted with Obasanjo and other senior national security officials. Interview with Atiku Abubakar, July 14 2016.

³²⁸ Ima Noboro, "Obasanjo's Operation Sweep," *Tell Magazine*, June 28 1999; Dotun Oladipo, "The Big Purge," *Newswatch*, June 28 1999.

³²⁹ Hassan Adebayo, "Nigerian Army Gives Formal Reasons Why It Dismissed 22 Senior Officers" *Premium Times*, September 27 2016.

Second, the retirements offer a clear contrast with the 1979 transition process, when officers such as Buhari, Babangida and Abacha, each of who had served in political roles in the previous military administration, were allowed to remain in the military and nearly immediately began plotting to seize control. The coup of 1983 was largely the work of them and several dozen mid- and senior-level officers who had served in political roles and plotted coups as far back as Nigeria's first military government in 1966. The retirements early in the Obasanjo administration precluded the next generation of 'coup merchants' from attempting to re-enter politics.

Finally, it is perhaps no coincidence that the mass retirements of active duty officers who had served in political roles was preceded by the mass entry of retired military officers into civilian politics. Numerous high-ranking former military officers, including Obasanjo, Buhari, Danjuma, Aliyu Mohammed Gusau, and Senators David Mark, Chris Alli and John Shagaya have gone on to high level political careers, in no small part due to the wealth and connections they were able to accumulate while they were in power.³³⁰ Of all the Fourth Republic's presidents, only one, Goodluck Jonathan, has lacked previous service in or immediate family ties to the armed forces.

From the forgoing analysis indicates that the reasons for the military's support for Nigeria's democratic stability are not inconsistent with this project's broader overall argument. Recall that my core contention is that the cleavages between praetorian and traditional offers render military regimes distinct from other forms of authoritarian civil-

³³⁰ See J'Bayo Adekanye. *The Retired Military as Emergent Power Factor in Nigeria* (Ibadan University Press, 1999).

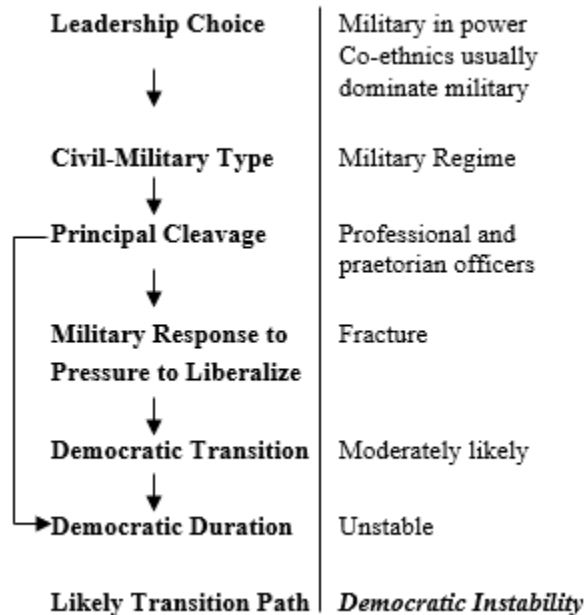
military relations. Such cleavages are the main reason why military regimes tend to fracture at critical junctures, and the ambitions of the praetorian class of officers constitute the single greatest threat to democratic stability. It follows, then, that in order for a democracy following a military regime to have a reasonable chance to survive, praetorian officers within the armed forces must be marginalized. As a result of the steady stream of purges and retirements that caused many retired officers to support a return to civilian rule, along with the purges of former politicized officers early in the Obasanjo administration, these basic conditions were met, for the first time in Nigerian history. At the very least, it is likely that these conditions were also necessary, if not sufficient, conditions for Nigerian democracy to endure.

5.8: Tracing the Mechanisms: Nigeria's Military Regimes and Democratic Instability

In the quantitative chapter, I provided evidence in favor of my argument that military regimes tend to follow paths of democratic instability. I found that military regimes end in democracy at an approximately average rate, but that the democracies they give rise to are unstable, lasting approximately 50 percent less than average. The quantitative chapter provided strong evidence in favor of the relationship between my dissertation's central independent and dependent variables, but it did not provide support for my argument concerning the causal mechanisms linking military regimes to the outcomes mentioned. The qualitative chapters, beginning with Nigeria, are meant to

provide this missing linking by more closely examining the extent to which the cleavages and mechanisms that lead to the observed outcomes are reflective this dissertation’s overall argument. To reminder of the reader of these arguments, this dissertation’s argument with respect to military regimes is reproduced below in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.3: The Transitional Politics of Military Regimes



The evidence, gathered both from an intensive examination of the secondary literature and interviews, is consistent with the argument. The Nigerian military officers who seized power in 1983 were predominantly from Nigeria’s North and Middle Belt and had extensive prior governing experience. They had long had designs on power and

modelled their government off of Nigeria's previous military regime, which ruled the country between 1979 and 1983. With one brief interruption during the interim government of 1993, military officers controlled the country through by issuing decrees through various ruling councils until 1999. Nigeria is considered one of Africa's archetypes of military governance.

In addition, the Nigerian military was defined by cleavages between officers who served in ruling roles and those in more traditional military ones. The coup was a work of a relatively small group of officers whose opinions were not necessarily reflective of the overall military. Moreover, the military was never able to come to a consensus over when to leave, nor which among the ruling class of officers was to wield power. The seven coup attempts, four successful coups and four heads of military government that Nigeria had in just fifteen years is a strong indication of just how internally divided the military became. The fact that only one of these coup attempts had an explicitly ethnic character is further evidence that the central cleavages concerned were about the military's role as ruler.

These internal divisions caused the Nigerian military to split in response to pressure to liberalize. Each of Nigeria's transition periods in 1993 and 1998 were periods of considerable uncertainty, as officers representing the more traditional military faction attempted to guide the country towards democracy, while hardliners sought to hang on to power. In 1993, in no small part due to the privileged position of hardliners within the interim government and their assurances to their traditional counterparts that a return to

civilian rule was imminent, the praetorian wing of the Nigerian military managed to hang on. When Abacha died in 1998, the soft-liners had the upper-hand, and, in collaboration with retired military officers, guided Nigeria to a democratic transition they hoped would also serve the military's institutional interests.

Nigeria therefore illustrates this project's overall argument that the tendency of military regimes to fracture in the face of pressure to liberalize makes for uncertain transitional politics. A tentative conclusion from the Nigerian case is that the 1998 transition succeeded where the 1993 one failed, in part because there was less support among Nigeria's top officers for continued military rule in 1998; and in part because, by selecting a former military ruler as its preferred candidate, the armed forces was more certain that its institutional interests would be safeguarded under democracy. The variation in transition outcomes within military regimes themselves is a topic that is virtually unexplored in the academic literature and could lead to fruitful avenues of further research.

Moreover, the cleavages between praetorian and traditional officers, and the struggle they caused, also explain the observed outcomes concerning the fate of Nigerian democracy. The fall of the Second Republic, which lasted only four years, follows my argument's exact predictions. Nigeria's democratic experiment between 1979 and 1983 was ended by politically-minded officers who remained in the military after the first military regime ended in 1979 and deliberately sought power. Though the Fourth Republic has not met the same fate, an examination of the transition process offers a

compelling reason why: in 1999, almost immediately after the transition to democracy, officers with experience in mid- and high- level government positions were prematurely retired. They were the last of a generation of praetorian, politically ambitious officers to leave the military, breaking the cycle of political instability set in motion with Nigeria's first military coup in 1966. Through their retirements, they joined a broader class of retired military officers, many of whom have used their wealth and their connections to reenter politics as civilians.

Viewed from this perspective, the explanation for Nigeria's return to democracy and enduring democratic stability is relatively simple. It took four decades of military rule, but ultimately the praetorian officers within Nigeria's armed forces cannibalized themselves and the military in which they served. After years of watching their peers prematurely retired, tried, imprisoned, and even executed, there were few officers left who genuinely believed that military rule was to the benefit either of the military as an institution, or to the country. Moreover, many of the officers who had benefitted most from the military had by that point been forced to retire or bought off as a result of the constant struggle for power. These two groups of officers collaborated to orchestrate a transition to democracy that they hoped would take the military permanently out of power, but largely on their terms. They organized an election, selected one of their own as a candidate, and foreclosed the possibility of further military rule by prematurely retiring any soldier left in the military they suspected of harboring political aims. They knew that the best way to prevent a coup was to discourage networks of politically ambitious officers such as theirs from forming in the first place.

Chapter 6

Ethnic Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Obstruction in Sudan

The military officers and politicians who seized power on 30 June 1989 held a monolithic vision of the identity of Sudan. They maintained that Islam, the majority religion, and Arabic, the language of the Quran, represented the essential bases for the country's nationalism and should define its legal, political and economic systems. Arabic should supersede indigenous languages as well as English, the colonizer's language. Minorities must either merge into that Islamic culture or be exempt from a few religious punishments. Christians could practice their faith, but adherents of traditional African faiths could be compelled to convert, since they were not monotheist 'people of the book.' The regime sought to compel the public to follow its rigidly defined social code, cultural norms, and religious forms.

Ann Mosley Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities* (1998), p. 113

The Arabs came here looking for pasture, and when the grass was finished they went back. They used up our grass, but they took good care of the gardens and the people. There were no robberies, no thieves, no revolution. No one thought of domination; everyone was safe. We were afraid only of lions and hyenas. Now there is nothing but trouble, all over Sudan. There is no government, no control. Look around you. What do you see? No women, only armed men. We no longer recognize it, this land of ours.'

Sheikh Heri Rahma, quoted in Julie Flint and Alex de Wall, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War* (2008), p. 276

For over 27 years, Sudan has been ruled by Omar al-Bashir, an army officer who has since become the longest-serving leader of the longest-running regime in Sudanese history. Since coming to power in 1989, Bashir has survived several coup attempts, a confrontation with the Islamist party that brought him to power, international sanctions,

cruise missile strikes by the United States, and two devastating civil wars, one of which led to the independence of South Sudan in a 2011 referendum.³³¹ Bashir's survival in office is due in no small part to his support within the Sudanese armed forces, which have come to comprise not only the regular army but a plethora of parallel military institutions.

This chapter argues that Bashir's support stems from his use of ethnic stacking within Sudan's armed forces, which do not rule directly but are deliberately manipulated to serve the interests of a northern, Arab elite that have dominated Sudan's political institutions since the country's independence in 1956. Like Nigeria's rulers, Bashir is a high-ranking military officer who came to power in a democracy-ending coup. Yet unlike in Nigeria, the main co-conspirator in the coup was not the military itself, but Sudan's National Islamist Front (NIF), a party that sought to remake Sudan into an Islamist state. Other than Bashir, few senior military offices serve in non-national security-related roles, which are instead mostly filled by civilian politicians. By serving as the military's key interlocutor with a civilian political sphere, Bashir was eventually able to personalize his rule after a confrontation with Hassan al-Turabi, an Islamist politician whom many considered the power behind the throne in the early years of Bashir's tenure.

After it seized power, the NIF became split between those like Bashir, who saw it as a vehicle to continue the North's dominance of Sudan's political and military institutions, and Turabi, who sought to mobilize non-Arab Muslims in peripheral regions in support of the regime. The confrontation was won by Bashir after Turabi was expelled

³³¹ Unless otherwise specified, demographic statistics cited in this chapter refer to the whole of Sudan prior to participation in 2011.

from the NIF and imprisoned in 1999. Critical to Bashir's victory in this confrontation was his use of his position as head of state and party leader to maintain control over Sudan's military institutions. Though the country practices a policy of national conscription, Arabs have historically been significantly overrepresented in the officer corps of the regular army. In the early days of Bashir's rule, his regime reinforced the northern dominance of the military's highest echelons and purged large numbers of officers they suspected of being disloyal to the Islamist cause.

In addition to these purges, the army retained its loyalty to Bashir in part because of the creation of a parallel military institution, the Popular Defense Force (PDF). In principle, the PDF was meant to replace the traditional military with an Islamist one that appealed to a broader portion of Sudan's population, 70 percent of which practices Islam. In practice, the group was controlled by an Arabo-Islamist officer corps and composed of a combination of Arab militia groups and conscripts, who went through training meant to indoctrinate them into Islamist principles. After the PDF proved to be ineffective on the battlefield, Bashir marginalized the institution by placing it under his personal control. In this way, both the PDF and the regular army have checked one another's influence and have been instrumental in ruthlessly repressing protests that have at times challenged Bashir's rule.

Beyond the regular army and the PDF, the final, most destructive, and perhaps most crucial instrument through which Bashir has been able to sustain himself has been through use of ethnic militias as instruments of repression and war. Since the mid-1980s, the Sudanese state has incorporated organized joint military operations, funded and allied

with numerous militias who recruit exclusively along ethnic lines. In the south, home to mostly Christian and animist groups, the Sudanese government worked closely with tribal militia groups to wage war and exploit divisions among rebel groups. In Darfur, where Islam predominates but where Arab tribes make up roughly one third of the population, the Sudanese militaries conducted an almost identical strategy of funding Arab ethnic militias to violently repress groups opposed to Bashir's rule. These militias have been crucial to helping Bashir maintain power, but at horrific cost.

Sudan thus offers a particularly compelling contrast with Nigeria, another large, ethnically diverse, formerly British petro-state divided between a mostly Muslim North and Christian and animist South. As in Nigeria, a military officer seized power—in part to serve the interests of the northern elite that historically dominated the country's political institutions—and made further efforts to cement control by appointing co-ethnics into key positions within the regular army. Yet the parallels end there. Nigeria's military leaders were never so blatant in their attempt to transform both the country and the armed forces into instruments of ethnic rule. They remained committed in principle, if not always in practice, to regionally and ethnically representative military recruitment and promotion, and insisted that the regular army serve as the regime's primary coercive force. In the Sudan, Arabs dominated the officer corps not only of the regular army, but also paramilitary institutions that have demonstrated unwavering loyalty to the Sudanese regime and a near limitless capacity for violence. Only through the ruthless militarization of ethnic differences has the Sudanese regime managed to remain so long in power.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into seven sections. The second section provides basic background information on Sudan and situates the country within the broader universe of African cases. The third examines how the fact that the 1989 coup was masterminded by the NIF political party meant that the coup leaders chose to not to institutionalize military rule, but rather to enact a civilian-led government. The fourth section argues that the primary civil-military cleavages in Sudan are ethno-regional in character, and illustrates how Bashir was able to use his status as a representative of the northern Arab elite to stack the Sudanese Armed Forces and consolidate power. The subsequent sections illustrate how these cleavages have contributed to the resilience of authoritarianism in Sudan. The fifth section examines Bashir's clash with Turabi, arguing that the latter's control over the military and parallel military institutions were crucial in cementing his control over Sudan's political system and blocking the potential for greater liberalization. In the sixth section, I examine the Sudanese government's use of ethnic militias to wage war and repress demands for popular representation both in Darfur and the Sudan, leading to war and the eventual secession of the country's South. In the seventh section, I briefly examine how the Sudan's legacy of ethnically stacked military forces contributed to the current civil war in South Sudan, which inherited fragmented, deeply polarized security institutions. In the final section, I summarize how the casual processes behind Sudanese military's support for Bashir's regime reflect this dissertation's theoretical framework.

6.1: Sudan in Context: Background, History and Case Selection

Prior to partition, Sudan was home to over fifty million people and encompassed close to one million square miles of territory, one third the size of the continental United States (see Figure 1). Bordered by 11 countries in the heart of northeast Africa, home to hundreds of ethnic groups and a mixture of Islam, Christianity and indigenous religions, Sudan was considered by many to be its own microcosm of the African continent. A former English colony,³³² Sudan has historically been divided between a predominantly Arab and Islamic North, an ethnically diverse and Christian / animist South, and a West where Islam predominates but there exists a mix between Arab and indigenous self-identified ethnic groups (see Table 1). Though the country benefits from substantial oil wealth, a near continuous history of war since independence in 1956 has contributed to make GDP per capita the lowest of the three countries considered in this dissertation.

Sudan offers a particularly compelling comparison to Nigeria. Sudan was Africa's largest country in terms of land mass; Nigeria is the continent's most populous. Both countries are former British colonies, with substantial religious, ethnic, and cultural differences between a predominantly Islamic North and predominantly Christian South. The regimes of both countries are dependent upon oil reserves, which are responsible for most government revenue. In both nations, oil wealth, periods of economic stagnation, and political divides have led to major post-independence civil wars. Nigeria's two most

³³² During the colonial period, Sudan was technically jointly administered by Egypt and Great Britain, though it was the English who effectively ruled. For a concise summary of the history of this arrangement, see Robert Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 33-68.

serious conflicts were the short but intense Biafran civil war between 1967 and 1970, which nearly led to the secession of the southeastern part of the country, and the more recent conflict with Boko Haram, which has devastated the country's Northeast. For Sudan, nearly continuous conflict between the North and South since independence ultimately led to the secession of the south in 2011, though conflict continues in the borderlands of South Kordofan and the Blue Nile. More recently, an ongoing conflict in the Western region of Darfur led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands and is considered one of the greatest human tragedies of the twenty-first century.

Finally, in both countries, military leaders seized power from democratically elected governments in the 1980s. In 1983, the Nigerian military seized power and the country was formally and informally ruled by a group of military officers until 1999, when the military left power. In 1989, Colonel Omar al-Bashir seized power in a coup backed by Islamist political and military factions, and has since personalized his rule after winning a confrontation with Islamists in the late 1990s. Though the military's backing has been crucial to maintaining Bashir in power, the military has little influence in day to day policy decisions and does not openly rule, a subtle but crucial distinction with Nigeria. Bashir's authoritarian regime is the longest serving in Sudan's history, and the fact that Bashir has managed to remain in power for over 26 years provides another remarkable contrast to Nigeria's rapid succession of military rulers followed by its transition to democracy.

Table 6.1: Select Summary Statistics for all Cases

Country	Civil-Mil Relation	Transition Outcome	Dem Duration (yrs)	GDPk	Ethnic Groups	Religions	Pop.	Life Exp (yrs)
Nigeria	Military	Blocked & Successful	4,17	\$3,005	Hausa (25%) Yoruba (21%) Igbo (19%)	Muslim (50%) Christian (40%) Other (10%)	186 mn	52
Sudan	Ethnic	Blocked	N/A	\$1,753	Arab (39%) Dinka (10%) Beja (6%)	Muslim (70%), Christian (19%) Other (11%)	52 mn	62
Tunisia	Representative	Successful	6	\$4,317	Arab (98%)	Muslim (99%)	11 mn	75

Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators and CIA World Factbook

As the remainder of this chapter will argue, differences in the civil-military relations under both authoritarian regimes are crucial to understanding authoritarian persistence in Sudan. In Nigeria, a predominantly Northern elite has monopolized power, but at times shown willingness to cede the country's highest office to Southern members of non-Muslim ethnic groups. Though ethnic stacking pervaded the Nigerian military throughout its period of authoritarian rule and constituted an important obstacle to the country's democratization, Nigeria's military leaders and the institution itself remained committed in principle to a multi-ethnic state. In Sudan, the regime's basis of power is far narrower. Sudan's state institutions, including the top posts of the armed forces, have historically been monopolized by a sub-group of Northern or riverain Arabs that come

from three tribes who constitute about five percent of the population. One of the key mechanisms through which this group has been able to maintain power is by divide-and-rule tactics, which has kept Sudan's periphery in a near constant state of conflict by polarizing the country along ethnic lines. Unlike Nigeria, Sudan has relied extensively on Arab-dominated parallel military institutions, including the PDF and private, ethnic militias to repress local dissidents and wage war in the country's periphery. These parallel military institutions have at times served as a direct substitute for the regular army and possess a seemingly limitless willingness to be used as an instrument of repression. Sudan, in other words, represents a case of ethnic stacking to the extreme, with ethnic recruitment a common facet of the regular army and parallel military institutions alike.

Finally, it is important to note that the militarization of tribal identity in Sudan is neither due to ancient hatreds nor fixed tribal customs, but to deliberate attempts by political leaders to exploit identities for political mobilization and gain. Though Sudan's northern elites in Khartoum have long favored ideologies that promote the Islamic and Arab character of Sudan, the militarization of "Arab" and "African" identities is a relatively recent phenomenon. Sudanese 'Africanism' developed to a large degree as a response to the notion of Arab supremacism; the SPLA leader John Garang used the idea of an "African majority" counter the Sudanese government's claim that the Sudan should be an Islamic State because it had a majority Muslim population.³³³ Likewise, most

³³³ Alex De Waal. "Who Are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement." *African Affairs* 104, no. 415 (2005), p. 199.

Darfurians historically would not have identified themselves as “Africans.” In Darfur itself, an “Arab supremacist” ideology did not exist until the late 1970s and early 1980s, when, some of Darfur’s Arabs began to draw on their Juhayna identities to combat Khartoum’s claims that they were second-rate Arabs at best.³³⁴ They were abetted by the Arab Gathering, a Ghaddafi-inspired organization with aims of spreading an Arab homeland across the Sahel, who in 1987 sent a now notorious letter demanding better Arab representation in Darfur, falsely claiming that Arab tribes represented more than 70 percent of the population, and threatening violence should their demands not be met.³³⁵

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Julie Flint and Alex De Waal, *Darfur: A New History of a Long War* (Zed Books, 2008), p. 50.

Figure 6.1: Political Map of Sudan



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section (2007)

6.2: The Choice: The National Islamist Front (NIF) and Omar al-Bashir's Coup

On June 30, 1989, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by an obscure colonel by the name of Omar al-Bashir, seized power from the civilian government of Sadiq al-Mahdi. The seizure of power came amidst significant popular discontent. Sudan's democracy, which lasted only three years, had proved itself incapable of managing a stagnant economy and overseeing a six-year war that had re-erupted between the North and South. Like past officers who had come to power at the barrel of a gun, Bashir "justified his coup and his policies as the only alternative to civilian mismanagement."³³⁶ In the immediate aftermath of the coup, Bashir appointed a Revolutionary Command Council composed exclusively of military officers to rule the country, and appointed himself head of state, defense minister, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The constitution was suspended, parliament dissolved, emergency rule imposed, and the usual spate of officers suspected of disloyalty to the regime retired.³³⁷

In many respects, the SAF coup was similar to the seizure of power by the Nigerian military in 1983. It took place in an environment of significant internal unrest, ended a brief period of democracy, and was enacted by a relatively small group of Muslim officers with ethnic ties to the country's North. Yet these similarities mask a crucial difference essential to understanding support within the Sudanese Armed Forces for authoritarian rule. The military seizure of power in Sudan was masterminded not from

³³⁶ Helen Chapin Metz. *Sudan: A Country Study*. Vol. 550. No. 27-992. (Government Printing Office, 2015), p. 309.

³³⁷ Alan Cowell, "Military Coup in Sudan Ousts Civilian Regime," *New York Times*, July 1 1989.

within the armed forces, but by the National Islamist Front (NIF), a political party committed to turning Sudan into an Islamist state.³³⁸ The NIF infiltrated the military and, after being rebuffed by several other officers, recruited Bashir to lead the coup attempt. Among the first moves of the military-controlled RCC was not only to arrest much of the political class, but also to place under house arrest Hassan al-Turabi, the NIF leader who was reportedly behind the coup. In fact, this turned out to be an elaborate ruse designed to placate wary Western governments while giving Islamists, who were a minority party, the opportunity to seize control of the organs of government. In December 1989, Turabi was released from prison, upon which all members of the RCC, including Bashir, swore an oath of allegiance.³³⁹

The pre-eminent role of the NIF in planning and organizing the coup d'état meant that Sudan did not follow Nigeria down the path to a full-blown military regime. Instead, during the early years of the Bashir administration the NIF attempted to assert control over nearly all aspects of government. Unions and secular political parties were banned, their properties confiscated. All but the most loyal newspapers were shut down, and the government cracked down on human rights activists, university professors, and intellectuals, many of whom left the country. Sharia laws were implemented more stringently than ever before, forcing thousands of women from their jobs and leading to many arbitrary arrests, public floggings, and other penalties for “scandalous conduct” and

³³⁸ Robert O. Collins, “Africans, Arabs, and Islamists: From the Conference Tables to the Battlefields in the Sudan.” *African Studies Review* 42, no. 2 (1999), p. 106.

³³⁹ See Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*, pp. 185-194.

“immodest dress.”³⁴⁰ Much of the judiciary was replaced, with the Islamist Jalal Ali Lutfi appointed as chief justice. Ministerial positions that were not directly related to national security were filled with mostly NIF-affiliated civilian appointees. In October of 1993, the RCC was dissolved, Omar al-Bashir became the country’s civilian president, and Turabi was appointed the speaker of an NIF-dominated parliament. With his election, Bashir was able to accomplish what his authoritarian counterparts in Nigeria never could, becoming Sudan’s head of state while ending the military’s formal control of the country.

6.3: Civil-Military Cleavages: Bashir as a Scion of the Northern Arab Elite

Though Bashir was a political neophyte, over time he and his close associates came to represent the interests of the Northern or riverain Arab elite, a group that has dominated Sudan’s state institutions since independence. The riverain Arabs, and in particular three tribes that live along the Nile north of Khartoum and constitute about five percent of the population, represent an elite-within-the-elite; every Sudanese president has hailed from this northern region and its officials have made up a majority of ministerial and other high level positions in nearly every government since independence.³⁴¹ The three main groups from this region are the Ja’aliyin of President Bashir, the Shagiyya of former vice-president Ali Osman Mohamed Taha and the Dangla

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Flint and De Waal, *Darfur*, p. 16.

of Defense Minister Bakri Hassan Saleh.³⁴² The riverain Sudanese are “overwhelmingly Arabic speaking... wholly Muslim and to a greater or lesser degree identify themselves as genealogically and culturally Arab.”³⁴³

Bashir and his fellow officers represented this elite in that they shared a “monolithic vision of the identity of Sudan,” maintaining “that Islam, the majority religion, and Arabic, the language of the Quran, represented the essential basis for the country’s nationalism and should define its legal political and economic systems.”³⁴⁴

Bashir was neither the first nor the last head of state to attempt to govern all of Sudan in the name of Islamist principles and on the basis of Arab identity, despite the fact that only 70 percent of the country practiced Islam and about 40 percent identify as Arab.³⁴⁵ Even in pre-colonial times, what is now modern Sudan was wracked by significant political and social divisions between the country’s North, where Islam predominates and where most groups identify as Arab, the West, where many non-Arab groups practice more syncretic forms of Islam, and the South, which was for the most part neither Islamic nor Arabic. During the colonial period, the British favored an elite from within these Northern communities, who saw Arab culture as inextricably bound in the formation of

³⁴² Ibid. See also the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), *The Black Book: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in Sudan*. Translated by Abdullahi Osman El-Tom (JEM, 2004). Available at http://www.sudanjem.com/sudan-alt/english/books/blackbook_part1/book_part1.asp.htm (accessed May 26, 2017).

³⁴³ Rex Seán O’Fahey, “Islam and Ethnicity in the Sudan.” *Journal of Religion in Africa* (1996), p. 259.

³⁴⁴ Ann Mosely Lesch, *Sudan: Contested National Identities* (Indiana University Press, 1998) p. 113.

³⁴⁵ For an excellent demographic and religious breakdown of Sudan, see Ibid., pp. 15-20.

the Sudanese state.³⁴⁶ In 1966, Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of one of Sudan's two main political parties at the time, proclaimed, "the dominant feature of our nation is an Islamic one and its overpowering expression is Arab, and this Nation will not have its entity identified and its prestige and pride preserved except under an Islamic revival."³⁴⁷

The deliberate political marginalization of non-Arab, non-Islamic groups have played an important in political competition and political conflict throughout Sudan's post-independence history. After privileging the North and neglecting the South, the British attempt to unify both regions helped ignite the post-independence civil war, which lasted from 1955 to 1972. In 1983, President al-Nimeiri attempted to further cement the political power of Arab and Islamist ethno-nationalist groups by instituting country-wide Sharia law, an action which helped prompt the second war. According to Lesch, the rebellion's "aims of establishing a nonreligious, nonethnic government in which all the diverse peoples of Sudan would have an equal share threatened the essence of a Muslim and Arab-oriented country."³⁴⁸ Five years later, the NIF coup was prompted by its expulsion from the al-Mahdi government as part of negotiation efforts to end the second civil war, which likely would have resulted in more regional autonomy for the South and formal recognition for secular, non-Arab political parties and groups. In short, Arab groups have monopolized on Sudan's politics since independence, and the 1989 coup can

³⁴⁶ See Rex Seán O'Fahey. "Islam and Ethnicity," p. 259; see also Heather Sharkey "Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity, and Race." *African Affairs* 107, no. 426 (2008): 21-43.

³⁴⁷ Harvey Glickson. "Islamism in Sudan's Civil War." *Orbis* 44, no. 2 (2000), p. 267.

³⁴⁸ Lesch, *Sudan*, p. 113.

be read to a large degree as an attempt by the country's Arabized elite, and in particular the Northern elite, to preserve political dominance.

The dominance of Arab groups extends to the SAF officer corps. Exact statistics are not available due to their sensitive nature, but the consensus among scholars is that the dominance of Arab officers is persistent. According to Lesch, the British recruited officers for what became the SAF from mostly urban, educated elite based around Khartoum in the North, who were required to pass oral and written exams and display proficiency in Arabic. In 1981, at most five to 10 percent of officers in the Sudanese officers were Southerners.³⁴⁹ Though up to 60 percent of enlisted men were drawn from western regions such as Darfur and South Kordofan, soldiers from these areas were met with suspicion, had their numbers capped and were underrepresented in the officer corps. Even when Sudan was at peace between 1972 and 1983 and Southerners were integrated into the armed forces, no Southerners held important commands, and attempts by the government to transfer Southern troops to the North because of doubts about their loyalty helped justify a renewal of the Sudanese civil war. Arab officers have continued to dominate the SAF officer corps in the Bashir era, even after the 2005 peace agreement.³⁵⁰

In fact, the seizure of power by the NIF government allowed Bashir to strengthen his hold over the military in two crucial respects: by purging officers hostile to the Islamist agenda and by appointing co-ethnics from a small sub-group of Northern Arab tribes into key positions in the military's highest ranks. Despite the Arab bias within the

³⁴⁹ Metz, *Sudan*, p. 310.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

officer corps, Bashir appears to initially have been opposed by a number of groups within the armed forces that were either more moderate in their political leanings or seeking themselves to seize power.³⁵¹ Bashir's response was to purge hundreds of officers who were not affiliated with the NIF agenda, sometimes brutally. In April 1990, Bashir's government executed 28 officers in the aftermath of an alleged coup plot, an act which "left the majority of active duty officers silent for fear of being dismissed, jailed or shot."³⁵² Within the first five years of his rule, Bashir forced as much as one third of the Sudanese officer corps not affiliated with the NIF into retirement.³⁵³ The precise effect of these purges on ethnic representation within the Sudanese officer corps is unclear, though it is likely that his actions further increased representation of Northern Arab groups most likely to supportive of Bashir's agenda. Regardless, the atmosphere of fear created by Bashir's purges and the NIF infiltration of the military was sufficient such that the several coup plots that emerged over the subsequent years never appear to have advanced much beyond the planning stages, were not well connected to the political class, and were quickly snuffed out by loyalists within the military.

Bashir's efforts to purge the officer corps of those opposed to the NIF agenda was accompanied by efforts to even further narrow the political representation of senior officers, who were almost exclusively appointed from Northern or "riverain" Arab tribes.

³⁵¹ Ibid., p. 310.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 309.

³⁵³ Jago Salmon and Emily Walmsley. *A Paramilitary Revolution: The Popular Defence Forces* (Citeseer, 2007) p. 17. The authors estimate that slightly less than one third of the officer corps was retired, using a statistic cited by then-journalist Julie Flint. See Julie Flint "Even if They Have to Beat Schoolboys Senseless the Rulers of Sudan Will Have Their New Society," *Independent*, May 2 1993.

Under al-Mahdi's government, Northern Arabs were considerably overrepresented but less so than they had been at any point in post-independence Sudanese history, filling about 45 percent of the country's ministerial positions.³⁵⁴ Under Bashir's government, Northerners had filled 60 percent of all ministerial positions, 80 percent of the top staff appointees in the presidential palace, and two thirds of the Revolutionary Command Council (the RCC). Nearly all presidential ministers, ministers of defense, and ministers of internal affairs were generals from the North. When the RCC was disbanded, only Northern officers remained in the government, and most senior generals in the Sudanese administration appear to be of riverain extraction.³⁵⁵

Civil-military relations under Bashir's government therefore follow my argument's predictions and fall principally along ethno-regional lines. Bashir's status as a personalist, civilian dictator allowed him to shape Sudan's security institutions in ways that have assured their loyalty, and his use of ethnic stacking has helped make soldiers in Sudan's military and paramilitary institutions the dictator's most reliable allies. The support of the Sudanese armed forces have been the lynchpin of his rule, and was crucial in helping Bashir overcome one of his regime's first major crises: a major confrontation with Turabi, the Islamist leader who was widely credited with bringing him to power and to whom he had supposedly sworn allegiance.

³⁵⁴ JEM, *The Black Book*.

³⁵⁵ Flint and De Walle, *Darfur*, p. 17. Detailed data unavailable.

6.4: The Critical Juncture: The Confrontation Between Turabi and Bashir

The appointment of co-ethnics and other party loyalists in key positions within the armed forces may have been a necessary condition to stabilize Bashir's rule. Yet ethnic stacking within the regular army also occurred in Nigeria under military rule, meaning it was not likely sufficient. More importantly, the removal of the military from political power limited the political access of Bashir's rivals within the military and prevented the same kinds of debates over how and when to leave power. Perhaps just as crucially, Bashir was able to mobilize powerful parallel military institutions that served both to complement and counterbalance the SAF. Support from Sudan's security institutions were crucial in helping the dictator maintain power, particularly during a 1999 confrontation with his erstwhile mentor, Hassan al-Turabi.

The most visible parallel military institution was known as the Popular Defense Forces (PDF). Founded by legal decree in November 1989 and composed of Islamist party activists, Arab militias based in the south and west of the country, and students, youth, and conscripts, the PDF was intended to become one of the regime's primary instruments of political and popular mobilization.³⁵⁶ All male Sudanese citizens over the age of 16 were required to attend PDF training, which was supervised by pro-NIF military officers, and included "Islamist lectures, religious songs, and chants alongside basic military training."³⁵⁷ The PDF was also initially intended to replace the SAF, whose

³⁵⁶ Salmon and Walmsley, *A Paramilitary Revolution*, p. 10.

³⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 17.

loyalty the Islamists felt was suspect and whose fighting capacity had at that time been significantly diminished as a result of years of civil war.

In part, the struggle over the PDF became a deeper contest for power between Bashir, who came to represent the interests of the northern elite and Turabi, the NIF party founder who attempted to “broaden the agenda and the constituency of the Islamist movement” by appealing to all Muslims, including those of West African and Sudanese extraction, such as the Hausa, the Fulani, the Fellatta, and Darfurian groups such as the Fur and Masalit.³⁵⁸ This “Western strategy” was ostensibly meant to undermine the orientation of Islam in Sudan towards the Arab world. Though the Western strategy initially won the support of some non-Arab non-Muslim groups, as time went on and Bashir consolidated his control over the Sudanese political system, it became increasingly clear that the Northern elite had little intention of sharing power.

Through a deft series of manipulations, Bashir managed both to turn the PDF into an important paramilitary force while maintaining the loyalty of the SAF. In the first place, despite the attempt to draw recruits from across a broad spectrum of Sudanese society, the PDF maintained a “a distinct Arab-Islamic philosophy.”³⁵⁹ The PDF was a heterogenous organization, and many of its units were simply rural, Arab militias that had been incorporated into the PDF at its founding and were supplied through local PDF offices and committees.³⁶⁰ Its upper echelons were dominated by Islamist student groups

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

³⁵⁹ Jennifer Penniken, “Sudanese Elites: How Riverain Groups Achieved Political Dominance and their Impact on the Sudanese State,” (Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies Africa Studies Program, 2009), p. 17.

³⁶⁰ Salmon and Walmsley, *A Paramilitary Revolution*, p. 17.

which also had a distinct Arab orientation, principally the Muslim Brotherhood. And as with the regular army, the Westerners and Southerners recruited into its ranks were mostly used as foot soldiers. Thus, though the PDF's orientation was designed to give it a nationally representative veneer, in practice it was still controlled by the Arab elite.

This structure allowed Bashir to use the PDF as a force that both counterbalanced and complemented the regular army. The PDF counterbalanced the armed forces in the sense that it was a parallel military institution with a separate command structure. Its urban units were specially designed as instruments of social control and to provide a disincentive to the Sudanese armed forces to attempt a coup. Accompanying the regime's extensive purges of disloyal military officers in the early 1990s was the forced recruitment of military officers into the PDF for reeducation. By 1996, the PDF's 150,000 members outnumber the 80,000 soldiers who served in the army, and were being extensively recruited to fight large-scale combat offensives.³⁶¹

Yet the PDF also complemented the SAF. For one, the emphasis on indoctrination into Islamist principles meant that PDF recruits did not receive nearly the same level of training as their military counterparts. This allowed Khartoum "to continue the war without large numbers of Northerners dying. PDF forces have been crucial in conflicts in Sudan as low-cost alternatives to trained military professionals."³⁶² Between 1992 and 1995, the PDF was used as cannon fodder in campaigns against Southern rebel strongholds, which led to massive casualties.

³⁶¹ Ibid; see also Penniken, "Sudense Elite," pp. 17-18.

³⁶² Penniken, "Sudanese Elites," Op. Cit.

As his rift with Turabi over the direction of the NIF widened, Bashir was able to use disenchantment within the PDF and his support within the regular army to further secure his hold on power. Though the PDF might have been a convenient prop, it was ineffective in combat and despised by the SAF, the two key factors that prevented it from attaining its ambitious goals. According to Salmon, the PDF's coercive recruitment practices angered most Sudanese, including "devout and highly orthodox Muslims who did not adhere to the NIF's project."³⁶³ Many young men went to great lengths to escape conscription. One newspaper reported in 1997 that of the 70,000 graduates and drop-outs legally obligated to attend training, only 4,000 had joined the PDF.³⁶⁴ Even more importantly, the PDF was despised by many in the Sudanese military.³⁶⁵ According to Collins, "senior officers never trusted Turabi... and were determined not to permit the rabble of the PDF to supersede their authority."³⁶⁶ Bashir, too, had "assiduously cultivated his popularity with the military, particularly the officer corps, for he was one of them."³⁶⁷ Signs that the military had prevailed on the regime to reign in the PDF became clear in 1997, when mass recruitment into the PDF was eased, the armed forces was allowed to take de facto control of internal appointments into the organization, and a higher authority for mobilization led by a Northern general who reported directly to Bashir was placed in charge of the PDF. In 1998, compulsory national service for the SAF was re-instated.³⁶⁸

³⁶³ Salmon and Walmsley, *A Paramilitary Revolution*, p. 19.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Metz, *Sudan*, p. 310.

³⁶⁶ Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*, p. 227.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Salmon and Walmsley, *A Paramilitary Revolution*, pp. 21-22.

Backing from the country's security institutions was crucial in Bashir's ultimate confrontation with Turabi, which reached a climax in 1999. After signing legislation in which Sharia law became the country's sole source of legislation and which significantly expanded the powers of the presidency, Turabi used the opening to reconstitute the NIF into the National Congress Party (NCP) and attempted to broaden his base of support by reaching out to other parties. He used his leverage within the newly formed NCP to give himself the power to approve official nominations before they were submitted to the National Assembly, where he was the speaker. He then proposed legislation to allow governors to be elected directly rather than be selected by Bashir, and sought to push through a constitutional amendment that would allow a two-thirds vote of parliament to depose the president. This last act Bashir deemed a mortal threat to his presidency and mobilized the armed forces.³⁶⁹ On December 12, days before the National Assembly was to vote to curb Bashir's powers, soldiers and tanks surrounded the legislative building, allowing Bashir to dismiss Turabi as speaker and dissolved the National Assembly. Shortly thereafter, elections that were neither free nor fair were held in northern Sudan, in which Bashir was able to claim a mandate by winning 86 percent of the vote.

Bashir's deft and pragmatic manipulation of schisms within Sudan's elite were thus a crucial element of his ability to maintain control of the Sudanese political system. Much more so than Turabi, Bashir used Islamism as a political tool to keep Sudan's Northern Arab elites in power. By contrast, Turabi's pan-Islamist rhetoric often belied his actions. In 1992, for example, he called Islamists of the "Negroid tribes" of Darfur

³⁶⁹ Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan*, pp. 225-227.

enemies of the state, and supported the arming of Arab tribes to forcefully disarm them.³⁷⁰ In Flint and de Waal's estimation:

the Islamist promise was a sham. Local government was still bankrupt; banditry was still rife; drought and desertification continued to spark local conflicts that the governor could not, or would not, try to stop. And before long Sudan's 'westerners' found that their version of Islam was not, after all, accepted on its own terms: they were regarded as true Muslims only if they adopted Arab values and culture. In the decade following the 1989 putsch, the differences between President Bashir and the mercurial Turabi became ever more apparent. Turabi had ambitions for revolution throughout Africa and the Middle East; Bashir held to the traditional view of Sudan as the possession of an Arabised elite.³⁷¹

As is evident by the events of 1999, the continued domination of the Arabized elite, in particular the riverain elite, over Sudan's governing institutions were crucial catalysts for keeping Bashir in power and allowing him to personalize his rule.

And perhaps no institutions were more essential to maintaining Bashir in power than Sudan's military and paramilitary institutions, which Bashir's status as a civilian leader with a military background placed him into enviable position to manipulate. In the early years of his rule, Bashir had actively used the PDF and the Islamist agenda as a cudgel through which to dismiss disloyal officers, diminish the military's capability to enact a coup, and repress civilian dissent. At the same time, Bashir used the threat of irrelevance to shore up support within the SAF for a confrontation with hard-core Islamists when the time was right. Within Sudan's elite, Bashir's status as a civilian

³⁷⁰ M. Suliman, "The War in Darfur: The Resource Dimension." Paper presented at The American University in Cairo (2008), quoted in Alison J. Ayers, "Sudan's Uncivil War: The Global-Historical Constitution of Political Violence." *Review of African Political Economy* 37, no. 124 (2010), p. 161.

³⁷¹ Flint and De Waal, *Darfur*, p. 22.

leader offered him an ability to cultivate a power base independent of the military that Nigeria's leaders did not have.

6.5: Ethnic Militias and the Suppression of the Periphery

The decline of the PDF coincided with the rise of cheaper, deadlier and far more destructive paramilitary organizations: proxy militias. These groups, nearly all of which exploited tribal ties for recruiting soldiers, have become Sudan's most ubiquitous armed movements. The degree to which these organizations cooperated with the Sudanese state varied: some were supplied and equipped by, conducted joint operations alongside, and even shared the same barracks with regular forces. Others operated more independently, with indirect sanction. In each instance, however, the strategy was more or less the same: Khartoum employed these militias to deliberately target civilians from other ethnic groups, waging a form of unrestrained warfare that worsened existing conflicts and, at times, created new ones in formerly peaceful areas. As a result, the peripheral regions of the Sudanese state have been in a near constant-state of conflict with one another and with Khartoum. The Sudanese regime's Machiavellian use of these militias to exploit of ethnic ties have been essential in dividing the regime's enemies and keeping Bashir in power.

6.5.1: War in the South

Contrary to popular misconceptions, ethnic militias largely did not exist in Sudan until the 1980s, comparatively late in Sudan's country's post-colonial history. Their widespread use developed as a strategic response to advances made by the Southern People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in the earlier phases of the second Sudanese civil war. As the war progressed, the arming of tribal based groups with modern weaponry to ravage the south and exploit divisions among SPLA leaders became the central plank of the government of Sudan's war-fighting strategy. Escalating the conflict in this matter further embittered ties between the North and the South, but helped maintain Bashir in power by dividing previously peaceful areas into militarized factions and facilitating fractures within the SPLA from which South Sudan has never fully recovered.

The early phases of the second civil war did not go well for the government of Sudan. Faced with a well-armed, mobile enemy, the SAF initially ceded vast amounts of territory and lost most of the war's opening engagements. Economic crisis and poor morale plagued the SAF, whose fighting efficiency had been degraded by prolonged deployments and significant casualties. The practice of relying primarily on Southerners to fight the war proved a liability because enlisted Southern soldiers often had ties to the SPLA and hesitated to be used to kill their compatriots.³⁷² Initially, the government attempted to re-orient its strategy by making the PDF spearhead the offensive while regular forces in the South primarily defended garrisons and other fixed points of attack.

³⁷² Roger Glickson "Counterinsurgency in Southern Sudan: The Means to Win?" *The Journal of Conflict Studies* 15, no. 1 (1995), p. 5.

As discussed in the previous section, the poor training received by PDF recruits likewise ended up backfiring, making them good for use as little more than cannon fodder. With the decline of the PDF, the use of tribal militias became an increasingly central component of the government of Sudan's warfighting strategy.

The process of "militarizing tribalism" in Sudan began with the government recruiting Northern Muslim Arabic-speaking tribes bordering the south into militias known as the *murahiliin* in order to check the advances of the SPLA. These groups, collectively known as Baggara Arabs but made up a number of subgroups, provided particularly convenient sources of recruitment because their areas were directly threatened by Southern advances. In addition, many members were skilled in the use of modern weapons because of a history of service in the Sudanese army.³⁷³ The Sudanese government's strategy of unleashing the *murahiliin* proved critical in preventing the SPLA from ever mounting a sustained offensive in northern Sudan. They did this not just by engaging in battles with rebel forces, but also by terrorizing members of non-Arab ethnic groups and conducting cross-border raids into the South, significantly increasing the scope, the costs and consequences of the war.

The experience of the Ngok Dinka and Homr Arabs serves as a good example of how the use of the *murahiliin* by the Sudanese government helped blunt the progress of rebel groups northward while militarizing peaceful regions of the country. The Ngok Dinka are the only sub-group of the several million Dinka that were administered in

³⁷³ Mohamed Salih. "New Wine in Old Bottles': Tribal Militias and the Sudanese State." *Review of African Political Economy* 45/46 (1989), p. 170. See also Collins, *A History*, p. 172.

northern Sudan, in the province of South Kordofan. In part because of cordial ties between the ruling families, the Ngok Dinka co-existed peacefully with the Homr Arabs, a subgroup of the Baggara who outnumbered the Dinka in the region.³⁷⁴ During the second civil war, the government of Sudan recruited the Homr Arabs into militia groups to fight against the Southern rebel movement, but did not use them to hit military targets. Instead, as recounted by Deng, the Homr Arab militias were unleashed “against their Dinka neighbors. They killed at random, looted cattle, razed villages to the ground, and captured women and children as slaves.”³⁷⁵ The strategy succeeded in ripping the previously peaceful community apart, with the Dinka in the area now firmly aligned with the South and the Arabs aligned with the North. Not only did the use of ethnic militias in such a manner decrease the need for Khartoum to rely on its regular army; the Homr militia in South Kordofan became a buffer between the rebels and Khartoum and was indebted to the regime for continued funding and political support.

The strategy was also employed with perhaps even greater effect to take the fight into the South itself, where, as de Waal observes, “the government of Sudan played an effective game of divide and rule, exploiting the greed and grievance of southern elites to turn the civil war into an internecine conflict between southern Sudanese armed groups, with militia commanders selling their services to the highest bidder.”³⁷⁶ At first, the Sudanese government merely exploited links with local groups that formed to defend

³⁷⁴ See Francis Deng, “Sudan - Civil War and Genocide.” *Middle East Quarterly* (Winter 2001), p. 18.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁶ Alex De Waal, “When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent: Brute Causes of the Civil War in South Sudan.” *African Affairs* 113, no. 452 (2014), pp. 352-3.

themselves from heavy-handed SPLA tactics, such as assassinations of local leaders, corruption, and forced recruitment methods. These groups, including the Bari, Mundari, Didinga, Toposa and Fertit, became known as the “Friendly Forces.” These forces had a relationship with the government that was mainly “tactical and defensive,” receiving arms and training from the Sudanese government in order to defend their communities against a common enemy.³⁷⁷

However, the greatest damage to the rebel war effort occurred in 1991, when the SPLA-United, led by Dr. Riek Machar and Dr. Lam Akol, split off from the SPLMA-Mainstream, led by Dr. John Garang. Although Machar and Akol cited their opposition to Garang’s vision of a united Sudan and their desire for Southern self-determination as reasons for the split, Garang’s dictatorial style and recruitment of his Dinka co-ethnics into top positions of the SPLA also loomed large. The result of the dispute was a further tribalization of the conflict, resulting in “wide-ranging and brutal war” between the Dinkas one side and the Nuers and Shiluks, who fought for Machar and Akol, on the other.³⁷⁸ Both sides deliberately targeted civilian non co-ethnics, including the brutal 1991 “Bor Massacre” where the Nuer White Army fighting alongside Machar killed 2,000 Dinka civilians.³⁷⁹ When the better equipped SPLA mainstream won, Riek and Akol turned to Khartoum for arms and survival, signing agreements in 1992 and 1996 in

³⁷⁷ John Young, “Sudan: Liberation Movements, Regional Armies, Ethnic Militias & Peace.” *Review of African Political Economy* 30, no. 97 (2003): 423–434.; see also Salih, “New Wine in Old Bottles,” Op. Cit.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ International Crisis Group, “South Sudan: A Civil War by Any Other Name,” (International Crisis Group Report 217, 2014), p. 5.

which, contrary to the rebels' stated aims, the unity of Sudan was unequivocally reaffirmed.³⁸⁰ Though the liberation movement did not totally collapse, it never regained its former vigor, and Garang was left as the only commander in the country with a military force viable enough to take on Khartoum.

The civil war with South Sudan was finally brought to an end in 2005, when the government of Sudan and the main rebel groups signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Under the terms of the agreement, both sides laid down their arms in exchange for a dual share in Sudan's governance, oil wealth, and a referendum to be held in 2011 during which South Sudan would decide once and for all whether to stay or to part ways with Sudan. The agreement was hailed mainly as a victory for the South, who had managed to convince much of the Northern establishment that the conflict was not winnable through military means. Despite the doubling of Sudan's military budget and the joint efforts of the SAF, the PDF, and affiliated militias, the regime could not claim a single substantial battlefield victory over the SPLA in the South.³⁸¹ Moreover, the government hoped to normalize relations with the United States in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks by cooperating with the United States on terror and bringing the war against Southern Sudan to an end.

Despite the heavy price, however, Sudan's policy of total war against the South succeeded in keeping the Bashir regime intact and Bashir's position as a personalist dictator secure. The regime's mobilize of Arab militias prevented any dreams the SPLA

³⁸⁰ Collins, *A History*, p. 112.

³⁸¹ Collins, *A History*, p. 262.

had of bringing the fight to the North by militarizing the border regions. And the regime's divide and rule tactics prevented the formation of any politically or militarily unified opposition that could pose a fundamental threat to Khartoum. The existence of armed factions whose collective force in fact had come to outnumber Garang's SPLA meant that, regardless of the outcome of the referendum, Southern Sudan's political leaders would be as consumed by struggle amongst themselves as they were with Khartoum. Finally, beginning the early 2000s, the Sudanese regime faced a much more existential threat to its rule: the rise of armed insurgent groups in Darfur, who had long attempted to make common cause with the South and were equally incensed at Sudan's domination by Northern elites.

6.5.2: Darfur

The origins of the current conflict in Darfur begin with the fallout from the split within the Northern Sudanese ruling coalition. With the expulsion of Turabi, many Darfurians who had come into government the Islamist movement left and founded the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), one of the two major rebel groups in Darfur. The JEM's publication of the Black Book in 2000 laid bare the extent to which the riverain Arab elite dominated Sudanese institutions of government at the expense of everyone else. Though the JEM was the militarily weaker of the two main rebel groups, it was the most feared by the government. This is because its leader, Khalil Ibrahim, was a charismatic former NIF insider with close links to Turabi. His main concern was not the

neglect and marginalization of Darfur but the unity of Sudan. By taking up arms against the Sudanese government, Khalil hoped to delegitimize the central government, foster regime change, and prevent self-determination for South Sudan.³⁸² The direct threat that the split within the Islamist movement posed was a powerful motivating factor behind Khartoum's willingness to negotiate with the Southern rebels; had Bashir's government agreed to incorporate Darfur into the 2005 CPA, it could have meant the end of his regime.

Shortly after the publication of the Black Book, members of the Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit tribes mobilized into the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), the second major rebel group in Darfur. Free of association from the regime in Khartoum and as a coalition of three of Darfur's largest ethnic groups, the SLA eclipsed the JEM in terms of manpower, equipment, resources, and fighting capacity. In 2002, they began mounting offensives against government police stations and army convoys. In February 2003, the SLA announced itself publicly after a major attack on Golo, the district headquarters of the province of Jebel Marra. JEM followed suit shortly thereafter, but had to appeal to the SLA for rescue after they were surrounded by government forces; as a result, many JEM soldiers joined and remained with the SLA.³⁸³ On April 25, a group of 300 rebels with light vehicles and anti-aircraft weapons managed to capture a government airbase at al Fasher, destroying all seven of the base's aircraft and killing over 70 government troops.

³⁸² Flint and de Waal, *A History*, 101.

³⁸³ *Ibid*, pp. 99-100.

The victory was significant. Not in 20 years of war had the SPLA inflicted those kinds of losses on the SAF air force.³⁸⁴

The rebel victory at Al Fasher spurred the Sudanese government into action. Like it had been during the war in the South, Khartoum's army was overstretched. In addition, the fact that so many enlisted members of the SAF were drawn from Darfur made the elites in Khartoum wary of defection or suspicious that the regular army's troops would not be reliable in combat. As a result, the government's response was rather obvious.

According to de Walle:

Critically for Bashir, the central pillar of the Sudanese state - a cabal of security officers who have been running the wars in Sudan since 1983 - was still in place. Faced with a revolt that outran the capacity of the country's tired and over-stretched army, this small group knew exactly what to do. Several times during the war in the South they had mounted counter-insurgency on the cheap - famine and scorched earth their weapons of choice. Each time, they sought out a local militia, provided it with supplies and armaments, and declared the area of operations an ethics-free zone.³⁸⁵

Like it had in the war in the South, the SAF ultimately settled on a strategy of providing cash, arms, and training to Arab militia groups, who were unleashed onto non-Arab populations, dramatically escalating the scope and the costs of the conflict. Given the substantial Darfur-based population that identified as Arab, the government found a number of pre-existing groups with which it made common cause.

³⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 121.

³⁸⁵ Alex De Waal. "Counter-Insurgency on the Cheap." *Review of African Political Economy* 31, no. 102 (2004), p. 723.

The formation of Arab-based militias was not new to Darfur. Though the history is complex, the first militias appeared in the mid-1980s, when former Arab fighters during the first Sudanese civil war were mobilized into Baggara and Bedouin militias. Like Homr Arabs in South Kordofan, they were formed to help fight the SPLA and were crucial to help checking the SPLA's advances northward. In southern Darfur, the government had relied on the Beni Halba *fursan* (horseback) militias, who had routed the only major attempt by the SPLA to take Darfur in 1991; in cooperation with the SAF, they had had burned entire villages they suspected of cooperating with the SPLA.³⁸⁶ Finally there were soldiers, mainly from Chad, who had fought for the Libyan leader Muamar Ghadafi and were defeated by the Chadian army at Ouadi Doum in 1987 and settled over the border, making alliances with cross-border Arab groups such as the Abbala Rizeigat.³⁸⁷

Between 2003 and 2004, the Sudanese government funded an unprecedented expansion of these militias. In northern and western Darfur, militias were directly incorporated into the government armed forces, including the PDF, intelligence, border guard, and the police. In most of eastern and southern Darfur, the entire native administration system was reorganized to resemble military commands, creating militia units up to the level of the brigade.³⁸⁸ The most powerful of these militia groups, the "Swift and Fearless" brigade run by Abbala Rizeigat Sheikh Musa Hilal, ran a sprawling

³⁸⁶ Flint and de Waal 2008, *Darfur*, 56.

³⁸⁷ Alex De Waal, "Who Are the Darfurians?" p. 198.

³⁸⁸ Ali Haggar, "The Origins and Organization of the Janjiweed in Darfur," in Alex De Waal, ed. *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace* (Global Equity Initiative, 2007), pp. 128-129.

military base, maintained a direct line to Khartoum outside of the normal chain of military command, and could reportedly muster up to 20,000 men. According to de Waal and Flynt, these men “were distinguishable from regular troops only by their sandals, turbans, and the emblem they wore on their jackets—the armed man on camel-back.”³⁸⁹ Collectively, they came to be popularly referred to as the *janjiweed*, a reference to the fact that like Hilal’s Abbala, many Arab militia groups of Darfur have nomadic origins and conducted raids and other operations on camel or horseback. The term’s actual origins are more obscure, dating to as early as the 1960s, when *janjiweed* was used to pejoratively describe vagrants from other Arab tribes, and then adopted by non-Arabs to refer to Arab armed groups.³⁹⁰

At the height of the conflict in Darfur between 2003 and 2004, Arab militias cooperated hand in glove with government forces to inflict massive suffering on non-Arab ethnic groups. On February 27, 2004, Hilal’s “Swift and Fearless Brigade” attacked the town of Tawila, 40 miles from where the rebels had seized the air force base at al Fashar. Over three days, hundreds of Hilal’s men killed 75 people, abducted 350 women and children, and raped over 100 women. Though Hilal denied ever being there, the raid was witnessed by hundreds of people, many of whom recognized him in the uniform of any army colonel. The militia men had been armed with light and medium weapons, Toyota land cruisers, and were resupplied by military helicopters in the midst of the

³⁸⁹ De Waal and Flint 2008, *Darfur*, p. 38.

³⁹⁰ Many of the *janjiweed* themselves prefer simply to be referred to as *fursan* or “horsemen.” See Hagggar, “The Origins and Organization of the Janjiweed,” pp. 114, 126-127.

attack.³⁹¹ In other instances, cooperation between regular forces and militias was even closer, with militias becoming integrated into military barracks and into army operations in the field. In Wadi Saleh near the Chadian border, regular army and *janjiweed* burned 32 villages, displaced tens of thousands and killed hundreds in a matter of weeks. Military attack helicopters and airplanes were often brought in to burn empty villages and target columns of fleeing and displaced civilians.³⁹² Their participation, which required the authorization of the chief of staff's office in Khartoum, made it transparently obvious that the counterinsurgency operations in Darfur were being coordinated at the highest level of Sudan's government.

The government's actions led to a massive escalation in the conflict that has permanently altered Darfur's politics. In a few short years, close to 2,000 villages were destroyed, around 200,000 people killed, and 2 million displaced, a total of one third of the region's pre-war population.³⁹³ The explicit targeting of non-Arab ethnic groups led U.N. officials and many others in the international community to use the term "ethnic cleansing" to refer to the Sudanese government's policies. In September 2004, Secretary of State Colin Powell concluded that "genocide had been committed" during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.³⁹⁴ In 2008, the International Criminal Court (ICC) charged President Bashir with genocide.

³⁹¹ De Waal and Flint, pp. 35-36.

³⁹² See Ibid. pp. 129-132.

³⁹³ UN estimates cited in Roxanne Escobales, "Darfur Dead 'Could Number 300,000,'" *The Guardian*, April 23, 2008.

³⁹⁴ Quoted in Collins, *A History*, pp. 290-292.

As it had in the South, the Sudanese government has used negotiations largely as a tactic to attempt to further divide the opposition. In 2006, the Sudanese government signed the Darfur Peace Agreement with one faction of the SLA, while remaining SLA and JEM forces continued the rebellion. Though the violence has never reached the scale of what it was in 2003 and 2004, the conflict remains unresolved despite numerous attempts at negotiation and the deployment of a U.N. peacekeeping force. It helped fuel ongoing conflicts in neighboring regions, including South Kordofan and the Upper Blue Nile. In 2016, the government of Sudan reportedly began using chemical weapons during its attacks in Jebel Marra region of Darfur, killing up to 250 people, most of whom were children.³⁹⁵

In sum, the primary beneficiary of the Sudanese government's decision to mobilize Arab militias has been the neither the "Arab" nor "Africans" civilians of Darfur, but the elites in Khartoum. These militia provide the regime with cheap, motivated foot soldiers that complement the regular army and prevent the large contingent of non-Arab Darfurians within the armed forces from having to actively fight fellow Darfurians. Even more importantly, like the Dinka, Nuer, and other ethnic groups in the South, the proliferation of ethnic militia means that tribal groups in Darfur have spent much of the past two decades focused on fighting one another rather than making common cause against Khartoum. For the Bashir regime, the recruitment of tribal militia is an essential element of a political strategy to prevent a coherent Islamist opposition from forming. So

³⁹⁵ James Rothwell, "Darfur conflict: Hundreds of Children Gassed to Death Since January by Government in Sudan," *The Telegraph*, September 29, 2016.

long as they are able to provide these militias with cheap small arms, training, occasional air support, and maintains a minimal forward operating presence for its regular army, Sudan's Northern elite will continue, as they always have, to help themselves to a disproportionate share of the country's wealth, monopolize state institutions, and neglect the western part of the country.

6.6: Aftermath: Secession and War in South Sudan

Sudan's constant state of fragmentation and violence is a testament to the fact that once ethnically stacked security institutions are made, they are difficult to unmake. In the case of South Sudan, not even secession was enough of a rupture with the past to prevent its leaders from continuing to use ethnic stacking to instigate conflict and compete for power. A final consequence of Khartoum's reliance on tribal militias during Sudan's second civil war is that these same groups played key roles in the South Sudanese civil war that broke out in 2013, just two years after the country's independence from Sudan. Far from providing the fresh start that many had hoped for and the multi-ethnic democracy its leaders promised, South Sudan's militias have continued to wage war. This time, their guns have turned not towards Northern bogeyman, but one another.

Three weeks after the signing of the 2005 peace accords, the SPLA leader John Garang was killed in a helicopter crash. Though some have speculated that he was killed by foul play, an independent investigation concluded that his death was most likely due

to poor weather and pilot error.³⁹⁶ Garang had been the principal proponent of the idea of a united, multi-ethnic Sudan, and much of the hope that there was that Sudan would remain unified died along with him. Instead, leadership of the SPLA was taken over by Garang's deputy, Salva Kiir, who had long advocated for South Sudan's secession. So long as South Sudan remained part of Sudan, Kiir was worried that Khartoum would continue to be able to use rival armed groups to manipulate the SPLA.³⁹⁷ A central issue was that, despite the SPLA being the largest armed group, other rebels were collectively better armed, and some, such as the South Sudan Defense Force, received direct sponsorship from Bashir.

In order to prevent disunity, Kiir chose to absorb these militias into the Southern Sudanese army, which was to be made up of a mix of these former rebel groups and SPLA fighters. Rather than disbanding these militias entirely, they were integrated into the army, many commanders were given senior postings, and each soldier received \$220 per month. The salary was three times what the SAF paid its own militia for hire, and the intention was to effectively price the North out of the militia market in order to prevent it from continuing to manipulate South Sudanese politics. As extensively documented by Alex de Waal, the net result was not the demobilization that many had hoped for but a massive expansion in the SPLA payroll, from 40,000 fighters in 2004 to 240,000 in 2011.³⁹⁸ The strategy was successful in preventing the North from influencing Southern

³⁹⁶ See Andrew Natsios, *Sudan, South Sudan and Darfur: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 173-175.

³⁹⁷ De Walle, "When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent," p. 338.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 355-366.

rebel groups during the 2005-2011 interim period, and contributed to the success of the 2011 referendum in which 98 percent of the Sudanese population voted for secession.

The problem with Kiir's strategy is that it has led to a massive increase in rent-seeking rebellion, where key army militia leaders mobilized troops, mutinied, and demanded a greater share of the country's resources. De Waal described the strategy that emerged as follows:

The logic of the mutineers is to organize enough force to compel the government to bargain, and the logic of the government is to use enough punitive force to compel the rebels to settle for a lower price. As remarked by a local chief, 'We understand this government, it listens better to people doing bad things.' On the surface these appear to be ethnic conflicts, but that is a product of the ethnic patronage that constitutes military units, not deep-rooted tribal animosities. However, these conflicts typically generate bitterness, enmity, and a cycle of revenge. Human lives are casually expended to signal seriousness in bargaining.³⁹⁹

Prior to the secession, such munities were relatively isolated affairs. In 2010, for example, David Yau Yau rebelled against the SPLA after being denied a seat on the Jonglei-led assembly, leading a militia called the "Cobra Brigade," composed almost exclusively of Murle, an ethnic minority in the state, which is majority Nuer. After a brief but intense conflict, Yau Yau signed a cease-fire agreement with the government, was given the rank of brigadier general, and integrated along with much of his militia into the SPLA in June 2011.⁴⁰⁰ After being denied the seat of county commissioner, the junior SPLA officer Gatlauk Gai led a similar rebellion in Unity State. Gai, who had served in

³⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 361-62.

⁴⁰⁰ Small Arms Survey, "Fighting for the Spoils: Armed Insurgencies in the Greater Upper Nile," (Small Arms Survey Report No. 18, 2011), pp. 6-7.

numerous pro-Khartoum militias during the civil war, was mysteriously killed days after signing an agreement to return to the SPLA as a lieutenant general.⁴⁰¹

The stakes increased dramatically in the aftermath of secession, however, when the two main factions that made up the SPLA began to split apart. The antagonists were President Kiir and his deputy Riek Machar, who was also the SPLA's main Southern antagonist during the war with Sudan. Convinced that Machar was about to move to overthrow his government, Kiir kicked Machar out of his cabinet and directed security forces to target individuals they suspected of being closely associated with Machar. As a result, it appeared as if security forces were "targeting the Nuer community – this was largely a result of Machar and others surrounding themselves with their own tribesman."⁴⁰² For their part, Machar's supporters contended that there was no coup attempt, and that Kiir and a small group of Dinka hard-liners used the fighting as an excuse to purge rivals.⁴⁰³ The split between Machar and Kiir has resulted in yet another civil war that has since morphed into one of Africa's most deadly conflicts.

In the early days of the war, Dinka elements of the Presidential Guard, the army, and other security forces engaged in systematic violence against Nuer in Juba.⁴⁰⁴ This helped provoke mass defection from the SPLA, some of whom joined rebel groups and

⁴⁰¹ See Small Arms Survey, "Gatluak Gai Rebellion, Unity State," Small Arms Survey Baseline Assessment (August 2010). Available at <http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/archive/other/armed-groups/HSBA-Gatluak-Gai-17-August-2010.pdf> (accessed May 26, 2017).

⁴⁰² Matthew Le Riche, "South Sudan: Not Just another War and another Peace in Africa," *African Arguments*, January 28, 2014. <http://africanarguments.org/2014/01/28/south-sudan-not-just-another-war-and-another-peace-in-africa-by-matthew-le-riche/> (accessed January 10, 2018).

⁴⁰³ International Crisis Group, "South Sudan: A Civil War," p. 1.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

others who merely went home.⁴⁰⁵ In response, Machar organized the defecting soldiers into the SPLA in Opposition (SPLA-IO) and remobilized the “White Army” of Nuer youth to wage rebellion in Malakal, Beniue and Renk in order to attempt to control South Sudan’s oil fields. These armed groups, which are only questionably under Machar’s control, targeted Dinka civilians and communities in those areas.⁴⁰⁶ Kiir, in turn, responded by mobilizing allied Ugandan soldiers for key combat operations. These soldiers were crucial in helping to prevent Machar-led forces from taking the capital of Juba. In 2015, a peace agreement was signed that led Machar to return to Juba and retake his post as Vice President; in July 2016, he fled the country amid renewed fighting between his loyalists and Kiir loyalists after only three months on the job.

As the conflict has gone on, it has become more multi-sided and the opposition more fragmented. After a mere year on the SPLA payroll, the Cobra brigade defected again to the opposition in 2012. The brigade was re-incorporated into the government after a 2014 peace accord which granted Yau Yau a “chief administrator” position with powers equal to that of a governor. The conflict has also further spread south to the Equatorias, an economically critical region that was largely untouched by the civil war with Sudan. In 2014, the SPLA-IO launched a handful of attacks against government facilities, largely to seize weapons. The SPLA-IO became increasingly involved in conflicts between cattle herders and farmers that the SPLA had been attempting to manage. The SPLA was seen as being partial specifically towards Dinka cattle herders,

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 8-11.

⁴⁰⁶ De Waal, “When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent,” p. 366.

and the SPLA-IO used the tensions to mobilize numerous armed groups against the government, provoking an increasingly aggressive response.⁴⁰⁷ Though estimates at this stage of the conflict are inexact, the toll of the conflict has been tens of thousands dead and hundreds of thousands displaced.

In short, secession provided the opportunity for South Sudan to start anew. Instead, the bitter conflict that the South fought with North since Sudanese independence in 1956 has merely reproduced itself. South Sudan's politicians have learned only too well from their northern brethren the power of informal, kinship-based security institutions as a mechanism for clinging to power. Without a concerted effort to disarm these increasingly personal, privatized militias and to reconstruct the security apparatus from the ground up, South Sudan will likely continue to be trapped in a nearly perpetual state of war.

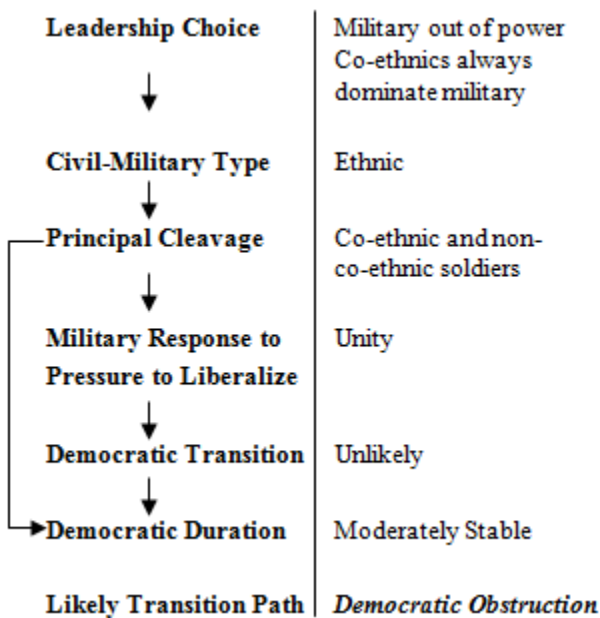
6.7: Tracing the Mechanisms: Sudan's Ethnic Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Obstruction

This study of Sudanese civil-military relations likewise confirms this dissertation's causal logic. In the quantitative chapter, I found that regimes with ethnic civil-military relations rarely result in democracy, but that democracies that succeed such regimes have approximately average chances of survival. Note that given the persistence of authoritarianism in Sudan, this chapter does not examine survival in democracies with

⁴⁰⁷ International Crisis Group, "South Sudan's South: Conflict in the Equatorias," (International Crisis Group Report 236, 2016), pp. 13-14.

ethnic civil-military relations. Rather, I argue that the causal mechanism driving authoritarian resilience in dictatorships like Sudan is the fact that the principal civil-military cleavages tend to fall along ethnic lines, making the civil-military apparatus more unified in the face of pressure to liberalize. To remind the reader, this dissertation’s argument with respect to military regimes is reproduced below in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 The Transitional Politics of Ethnic Civil-Military Relations



This analysis of Sudan provides evidence consistent with this argument.

Notwithstanding Bashir’s background as a military officer, the fact that the NIF party and not senior officers within the military were the 1989 coup’s primary instigators is significant. Bashir’s role as head of state established him both as commander of chief of

the armed forces and as the military's key interlocutor with an Islamist political class intent on bending the state to its will. The RCC's disbandment in 1993 placed the armed forces in a clearly subservient role to civilians in matters of policy.

Bashir's status as a civilian president rather than a military dictator meant that the primary cleavages in Sudanese civil-military relations tended to fall along ethnic lines. Within virtually all of Sudan's security institutions, ethnic stacking is used both as a tool to ensure loyalty and to keep the polity divided so that a narrow elite in Khartoum can continue to enjoy the spoils of power. Inheriting security institutions that were already dominated by riverain Arabs, Bashir further entrenched the domination of this group in the regular army. His government likewise ensured that co-ethnic Arabs controlled the PDF and most of the militia groups. As a result, Sudan's central security institutions both complemented and counterbalanced each other, securing Bashir's status as a civilian dictator. By recruiting co-ethnics into both the regular army and parallel security institutions, Sudan represents a case of ethnic stacking to the extreme.

These cleavages are crucial in understanding the resilience of the Sudanese regime. In face of challenges from within his own party, constant civil war, and pressure from the international community, Sudan's security institutions have remained loyal to Bashir. In the early years of his rule, Bashir deftly manipulated his status as a civilian leader representing the interests of the riverain elite to consolidate his control over Sudan's politics. He simultaneously used his NIF affiliation to initiate massive purges within the SAF of those not loyal to the party, and to place Northern elites in top positions answerable only to him. These moves both helped neutralize internal threats to

Bashir from within his own army and were crucial in ensuring his ultimate victory in his confrontation with Turabi, who sought to expand Sudan's basis of political representation beyond the Northern elite.

Equally crucial to the current regime's resilience is the use of tribal militias as an instrument of war to foster loyalty among Arab co-ethnics and to keep its rivals from coalescing around a coherent political opposition. These groups have demonstrated a nearly limitless capacity for repression and violence. During the civil war with the South, Arab militias use of unrestrained warfare prevented the advance of rebel groups northwards. The regime's strategy of encouraging ethnic divisions within rebel forces helped foster a stillborn government in a newly independent South Sudan. In Darfur, Khartoum's policy of supporting the *janjiweed* and other Arab militia in their war against non-Arab civilian populations has kept a once relatively peaceful region in a nearly perpetual state of conflict. The massacres perpetrated by parallel military institutions in Darfur led the regime have led to sanctions by the international community and Bashir to be indicted by the International Criminal Court.

The ultimate irony of Khartoum's blatant embrace of ethnic stacking within nearly all of Sudan's security institutions is that they benefit neither the South Sudanese nor the majority of the country's Muslims, nor even the majority of the country's self-identified Arabs. Rather, they serve to keep in power the same Northern elite that has always dominated Sudan's state institutions. Representing no more than five percent of the population, this elite still remains in power. The proliferation of ethnic security

institutions across Sudan is both a symptom and a cause of the Sudanese regime's determination to cling to power at whatever cost.

Sudan's status as a non-military regime with ethnically stacked armed forces is a crucial factor in understanding the dictatorship's resilience. Under Bashir's rule, the government of Sudan has lost a war and a third of the country's population along with it. It has faced fierce armed opposition from peripheral states that it has brutally repressed. It has faced opposition from international actors that have isolated the country, applied trade sanctions, and declared Bashir and his associates war criminals. Nevertheless, Sudan's security institutions, both an accomplice and instrument in Bashir's ruthless game of divide and rule, remain loyal to the regime. With its armed forces so committed to Bashir's survival, the current regime in Sudan has outlasted every previous government.

Chapter 7

Representative Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Stability in Tunisia

Of the military establishments in the Arab world, Tunisia is almost unique. It is a non-praetorian, highly professional body of officers and men which, as an armed force, never mounted a coup or fomented revolution against the state, never involved itself directly in the Arab-Israeli crisis, has never been the instrument of national emancipation except as the adjunctive arm of civilian policy, and has always answered to the authority of the state through the intermediary of a civilian minister of defense... The military has, therefore, never participated in the decision-making process as a political elite. Nor has the military had the opportunity to play the historical role of modernizers of a nation. Rather, they have served solely in the capacity of defenders of the national sovereignty and of the status quo and as a symbol of unity and an instrumentality that links people with government in the nation-building enterprise.

- Lewis B. Ware, "The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era," *The OU Middle East Journal* (1985), p. 37.

For nearly six decades after achieving independence from France in 1956, Tunisia was considered one of the world's most stable authoritarian regimes. The country experienced only intermittent periods of unrest, and one benign transfer of power in 1987, when Zine el Abidine Ben Ali masterminded a "medical" coup to replace an ailing Habib Bourguiba. With annual GDP growth rates consistently topping five percent, falling poverty, and close relations with Europe, conventional wisdom assumed the Tunisian regime's chances of failing were low even for a region known for authoritarian durability. Writing in the same year of the Tunisian revolution, Christopher Alexander observed that the majority of Tunisian appeared to favor the status quo, and that "political change in Tunisia will not come about through some dramatic event that suddenly

replaces the existing order with a new one."⁴⁰⁸ The conventional wisdom was proven wrong in a span of just three short weeks between December 17, when popular protests against the regime first began, and January 14, when Ben Ali fled the country.

As with Nigeria and Sudan, the role of the armed forces is central to understanding patterns of political transition and change in Tunisia. Unlike Nigeria and Sudan, Tunisia's army played an unambiguously positive role in the country's transformation from repressive personalist authoritarian regime to consolidated democracy. In the midst of massive popular protests that rocked the country in January 2011, the army exercised restraint in confronting demonstrators, at times clashing with loyalist police and intelligence forces. As Ben Ali fled the country, the Tunisian army chief of staff General Rachid al-Ammar declared his support for an interim national government and then stood aside as civilians orchestrated a transition to multiparty democracy. Despite a shaky economy and a rising threat from Islamic-state affiliated insurgents, Tunisia's armed forces have played a similarly stabilizing role in the aftermath of the revolution, resisting calls to intervene when Tunisia's democracy appeared on the brink of collapse in 2013. With the election of Beji Caid Essebsi in 2014, Tunisia became the only democracy that has emerged in the aftermath of the Arab Spring to undergo a peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another.

This chapter argues that the Tunisian military's support for the country's democratic institutions can be understood in large part due to its status as a representative

⁴⁰⁸ Christopher Alexander, *Tunisia: Stability and Reform in the Modern Maghreb* (Routledge, 2010), pp. 123-124.

military, absent use as an instrument of ethnic loyalty or the entanglements of power. The analysis in the chapter traces the causal processes and mechanisms through which the Tunisian army, as a representative military, embraced the country's opposition, helped engender the country's transition to democracy, and resisted further calls to seize power. The origins of the Tunisian military's support for the country's democratic institutions stems from the military's exclusion from political power and patronage under both Ben Ali and Bourguiba. A complete ban on political activity, social engagement, and absence of extensive recruitment into top positions led Tunisia's soldiers to abstain and even fear engagement in the political sphere. Moreover, as a result of their mistrust of the military's motives, Tunisia's dictators chose to employ a robust intelligence and police apparatus to serve the authoritarian regime's coercive functions.

These choices, in turn, caused the principal civil-military cleavage in Tunisia to occur between the regime and the armed forces. Rather than choosing to serve in a political capacity or being manipulated along ethnic lines, Tunisia's soldiers developed a very strong corporate identity that defined itself apart from the regime. Soldiers viewed their counterparts in the intelligence and police apparatus first and foremost as rivals and even oppressors, and not as counterparts. Particularly in the aftermath of the 1991 Barraket Essahel affair, in which a number of Tunisian officers falsely accused of coup plotting were tortured and imprisoned by the regime, the Tunisian army grew to disdain and fear the police apparatus. The enmity between the Defense and Interior Ministries was mutual, and deepened by the fact that the army was only rarely used in operations to

maintain internal order, and even then, saw its mission as one more guided by the need to protect than oppress.

In the few instances in which the military was called in operations that involved confronting demonstrators, soldiers tended to choose the path involving the least amount of repression and the most rapid return to the barracks. For most of Tunisia's post-independence history, the approach was successful, as relatively respectful relations between protestors and the army helped ease tensions between protestors and the police during several periods of popular unrest between 1957 and 2011. So long as protestors remained regionally contained or did not explicitly seek to overthrow the regime, further repression by the army was not necessary.

However, the military's status as an actor apart from the regime was exactly what led it to support the revolution and accept Tunisia's transition to democracy. Precisely when a violent crackdown on demonstrators would have been necessary to save the regime, Tunisia's soldiers were unwilling to engage in mass violence against demonstrators they identified with, working with an internal security apparatus that had abused their colleagues, on behalf of a dictator that feared and neglected them. In order to ensure the collapse of Ben Ali's regime, the Tunisian army hardly had to fire a shot: all it had to do was refrain from excessive violence and let demonstrators do the rest. Through an unspoken alliance between the military, opposition, and demonstrators, sunset fell on Tunisia's dictatorship.

Finally, the civil-military cleavages that Tunisia's authoritarian leaders wrought are also crucial in explaining the Tunisian military's continued support of democracy, despite continued political instability and further calls to intervene. Officers in Tunisia's military have no history of political ambition, political interference, or ethnic cleavages. In fact, because of its previously marginalized status, the Tunisian army draws its legitimacy and its current primacy in the security sector from the elements of Tunisian society most opposed to authoritarian rule. The future of Tunisia's armed forces thus depends upon close collaboration with democratic leaders, despite the general sense of disillusionment with the revolution.

The rest of this chapter proceeds as follows. The second section provides basic background information on Tunisia and situates the country within the broader universe of African cases. The third section discusses the institutional context of Tunisia's armed forces under both Bourguiba and Ben Ali, illustrating how decisions by both dictators to politically marginalize the military were motivated by a fear of a military seizure of power. The fourth section traces how these decisions created an institutional culture that defined itself apart from the regime, disdained use as an instrument of repression, and created animosities between the regular army and internal security services. The fifth section examines the Tunisian military's role in the 2011 uprisings, illustrating how the Tunisian armed forces' marginalized role under both dictatorships led the military to identify with the goals of protestors and refrain from using excessive force, forcing Ben Ali to flee the country. The sixth section examines the role of the military in Tunisia's transition to democracy, considering why Tunisia's army refrained seizing power despite

the opportunity. The seventh section explores the army's role in Tunisia's nascent democracy, arguing that cleavages between the army and the dictatorship eased the task of further subordinating Tunisia's armed forces to civil authority. A final section examines the extent to which the casual processes behind the Tunisian military's support for the country's democratic institutions reflect this dissertation's theoretical framework.

7.1: Tunisia in Context: Background and Case Selection

Tunisia is a small, overwhelming Sunni Arab country of 11 million situated in between much larger neighbors of Algeria and Libya along the Mediterranean coast of North Africa (see Figure 1). Arabic is the official language, though close and continuing ties to its former colonizer means French is spoken by over two-thirds of the population. Trade relations with Europe and significant investments in education and infrastructure have cemented Tunisia's status as a middle-income country, with a GDP per capita of \$4,317 (see Table 1). Tunisia has undergone only two transitions during its post-independence political history: in 1987 from Habib Bourguiba, who ruled the country dating back to independence in 1956, to Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, who ruled the country until its democratic transition during the Arab uprisings of 2011.

Admittedly, Tunisia's relative wealth and lack of ethnic diversity means that Tunisia has had an easier path to democratization than many other African nations. Unlike much of Africa, the Tunisia is almost exclusively made up of one ethnic and religious group; Sunni Arabs make up 98 percent of Tunisia's population (see Figure

1). The lack of ethnic or sectarian divides within Tunisia made it impossible for Tunisia's leaders to rely on ethnic stacking to ensure military loyalty.

Nevertheless, as argued elsewhere in this dissertation, these endowments are not sufficient to explain the causal mechanisms that lead the armed forces to decide to support democratic transitions or upend emerging democratic regimes. Though wealthier than most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Tunisia's GDP per capita, at somewhat more than Morocco and Egypt but somewhat less than Libya and Algeria, is about average for North Africa.⁴⁰⁹ Likewise, ethnic diversity has not always led African dictators to stack their militaries along ethnic or sectarian lines. Though the practice is common, leaders of ethnically diverse dictatorships in Ghana, Tanzania, and Malawi refrained from privileging co-ethnics in their armed forces. Moreover, as illustrated in countries from Egypt to Brazil, non-ethnically diverse countries are far from immune to military intervention.

⁴⁰⁹ Most recent GDP figures (in 2013 U.S. dollars), according to the World Bank 2016 World Development indicators, include: Libya: \$11,965; Algeria: \$5,361, Tunisia: \$4,317, Egypt: \$3,314, and Morocco: \$3,092.

Table 7.1: Select Summary Statistics for all Cases

Country	Civil-Mil Relation	Transition Outcome	Dem Duration (yrs)	GDPk	Ethnic Groups	Religions	Pop.	Life Exp (yrs)
Nigeria	Military	Blocked & Successful	4,17	\$3,005	Hausa (25%) Yoruba (21%) Igbo (19%)	Muslim (50%) Christian (40%) Other (10%)	186 mn	52
Sudan	Ethnic	Blocked	N/A	\$1,753	Arab (39%) Dinka (10%) Beja (6%)	Muslim (70%), Christian (19%) Other (11%)	52 mn	62
Tunisia	Representative	Successful	6	\$4,317	Arab (98%)	Muslim (99%)	11 mn	75

In fact, considering the history of the immediate region and the circumstances under which the country democratized, in some respects Tunisia offers a tough test case. Given the country's status as a middle-income country and close relations with Europe, the regime did not face anywhere near the level of external pressure to democratize confronted by many sub-Saharan African nations, who depend on aid for a considerable percentage of government expenditures. The Tunisian economy was also relatively stable prior to the transition, with growth rates ranging between three percent and five percent and consistent declines in poverty. The initial waves of democratization that hit much of Africa were provoked by years of economic crisis. In North Africa, Tunisia is the only country to have transitioned to democracy and experienced a peaceful transfer of power from one elected government to another. As the blocked transitions and general

authoritarian drift across the region can attest, the unprecedented and nearly unqualified support of Tunisia's military for the country's democratic institutions is a question worthy of further investigation.

Despite these differences, there are some intriguing parallels between the military's role in Tunisia's democratization and those in other African countries. Though the immediate triggers were different, Tunisia did experience unprecedented mass popular protests, similar to the civil society activism that swept across Africa in the early 1990s. Like representative armed forces in countries such as Zambia, Mali and Malawi, Tunisia's army refused to engage in the mass repression of popular protests and instead turned on forces loyal to the regime. These four regimes constitute a subset of a broader class of Africa's 16 civil-militaries who underwent a transition in my database, 12 of whom transitioned to democracy. The Tunisian military's clear signaling of its preferences in favor of democratization during and after the transition period offers an opportunity both to more closely investigate the causal mechanisms involved in these class of cases but also to provide this project with some measure of external validity. As I have argued elsewhere in this dissertation, there is nothing inherent in my argument that limits my findings strictly to Africa, merely the desire to be conservative with my project's overall assumptions given the continent's unique political and institutional history.

Finally, it is of additional importance to note that this chapter considers civil-military relations under both the Bourguiba and Ben Ali regimes. This is because, despite the change in leadership from Bouguiba to Ben Ali in 1987, there was no fundamental

change in regime. Both leaders presided over a single-party civilian dictatorship with essentially the same leadership structure;⁴¹⁰ one of the more drastic changes instituted by Ben Ali was to rename the party from Neo-Destour to the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD). The structure of civil-military relations likewise remained very much the same, with a relatively small military counterbalanced by robust police and intelligence forces. Because the decision to structure Tunisia's military as such was made in Bourguiba's time, it is essential to begin the analysis in 1956, with Tunisia's independence from France.

⁴¹⁰ Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Regimes Code Book," Version 1.2 (2014), p. 202.

Figure 7.1: Political Map of Tunisia



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, available online through the University of Texas Library, last accessed April 5, 2017 at https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/tunisia_pol_1990.jpg

7.2: The Choice: Tunisia's Representative Military

The political history and personal experiences of both post-independence dictators led Tunisia to follow a different path in managing their armies than most other countries in Africa and the broader Middle East. Whereas most leaders in the region chose to make the military the basis of their political power or co-ethnicity among the security apparatus' central organizing principles, both leaders chose a strategy that sought above all to marginalize the political influence of the military. Throughout nearly 60 years of Tunisian dictatorship, military officers were subordinated to civilian authorities, rarely served in top governmental posts, and even denied the right to vote or politically organize.

No one has had a greater influence on the post-independence history of Tunisia than Habib Bourguiba, who founded the republican Neo-Destour movement, negotiated Tunisia's independence from France, and ruled the country for over 30 years. Tunisia's was a small military that, unlike other countries in the region, did not play a significant role in the nationalist movement. "Tunisia's army did not have nearly as high profile a role in the country's independence as other armies," observed retired Colonel Major Mahmoud Mezoughi. "For example, the Egyptian and Algerian armies had a measure of legitimacy that the Tunisian military never had because so many Tunisian officers served in the French colonial army."⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mahmoud Mezoughi, Tunis, August 31 2017.

At the time of independence, the national military was composed of only a little over 1,500 former French troops, 850 former Beylical guardsmen, and 3,000 conscripts. Across the region, the armies of the era were beginning to take on an increasingly expansive political role. Egypt's monarchy fell to a military coup in 1952, followed by coups in Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq and Syria throughout the late 1950s and into the early 1960s. In Algeria, the army seized power in 1962 after waging a bloody eight-year insurgency against France. And in 1957 and 1962, a wide cross-section of soldiers participated in two unsuccessful plots organized by Bourguiba's political enemies to remove him from office.⁴¹²

These early experiences led Bourguiba to fear that a powerful army was a mortal threat. To counter this threat, Bourguiba enacted a deliberate series of policies designed to politically and materially marginalize the military. The first component of Bourguiba's policy was to refrain from appointing soldiers to the top echelons of Tunisian government and to subordinate Tunisia's military to civilian oversight. Throughout most of Bourguiba's tenure, few military officers served in high level political positions; not a single soldier was appointed to serve on Tunisia's cabinet until very late in Bourguiba's tenure. The separation between military and civilian roles extended even to defense policy, where, in direct contrast to other Arab nations, the army was overseen by a civilian rather than military minister. The fact that there was at least two degrees of separation between Tunisia's commander-in-chief and the country's men and women in

⁴¹² Michael Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* (Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 87; Noura Borsali. *Bourguiba à l'Épreuve de la Démocratie, 1956-1963* (Samed Editions, 2008), pp. 137-200.

uniform meant that few soldiers had many opportunities to build political loyalties and connections.

Yet Bourguiba's insistence on removing the military from political decision-making went even further still, to the point of infringing on the political rights of soldiers. In 1957, Bourguiba banned soldiers from political activity or association of any kind, including the right to become members of the Neo-Destour party.⁴¹³ Members of Tunisia's armies were not allowed to participate in political events, comment publicly on politics, or even to vote in elections. The ban on political activity applied not just to serving officers but also to retired ones.⁴¹⁴ Prior to joining the army, the political affiliations, connections, beliefs, and tendency for political engagement of officer candidates and their families were investigated to ensure maximum likelihood of compliance. Those who violated the ban on political activity were referred to military justice.⁴¹⁵

The military experienced a brief ascendance beginning in the late 1970s, a period marked by tensions of the border with Libya and internal unrest. In a sign of the military's increasing profile, Zine El Abdine Ben Ali was promoted to the Interior Ministry in 1986, the first ever military officer to achieve a cabinet-level position. In 1987, an ailing Bourguiba was overthrown by Ben Ali in what has been described as a

⁴¹³ Michael Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb*, pp. 86-87; Risa Brooks, "Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2013), p. 209.

⁴¹⁴ This ban was only lifted in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution.

⁴¹⁵ Interview with retired Colonel Major Moussa Khalfi, Tunis, September 28 2017.

“medical coup,” due to the not unreasonable justification of the plotters that they acted because Bourguiba was proving himself to be increasingly unfit for office. Early on in Ben Ali’s regime, he appointed several other senior military officers to the traditional civilian posts of Foreign Affairs, Interior Minister, and Justice Minister.⁴¹⁶

This period of ascendance was, however, short lived. Ben Ali continued, and in some respects even doubled down on, Bourguiba’s policy of keeping the military politically marginalized. For one, even as he appointed some military officers into top positions, Ben Ali was cautious. He deliberately did not involve the military in the coup to overthrow Bourguiba, instead using his post as head of Tunisia’s Interior Ministry to draw on the National Guard to secure key locations, including the presidential palace.⁴¹⁷ And a closer reading of the early appointments reveals that most of them were life-long friends, some of whom he knew from his military days, and were not likely made with the explicit intent of elevating the military in mind.⁴¹⁸ Instead, during the transition period of 1988, Ben Ali assumed the position of Secretary of Defense for himself so he could exert more direct influence over military posts and operations.

⁴¹⁶ Hicham Bou Nassif, "A Military Besieged: The Armed Forces, the Police, and the Party in Bin ‘Ali’s Tunisia, 1987–2011," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 01 (2015), pp. 68-69.

⁴¹⁷ Andrew Borrowiec, *Modern Tunisia: A Democratic Apprenticeship*, (Praeger, 2003), pp. 55-56. Ben Ali justified the coup on legalistic grounds, using Article 7 of Tunisia’s constitution to declare Bourguiba medically unfit to serve as president after receiving the signature of seven medical doctors. The removal of Bourguiba was met with support both within and without the Tunisian establishment, who were aware that the 84-year old Bourguiba’s health was in decline and behavior was becoming increasingly erratic. Ben Ali’s reliance on Tunisia’s internal security apparatus and constitutional means to secure power has led analysts to describe his 1987 seizure of power as a “constitutional,” “medical” or “police” rather than a military coup.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

Events would soon confirm that Ben Ali's predominant attitude towards the military was, like his predecessor's, one of suspicion. In 1991, four years after Ben Ali took office, the Interior Ministry announced the discovery of a coup plot between the military and the Islamist opposition group Ennahda. According to the allegations at the time, Islamist cells infiltrated the military, were planning to seize major government ministries and centers, and had planned to shoot down Ben Ali's plane with a Stinger Missile from Afghanistan.⁴¹⁹ The imbroglio came to be known as the Barraket Essahel affair, named after the coastal town in which Islamist leaders and military officials were said to have met to coordinate plans to take down the regime.

In reality, the coup allegations were a farce staged as a result of collusion between the ruling party (which had by then changed its name to the Constitutional Democratic Rally, RCD) and the internal security services. For these entities, the plot provided the opportunity to remove an increasingly powerful institutional rival and competitor for top posts. For Ben Ali, it provided an opportunity to marginalize what he likely considered the two greatest threats to his regime: the Islamists and the military.

After the announcement of the affair, Ben Ali took steps to further marginalize the military and cement his control on power. He forced all ministers with a military background into retirement or into postings abroad and then refused to re-appoint a chief of staff of the armed forces. He left the military bereft of a leader to coordinate joint

⁴¹⁹ Borrowiec, *Modern Tunisia*, p. 48

operations and instead began taking personal command decisions himself.⁴²⁰ And he had the Interior Ministry arrest, detain, torture, and then retire some 244 officers whose loyalties he questioned. To replace the rest of the officers he dismissed, Ben Ali appointed officers to senior command positions whom he knew or through personal connections, including former classmates. And, much like his predecessor, Ben Ali denied cabinet-level postings to military officers for the remainder of his regime. He assumed that, so long as he was able to ensure the loyalty of his chiefs of army staff, he would ensure the loyalty of the army and the regime's survival.⁴²¹

Finally, Ben Ali did not fundamentally alter any of the laws written in the Bourguiba period intended to ensure the military's political neutrality. Military officers remained unable to join the party, unable to vote, and unable to organize and express political viewpoints. So notorious was the military's silence that it became known in French as "La Grande Muette"—the Great Mute. Ever conscious of the latent policy that some military officer might eventually do to him what he did to Bourguiba, Ben Ali went to even greater lengths than his predecessor to politically marginalize the military and subordinate it to the regime. The primary instrument through which he achieved this was with Tunisia's internal security apparatus.

⁴²⁰Sharan Grewal, "A Quiet Revolution: The Tunisian Military After Ben Ali," (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2016). Available at <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/24/quiet-revolution-tunisian-military-after-ben-ali-pub-62780> <accessed April 17 2017>.

⁴²¹ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mahmoud Mezoughi, Tunis, August 30 2017.

7.3: Civil-Military Cleavages: The Military Establishment and the Regime

The choices Bourguiba and Ben Ali made to marginalize the military meant that the main civil-military cleavages in Tunisia existed not within the army, but between the army and the regime. By banning the military from political engagement of any kind, the regime ensured that the military maintained a politically neutral corporate identity. However, it also meant that both leaders had to look elsewhere for the day to day maintenance of the regime. To maintain internal order and serve as the regime's primary instrument of repression, both leaders relied heavily on Tunisia's internal security apparatus. The robust investments in police, intelligence and parallel security forces created considerable enmity between the Defense and Interior Ministries and, by extension, the regime itself.

When asked to explain the Tunisian military's historical lack of political intervention, nearly every soldier interviewed first cited the Tunisian military's status as a republican army, more akin to those in the United States and France than those in the Middle East and Africa. Stated retired Major Colonel Habib Ouesalati: "The Tunisian army does not occupy itself with politics; our leaders were convinced of that."⁴²² Retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai agreed: "we are a republican army and do not participate in politics."⁴²³ By refusing to sanction political action, Tunisia's leaders engendered an army less riven than most by internal cleavages.

⁴²² Interview with retired Major Colonel Habib Ouesalati, Tunis, September 7 2017.

⁴²³ Interview with retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai, Tunis, September 10 2017.

Rather, the central civil-military cleavage that emerged in Tunisia was between the army on the one side and the regime and the internal security apparatus on the other. As a result of the military's political marginalization, both Bourguiba and Ben Ali leaned heavily on the internal security apparatus to maintain internal order. Beginning early in his regime, Bourguiba charged this sensitive mission to the Interior Ministry, which included the National Guard to fight crime and secure the border, the Brigade of Public Order to manage popular unrest, and the Presidential Guard to provide for the head of state's personal security. Throughout Tunisia's authoritarian period, the budget for the Ministry of the Interior was roughly equal to and at times significantly exceeded that of the Ministry of Defense.⁴²⁴ Though estimates vary considerably, the number of men serving in internal security forces also exceeded the number of men in military uniform.⁴²⁵

The existence of these powerful internal security institutions, who were more implicated in the day to day management of authoritarian rule, were intended to act as a deterrent to military intervention, making it difficult to coordinate and unlikely to succeed. Unlike many countries in the region, the Tunisian military could not claim to have legitimately maintained a total monopoly on violence and was charged with

⁴²⁴ Derek Lutterbeck. "Tool of Rule: The Tunisian Police under Ben Ali." *The Journal of North African Studies* 20.5 (2015), p. 816.

⁴²⁵ The number of Tunisian police during the authoritarian era is a matter of some dispute. During the Ben Ali regime, some analysts put the number of Tunisian police as high as 200,000 men, which would have made it one of mostly heavily policed states on a per capita basis in the world. Officials in the aftermath of the revolution put the total at 50,000. Under authoritarian rule, the number of men in the Tunisian military was typically between 30,000 and 40,000 and only briefly between 1995 and 1996 appears to have exceeded 50,000 men, according to International Institute of Strategic Studies *Military Balance* reports included in the World Bank 2016 development indicators. See Lutterbeck, "Tool of Rule," pp. 817-818.

maintaining internal order only as a secondary mission. The Interior Ministry's predominant role in the everyday maintenance of the regime meant that members of Tunisia's armed forces did not see themselves as instruments of authoritarian repression. In the words of retired Major Colonel and former director of military security Moussa Khalfi: "The army can assist the police in maintaining internal order, particularly with respect to sensitive posts and critical infrastructure. But it is not the military's role or mission to fire on or oppress unarmed civilians."⁴²⁶

As Khalfi indicates, the military was by institutional design only to be used in the "last instance" to maintain order when the National Guard and the Brigade of Public Order became overwhelmed.⁴²⁷ Military interaction with civilians was therefore minimal, but did occur on a number of occasions over the course of both authoritarian regimes. The four most notable such occasions were: in 1978, in response to a labor strike; in 1984, in response to protests against a rise in the price of bread;⁴²⁸ in 1991, after protests erupted during and in the aftermath of the Gulf War; and in 2008, when protests over working conditions erupted in the mining town of Gafsa.⁴²⁹ Interactions between the police and military officers involved in putting down these uprisings were remarkably similar, particularly in 1978, 1984, and 2008. In each instance, protests overwhelmed

⁴²⁶ Interview with retired Colonel Major Moussa Khalfi, Tunis, September 28 2017.

⁴²⁷ Ware, "Role of Military," p. 48.

⁴²⁸ For accounts of these uprisings, which occurred during the Bourguiba era, see Ware, *Tunisia in the Post-Bourguiba Era* (Air University Press, 1986), pp. 52-53; Noureddine Jebnoun, "In the Shadow of Power: Civil-military Relations and the Tunisian Popular Uprising." *The Journal of North African Studies* 19, no. 3 (2014), p. 300, and Jim Paul, "States of Emergency: The Riots in Tunisia and Morocco," *Merip Reports* 127 (1984), p. 5. Paul estimates that about 150 people were killed over the course of these riots, mostly by the police.

⁴²⁹ See "Behind Tunisia's 'Economic Miracle': Inequality and Criminalization of Protest", *Amnesty International*, March 30 2009.

local security forces, a state of emergency was declared, and the military was called in, engaging in at times violent clashes with protestors. Despite the loss of life, the military was perceived to have acquitted itself in a more even-handed manner than the civilian security apparatus, and after a matter of days retreated to the barracks.

Soldiers attributed their role in calming the protests in part as a result of their lack of association with the regime. Where interactions between police forces and the population were usually marked by repression, the military saw its primary role as the protection of public installations and the prevention of further violence. According to Major Colonel Manai, who participated in containing the 1978 strikes: “Whereas protestors were often angry with the police, they have more confidence in the army and were more inclined to listen to us.”⁴³⁰ Said Major Colonel Mezoughi, who helped contain the 1984 bread riots: “The military attempted to act with restraint in quelling popular unrest. The army does not feel as if it is there to repress the population, and though the mission was to cooperate with the police, a key difference is that the military attempted to minimize the loss of civilian life.”⁴³¹

The military and the interior security services did not just differ in their approach to handling popular uprisings. The military’s lack of use in internal oppression was accompanied by a general enmity between the Interior and Defense Ministries. The enmity was driven not only by competition over budgets and resources, but because of the former’s closeness to the regime, which led the latter to at times feel victimized.

⁴³⁰ Interview with retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai, Tunis, September 10 2017.

⁴³¹ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mahmoud Mezoughi, Tunis, August 30 2017.

According to Mezoughi: “Bourguiba and Ben Ali’s policies generated considerable friction between the army and the internal security services. The military recognized that the police and intelligence services were tainted by association with the regime. The military, as the only ‘clean’ institution in the country, felt despised by the internal security services.”⁴³²

In fact, it was the task of Tunisia’s internal security apparatus to monitor the army and ensure it remained disengaged from politics. Under Bourguiba, the status of the two ministries was relatively co-equal. Though for most of Bourguiba’s tenure the military’s budget was lower and the social and political activities of Tunisian soldiers were monitored by the internal security apparatus, the Defense Ministry maintained operational oversight over the conduct of its soldiers. Petitions to organize socially, for example, were typically sent to the Defense Minister, where they were usually rejected, and misconduct was investigated via a military justice system before potentially being referred to the Interior Ministry for further action.⁴³³ While the police were charged with monitoring the operational activities of the military, the military, through its bureau of military security, did likewise with respect to the police.⁴³⁴

In the aftermath of the Barraket Essahel affair, Ben Ali subordinated the Defense Ministry to the Interior Ministry, preferring to have security information centralized under his command.⁴³⁵ Where spending on internal security and the armed forces was

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Interview with retired Major Colonel Moussa Khalfi, Tunis, September 28 2017.

⁴³⁴ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mokhtar Ben Nasser, Tunis, September 21 2017.

⁴³⁵ Correspondence with Dr. Faysal Cherif, October 30 2017.

more or less evenly balanced at the end of Bourguiba's reign, by 2010, the Interior Ministry budget was nearly 50 percent greater than the budget of the Defense Ministry.⁴³⁶ Particularly preferential treatment was given to the 6,000-man Presidential Guard, who became the regime's best paid and equipped security force.⁴³⁷ Despite planting fake evidence to implicate their military colleagues, the Interior Ministry was given additional power to monitor and survey military officers in order to ensure their loyalty. The military's activities became so closely monitored that officials at the Ministry of Defense could not conduct any military exercises or operational maneuvers without first informing the police of the number of troops involved, the direction the troops were to be moved, and the length of the maneuver.⁴³⁸ In addition, military officers were completely discouraged from social gatherings outside of their duties, making it nearly impossible for them to meet in private without raising the suspicions of the regime.⁴³⁹

Particularly deeply resented by the army was the treatment of the 244 officers arrested by the regime in the wake of the affair. These soldiers were rounded up, removed from duty, and tortured in order to extract confessions. Most of the defendants, all of whom were innocent of coup plotting, ended up being forced into prison or into early

⁴³⁶ Derek Lutterbeck. "Tool of Rule: The Tunisian Police under Ben Ali." *The Journal of North African Studies* 20, no. 5 (2015), pp. 815-816

⁴³⁷ Brooks, "Abandoned at the Palace," pp. 212-213; International Crisis Group, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's Way," (International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report 106, 2011), pp. 93-94.

⁴³⁸ Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed, email correspondence, December 4 2017.

⁴³⁹ Ibid. Though most officers interviewed generally agreed that Ben Ali marginalized the military in comparison to Bourguiba, there were differing opinions with respect to why.

retirement. Retired Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed, one of the officers caught up in the affair, describes the ordeal these soldiers went through:

When I was assistant to the chief of staff of the army for Military Intelligence and Security, I was arrested along with many other very promising young officers, and we were compelled to make false confession under torture. Afterwards, the Interior Minister, who just several months prior had been the Minister of Defense, Abdallah Kallel, told the officers that we were ‘excused’ and to return home. Though most of us were eventually released and then retired from the army, our pensions and health benefits were taken away and we could not find work that befitted our station. I personally couldn’t travel for 10 years, and our families were tainted by association with us. Whenever we were recommended for a job the police would intervene and indicate that we were plotters and terrorists. We all had to check in at police posts on either a daily or weekly basis.⁴⁴⁰

The experience of Ahmed and his fellow soldiers makes clear the lengths to which the Ben Ali regime went to marginalize the military and instill fear in its ranks. In the aftermath of the affair, the message was clear: dissent of any kind, real or imagined, would not be tolerated.

The affair and its aftermath generated resentment not just from the officers who were dismissed. Ahmed adds: “Under Ben Ali’s regime the military was totally subordinate to the Interior Ministry, in effect becoming a victim of the regime. Military commanders did not have a direct line of communication with Ben Ali, the Defense Ministry could not exercise their prerogatives, and Defense Ministers knew they were effectively powerless.”⁴⁴¹ Rank and file soldiers, who knew their detained colleagues

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed (ret), Tunis, September 10 2017. The full extent of this aspect of the Barraket Essahel affair has only become clear in the aftermath of the revolution, and these soldiers have only recently been promoted to the ranks they would have obtained had they remained in the army and had their benefits re-instated.

⁴⁴¹ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed, September 10 2017, Tunis

personally and believed them likely to be innocent, were incensed at the arrests, causing the popularity of the regime and much of the senior military leadership to plummet in the aftermath of the affair.

It is remarkable that, despite this sense of victimization, Tunisia's armed forces never attempted a coup. For some officers, even those caught up in the affair, the lack of putchist inclinations was simply a matter of the military's institutional history of non-interference. Colonel Major Hedi Kolsi, who was also arrested and retired as part of the Barraket Essahel affair, states:

We didn't care for any political scheme, don't really think about politics, and no one has any desire for any kind of political career. Even after what I went through, never once did I think of supporting any kind of coup d'état against the regime. I never would have thought of that because my first duty as a Tunisian is to protect the country, not bloody it.⁴⁴²

Others stressed the sheer impossibility of being able to manage and coordinate a coup plot given the significant degree to which the armed forces were monitored. According to Major Colonel Ahmed:

The rest of the military was scared. My colleagues couldn't confirm that the allegations against us were false until after the revolution, though they had their suspicions. Many of them chose to believe the allegations, and even avoided us in the streets. Many feared that they would suffer the same fate and were afraid to even discuss a plot for fear that one officer might denounce another to the internal security apparatus.⁴⁴³

Some officers split the difference. According to retired Colonel Mohsen Mighri:

After Barraket Essahel, the army remained loyal to the regime for two reasons. First, many in the army were afraid of surveillance by the intelligence and police after what we suffered. After we were forced to leave, the army didn't just

⁴⁴² Interview with Major Colonel Hedi Kolsi (ret.), Sfax, September 15 2017

⁴⁴³ Interview with Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed (ret.), Tunis, September 10 2017

monitor me, but also my family, and especially my children who attended university. The second reason was the army's culture of political neutrality. Ever since independence, for Tunisia's soldiers, service to the nation came and solidarity within the officer corps came first.⁴⁴⁴

The approaches of both Bourguiba and Ben Ali towards the security sector can be described as one that, in attempting to foster a politically neutral army, nevertheless created inherently political cleavages between the military and the regime. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Bourguiba charted the Tunisian military's post-independence course when he decided to completely ban the military from political activity of any kind, and to marginalize the armed forces next to the internal security apparatus. As a result, the army took on a corporate identity that defined itself apart from the regime, particularly in relation to the internal security apparatus and in its interactions with civilians. After a brief period in which it looked to some as the military was on the rise, Ben Ali continued and even built on these policies. Leaving the ban on political activity in place, Ben Ali turned Tunisia into an effective police state in which the army was not merely subordinate to the police, but subject to continual surveillance and monitoring.

As evidenced by the minimal amount of upheaval Tunisia experienced during well over 50 years of authoritarian rule, this arrangement was remarkably resilient. Nevertheless, the system of civil-military relations implemented by Tunisia's authoritarian leaders contained a fatal flaw. Precisely because they had presided over such remarkable political stability, Tunisia's authoritarian leaders never had to confront mass popular protests who sought to overthrow the regime. In the relatively few

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with Colonel Mohsen Migrhi (ret.), Tunis, September 20 2017.

circumstances in which Tunisia's police forces needed support, the military quickly stepped in and quelled the uprisings. Though at times widespread, protests under Bourguiba never explicitly demanded that the regime leave power and were diffused through a combination of repression and concessions. During the Ben Ali era, protest actions against the regime were isolated and confined mainly to Tunisia's interior regions. The closest that the regime had probably come to a scenario resembling that of 2011 was during the 1984 bread riots, where for a few short days Bourguiba's reign appeared on the brink of collapse. Had Bourguiba remained firm in his insistence on maintaining the proposed increase in the price, the military might have been placed in an uncomfortable scenario where the only viable option for the continuation of the regime would have involved mass repression. Fortunately, the military was spared that choice when Bourguiba agreed to roll back the proposed price increases, and the protests died down.⁴⁴⁵

In short, the Tunisian military had never been put in a situation where it had to be called upon to quell mass uprisings against the regime, with the very future of the republic at stake.

7.4: The Critical Juncture: The Army and the 2011 Revolution

The uprisings that engulfed Tunisia beginning in mid-December 2010 and early in 2011 were unlike any the country had witnessed previously. An unprecedented number of

⁴⁴⁵ See Borrowiec, *Modern Tunisia*, p. 52.

Tunisians participated, and as popular mobilization increased it became clear that the demonstrators would settle for nothing less than the end of Ben Ali's regime. As in previous moments of unrest, Tunisia's dictators relied mostly on the police and internal security services to contain the protests, and only called in the army to restore order once the internal security apparatus was overwhelmed. Despite initial impressions to the country, the army was not asked, nor would it likely have obeyed, orders to crack down on civilian demonstrators in order to save the regime. With the demonstrators demanding the dictator's resignation and the security apparatus unable to contain them, Ben Ali was forced to flee the country.

On the evening of December 17, 2010, the street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi, who had his vegetable cart confiscated by authorities earlier that day, set himself on fire with paint thinner in front of the municipal building of the central Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid. Though Bouazizi was neither the first nor the last Tunisian to self-immolate as a form of political protest, local activists captured Bouazizi's act on video, where it was widely viewed on Facebook and Al-Jazeera. Protests soon spread across the interior region of the country.⁴⁴⁶ The regime's initial reaction combined public gestures of conciliation with typical police brutality towards protestors. Shortly after announcing \$10 million in economic aid for Sidi Bouzid, police shot and killed two demonstrators on December 24, prompting protests spread to country's two largest cities, Sfax and Tunis. In a December 28 speech, Ben Ali expressed his sympathy with the unemployed and

⁴⁴⁶ Yasmine Ryan, "How Tunisia's Revolution Began," *Al Jazeera*, January 26 2011; Kazeem Fahim, "Slap to a Man's Pride."

visited Bouazizi, who had been transferred to a state hospital. Yet Bouazizi's death on January 3, along with news that lawyers representing the protestors had been beaten and tortured by the police, prompted much of Tunisia's class of legal, medical and education professionals to hit the streets. In early January, as many as 95 percent of Tunisia's 8,000 lawyers went on strike, major clashes between protestors and security forces killed dozens, and the rallies across the country continued to grow in size.⁴⁴⁷

Realizing his regime was under mortal threat, Ben Ali's next address to the public on January 10 was much harsher. He maintained that the clashes between security forces and protestors were "terrorist work that cannot be tolerated" and accused opponents of being "manipulated from abroad."⁴⁴⁸ Ben Ali's harsh address only prompted an even greater degree of mobilization, with Tunis wracked by its biggest protests yet, prompting the government to declare a curfew. On January 13, the dictator again softened his rhetoric, telling protestors he "heard and understood" them and promising not to run for a sixth term.

Yet unlike in 1984, when Bourguiba's agreement to maintain the price of bread was enough to send demonstrators home, the single largest anti-government protest Tunisia ever witnessed took place on January 14. According to a survey taken as part of Arab Barometer, 16 percent of Tunisia's population, or roughly 1.7 million people, reported participating in the protests, twice the percentage of people who participated in

⁴⁴⁷ Ryan Rifai, "Timeline: Tunisia's Uprising," *Al-Jazeera*, January 21 2011.

⁴⁴⁸ Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, "Public Address," (Tunis, January 10 2011), <http://al-bab.com/documents-section/tunisia-speech-president-ben-ali-0> <accessed January 31 2018>.

protests in Egypt.⁴⁴⁹ A report by the U.N. later determined that between mid-December and mid-January, 338 people were killed and 2,147 injured, mostly at the hands of the police. The casualty figures amounted to more than twice the number killed during the 1984 bread riots.⁴⁵⁰ By this time, it was clear that only an even more violent confrontation with the protestors would have saved the regime, and that such a confrontation would have required support of the army. This support was not forthcoming.

Contrary to popular belief, the Tunisian military did not directly disobey orders given to it by Ben Ali. Reports that Lieutenant General and Chief of Army Staff Rachid Ammar refused a direct order to open fire on protestors and had been put under house arrest by Ben Ali were confirmed to be fake by Ammar himself and by a social media activist who apparently made them up in order to pressure the military into siding against the regime.⁴⁵¹ Moreover, subsequent reports have emerged that regime officials remained convinced of Ammar's loyalty right up until Ben Ali left the country. According to one former defense minister, Ben Ali asked Ammar to take control of the operations room at the Interior Ministry just hours before he fled to Saudi Arabia.⁴⁵²

It is more accurate to conclude that the Tunisian armed forces interpreted the orders given to it by the regime in a way that allowed it to refrain from engaging in the

⁴⁴⁹ See Arab Barometer, "Public Opinion Survey Conducted in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen" (Arab Barometer, 2012). Available for download at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICSPR): <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/35040> <accessed January 31 2018>.

⁴⁵⁰ "Report: 338 Killed During Tunisia Revolution" *Associated Press*, May 5, 2012.

⁴⁵¹ Nassif, "A Military Besieged," pp. 77-79.

⁴⁵² Quoted in Grewal, "A Quiet Revolution."

mass repression of protests and to stay neutral prior to Ben Ali's departure. It was able to do so in part because the regime followed the protocol undertaken in 1978, 1984, 1991, and 2008 of keeping the military out of the business of responding to popular uprisings unless absolutely necessary. In the early phases of the protests following Bouazizi's self-immolation, Ammar was monitoring a military exercise, and was not aware that protests were spreading until he was instructed to put three battalions on alert on December 24.⁴⁵³ The army did not become heavily involved in managing the protests until January 9, when Ben Ali realized his regime was on the verge of collapse and ordered soldiers to deploy to Tunis. This division of labor meant that the army stayed on the sidelines while the police brutally confronted increasingly large numbers of protestors. As the protests intensified, exhausted police, who had been working for days and were beginning to run out of ammunition, allowed rioters to loot the properties and the palace of the President's relatives.⁴⁵⁴ By mid-January, the remaining police and intelligence forces lacked the resources necessary to continue to repress the uprisings.

When the command did come for the military to take on a major role, beginning in mid-January, soldiers were simply ordered to cooperate with the police and internal security apparatus to maintain order. This meant that the military was able to interpret its mandate broadly, and in a different manner than their colleagues in the internal security apparatus. "The training of the police was to do anything to safeguard the regime," stated retired Major Colonel Kolsi. "Their loyalty was for the regime and against the people,

⁴⁵³ Jebnoun, "In the Shadow of Power," p. 304.

⁴⁵⁴ Alejandro Pachon, "Loyalty and Defection: Misunderstanding Civil-Military Relations in Tunisia during the 'Arab Spring,'" *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37, no. 4 (2014), p. 515.

and their attitude was that the only person who ought to survive an uprising against Ben Ali was the dictator himself. By contrast, the military's attitude was to do everything it could to safeguard the people, the flag, and the territory of Tunisia."⁴⁵⁵ Throughout the first month of demonstrations, soldiers stood idly by as their colleagues in the internal security services beat, arrested, opened fire on, and killed demonstrators, who in some instances sought shelter from police gunshots behind military tanks and armored vehicles.⁴⁵⁶ Rather than arrest or shoot protestors, soldiers not only permitted protests to ransack and even burn police stations, but fraternized with and protected demonstrators.

For civilians who participated in the revolution, the emerging solidarity between protestors and military against the police was obvious. According to Professor Oussama Ayara, who took part in demonstrations in Tunis between January 10 and January 14:

From virtually the first week, we were told that the army was not intervening on behalf of the regime... As time went on, the contrast between the behavior of soldiers and the behavior of the police became obvious. People, including myself and wife and children, would take food and water to soldiers and asked if they needed anything. We felt like above all else the army was watching our country. Even today we refer to 'our soldiers' in a similar manner to which we refer to 'our children.'⁴⁵⁷

According to another student who was in Tunis at the time of the revolution:

I did not go to the mass rally on January 14 for fear of police snipers. By contrast, the army came to our dormitories to take some of us who did not have relatives in the area we could stay with to find transportation back to their home towns. In addition, I remember that the army during that time the army would even agree to pose with us for pictures, something that would never have been allowed before the revolution.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁵ Interview with Colonel Major Hedi Kolsi, Sfax, September 15 2017.

⁴⁵⁶ Lutterbeck. "Arab Uprisings," p. 35.

⁴⁵⁷ Interview with Oussama Ayara, Tunis, September 29 2017.

⁴⁵⁸ Interview with student of English literature who did not wish to be named, Tunis, September 26 2017.

As these experiences and many others like them indicate, the degree to which Tunisian citizens identified with and even felt protected by soldiers during the revolution is a striking contrast with the animosity and fear felt towards the police. Under these circumstances, it is highly unlikely that the army would have obeyed orders to engage in mass repression. As suggested by Hicham bou Nassif, the most likely result of a direct order to open fire on the protestors might have been mutiny, particularly among enlisted soldiers and low and mid-ranking officers.⁴⁵⁹

The fact that the military let protestors attack police and sometimes interceded on their behalf suggests that the restraint was intentional, in no small part a product of the institutional grievances the military felt against both the internal security services and the Ben Ali regime. For example, when the Defense Minister ordered the military to take off their helmets so as to make it difficult to distinguish between them and the police, Ammar ordered that soldiers wear red berets. In addition, Ammar explicitly instructed that soldiers not shoot anyone without the explicit authorization of top military commanders, an unusually strict order given the circumstances, according to retired Colonel Major Mokhtar Ben Nasser, former spokesperson for the military during the revolution.⁴⁶⁰ Though the Tunisian military did not openly defy orders given to it by the regime, Tunisian soldiers were not about to respond with an unprecedented level of repressive violence in favor of a regime that victimized it.

⁴⁵⁹ Nassif, "A Military Besieged," pp. 78-79.

⁴⁶⁰ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mokhtar Ben Nasser, Tunis, September 22 2017; see also Jebnoun, "Shadow of Power," p. 305.

That there existed some level of fear and enmity between the regime and its army was an open secret. With this understood, it is no surprise that Ben Ali knew that he could not count on the military to be used as an instrument repression, and never asked the army to repress civilians. Virtually every officer I interviewed maintained that, during the 2011 uprisings, the army never openly defected from the regime, but at the same time would never have consented to mass killing on its behalf. The most succinct summary of this argument was given by Major Colonel Ouesalati:

The Tunisian military never defected from the regime. Ben Ali never asked the army to fire on the people, because that obviously would have made the situation worse. In our view, we were simply obeying orders to limit the violence. The army does not normally have contact with the population. Our obligation is to accomplish our mission, whereas confronting the population is the role of internal security. The population likes and often appreciates the military's presence."⁴⁶¹

Thus, by January 14th, 2011, Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali had run out of options. Neither concessions nor Tunisia's vaunted internal security apparatus succeeded in calming demonstrators, who were willing to settle for nothing less than the end of the regime. With a military he knew to be unwilling to enact the level of repression necessary to sustain him and his inner circle no longer able to guarantee his security, the president fled the country later that day, never to return. For fifty years, the army's political marginalization from the regime, which limited the army's use as an instrument of internal repression and fostered the existence of a powerful police apparatus, made a military seizure of power unlikely to succeed and helped stabilize authoritarianism in

⁴⁶¹ Interview with retired Major Colonel Habib Ouesalati, Tunis, September 7 2017.

Tunisia. During the uprisings of 2011, those same factors made it virtually impossible for the Tunisian armed forces to continue to support the dictator. The army's lack of willingness to repress on behalf of the regime was a crucial factor in causing Tunisia's authoritarian edifice to crumble.

7.5: The Outcome: A Democratic Transition

After Ben Ali's flight, the Tunisian army emerged as the country's only institution capable of maintaining order. Despite the opportunity, Tunisia's army chose to refrain from seizing power, instead supporting the creation of a civilian interim government that guided the country to democracy. Tunisian military's political culture of neutrality and lack of will to repress demonstrators did not change with the regime. If anything, the revolution reinforced the military's role as an actor apart from the dictatorship and therefore untainted by Tunisia's authoritarian past. Moreover, if abstention from repression allowed the military to become Tunisia's central power broker, democracy offered the armed forces a pathway to institutionalize those gains. Under democracy, the Tunisian military could regain the status it had lost due to its marginalization under the Bourguiba and Ben Ali regimes.

In the immediate aftermath of Ben Ali's flight, uncertainty reigned in the upper echelons of the Tunisian government and in the Tunisian streets. Following Ben Ali's resignation, two heads of state were announced within twenty-four hours. Over the next two weeks, the interim cabinet was reshuffled multiple times in response to continued protests, who opposed the appointment of RCD cabinet officials in top posts. With little

police presence in the streets, looters and gangs ransacked grocery stores, set fire to buildings, and attacked people and property.⁴⁶² Initial attempts to find a political path forward were marked by confusion because the government was in complete disarray and the protestors were yet to be represented by coherent leadership.

The support of the protestors and the breakdown of the former regime's repressive apparatus meant that the military became the country's central power broker, and remained so for many months after Ben Ali's flight. Beginning in mid-January, thousands of Tunisian soldiers deployed to the capitol in order to protect public buildings, key infrastructure, and to attempt to prevent the protests from becoming too violent. The armed forces even guarded the Interior Ministry, which had been abandoned by the police.

During this period, the army could have seized power had it wanted to. In the words of retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai, who was brought to Tunis by Ammar to deal with the continuing unrest:

It would have been very easy for the army to have seized power during the revolution, as it had in Egypt. Particularly in the days after Ben Ali fled, everything was in total chaos, the army was effectively the only standing institution in the country, and therefore everything was in the military's hands.⁴⁶³

With continued tension between the interim government and the protestors, the Tunisian military might have massaged its status as a neutral arbitrator seeking to restore order.

⁴⁶² See Ryan Rifai, "Time: Tunisia's Uprisings," *Al Jazeera English*, January 23 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/tunisia/2011/01/201114142223827361.html> <accessed September 19 2017>.

⁴⁶³ Interview with retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai, Tunis, September 11 2017.

Throughout this interim period, there were calls by protestors, government officials, and civilians alike for the military to take control.

Instead, the Tunisian army continued to minimize its engagement with politics while signaling its preferences for a civilian-led democratic transition. 10 days after the flight of Ali, Ammar cemented the status of the interim government when he declared that the military stood on the side of the people, and let other military officials also confirm that the general preferred a democratic transition via elections.⁴⁶⁴ After Ammar's announcement, the military faded into the political background, allowing an interim government, which controlled the country through the October elections, to be composed entirely of civilians.⁴⁶⁵ On October 22nd, 2011, the interim government was replaced by a national constituent assembly elected with the task of drafting a new constitution, completing the country's democratic transition.

Why did the Tunisian military make its preferences for democracy obvious in a political environment where it could have seized power? The simple answer is that, in the absence of the will to repress the Tunisian population, democracy was the path that best served the military's institutional interests. Though the character of the Tunisian regime changed rapidly in the months following the revolution, the institution itself remained the same. The military saw its mission as one that involved maintaining order but not repression, and sought, like the rest of Tunisia's population, the means to permanently

⁴⁶⁴ David Kirkpatrick, "Chief of Tunisian Army Pledges His Support for the Revolution," *New York Times*, January 25 2011.

⁴⁶⁵ Philippe Droz-Vincent, "A Return of Armies to the Forefront of Arab Politics?" (Istituto Affari Internazionali Working Paper, 2011), p. 8

free itself from the grip of the regime, and in particular the internal security apparatus. A transition to democracy, and not a seizure of power, was most likely to guarantee this outcome, for several reasons.

First, by seizing power for itself, the Tunisian military would have risked facing the same kind of ire from civil society to which Tunisia's internal security institutions had been subject. The military did not want to place in power the kind of leader that would have "further catalyzed instability and a breakdown in the civil order."⁴⁶⁶ According to Ben Nasser: "Ammar was convinced that democracy couldn't come through arms or via the army, and that the army had to interpret its mandate legalistically."⁴⁶⁷ In a conversation with a demonstrator while the military was attempting to restore order at the Casbah, Major Colonel Manai recalls admonishing a civilian who was calling for intervention: "a military regime is a regime of the baton."⁴⁶⁸ Retired Navy Colonel Lassad Bouazzi agrees: "We were conscious that there's no worse dictator than the army."⁴⁶⁹ The Tunisian military refrained from using excessive violence against demonstrators during the transition, and had little reason to wish to do so in its aftermath.

The Tunisian army was not just hesitant to use force against protestors because of a concern for political stability. Opposition protestors proved the army's allies in overwhelming the internal security apparatus. It was only after Tunisia's internal security apparatus disintegrated, in no small part due to increasingly tense interactions with

⁴⁶⁶ Books, "Abandoned at the Palace," p. 217.

⁴⁶⁷ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mokhtar Ben Nasser, Tunis, September 21 2017.

⁴⁶⁸ Interview with retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai, Tunis, September 11 2017.

⁴⁶⁹ Interview with retired Colonel Lassad Bouazzy, Tunis, September 29 2017.

protestors, that the army emerged from the uprisings as the country's pre-eminent security institution. In addition, it was only with the sanction of Tunisia's interim government that the Tunisian army shifted from a position of neutrality to one of more active confrontation with the departed regime's police. In the aftermath of Ben Ali's resignation, the military arrested Ben Ali's former security chief, Ali Seriati, who was suspected of attempting to incite violence against the protestors and interim government. The military also engaged in gunfights against the police and presidential guard around the presidential palace, the force most loyal to the regime.⁴⁷⁰

Only once the police and intelligence apparatus was marginalized did the military feel as if it had license to confront protestors. Prior to Ben Ali's departure, any action that might have resulted in civilian casualties could have led the army to be tainted by association with the regime. According to statistics compiled by Nassif, between December 17th and Ben Ali's flight January 14th, the death of only one civilian could be directly attributed to military forces. In the month after, 37 civilian deaths could be directly attributed to the army as it attempted more forcefully to restore order.⁴⁷¹ Ben Nasser confirms that this was part of the military's logic in acting with restraint: "Because no president would give a direct order to open fire on civilians, it meant that all killings of the civilians prior to the flight of Ben Ali were attributed to the police."⁴⁷²

Because of the solidarity between the protestors, the political opposition, and the army, democratization offered the Tunisian military the option of getting out from under

⁴⁷⁰ David D. Kirkpatrick, 'Military backs new leaders in Tunisia', *New York Times*, 16 Jan. 2011

⁴⁷¹ Naccif, "A Military Beseiged," pp. 80-81.

⁴⁷² Interview with retired Major Colonel Mokhtar Ben Nasser, Tunis, September 22 2017.

the thumb of the Tunisian police and intelligence forces once and for all. Tunisia's soldiers had not forgotten their ill-treatment at the hands of their counterparts in the internal security services, whose interference in their affairs they resented and who closeness to the regime they despised. The Tunisian Revolution gave the armed forces the opportunity to redress the grievances it had piled up against forces more loyal to the regime, including the fictitious coup plots, the relative loss of funding and equipment, and harsh security measures to which they had been subject. "Ben Ali created a situation of mutual suspicion between the two ministries, one where the Defense Ministry knew that the Interior Ministry had tortured their people," retired Major Colonel Ahmed maintained. "This caused many in the army to further identify with the people, who were also oppressed by the police, who became closely associated with the regime due to its repressive tactics. The army stayed neutral during the uprisings in no small part because it could not support a regime that did what the Ben Ali regime did to its people."⁴⁷³

Thus, by standing in solidarity with the protestors, declaring its support for Tunisia's interim government, and cracking down on the internal security apparatus, the army ensured its reputation was unsullied and that it above all other security institutions was in the best position to work with Tunisia's interim leadership. The military's active role in the revolution assured it more autonomy, more support from civilian leadership, and a more influential role in the security sector than it had under Ben Ali and Bourguiba. Any path other than a democratic transition would have risked an opportunity for the

⁴⁷³ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mohamed Ahmed, Tunis, September 10 2017.

Tunisian military to institutionalize the material and social gains it received as a result of refusing to associate itself with the old regime and its coercive apparatus.

In short, democracy offered the Tunisian military to avoid having to implicate itself in internally repressive activity it disliked, to restore its status as Tunisia's central security institution, and to free it from the grip of Tunisia's internal security establishment.

7.6: Maintaining Democracy: Civil-Military Relations after the Arab Spring

At merely seven years of age, Tunisia's democracy is still quite young. Yet the relative youth of Tunisia's democracy makes it no less remarkable. Tunisia was the first Arab country to be convulsed by the Arab uprisings and the first to undergo a democratic transition. With the 2013 coup in Egypt, Tunisia is the only Arab country to remain democratic. And it has done so in the face of some significant challenges, including a moribund economy, an emerging terrorist threat as a result of the collapse of Libya and the Syrian civil war, and the return of a political elite sympathetic to the old regime. Despite these challenges, the Tunisian military has resisted calls by opposition parties to seize control and instead embraced attempts by civilian officials to remove the last vestiges of Ben Ali era personalism from the Tunisian armed forces. In addition, soldiers have benefitted from efforts to address past grievances, cultivate a more active social role for retired military officers, and increase military budgets. The army arguably remains the country's most respected institution in precarious political circumstances.

In many respects, Tunisia is both less prosperous and less stable than it was under Ben Ali. According to the World Bank, both overall GDP and GDP per capita were less in 2015 than they were in 2011, the year of the revolution. Unemployment remains at 15 percent, with youth unemployment, widely credited to have sparked the revolution, over 30 percent. The security situation is likewise perilous. The political instability sparked by the 2011 revolution, in addition to the upheavals in Libya and Egypt, have dampened tourism and spooked investors in mining, oil and gas industries. Shortly after Tunisian activists won the Nobel Peace prize in 2015, the country suffered a spate of Islamic-State sponsored terrorist attacks. In March of that year, militants killed 17 and hospitalized 26 after an attack at the Bardo Museum in Tunis. Three months later, 38 were killed and 39 wounded after an attack on a beach-side resort in Sousse. And the winding down of the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria may be of little boon to Tunisia, where as many as 7,000 citizens have left to join IS as foreign fighters, the most of any country.⁴⁷⁴

In addition, there have been periods of heightened concern over the military's role in politics. At the same time as the military combatted the internal security apparatus, it consolidated control over the Tunisian security sector. In April 2011, Ammar cemented his control over the military by appointing himself as chief of staff of the armed forces, reviving a position that Ben Ali had abandoned and "acquiring near hegemony of military decisions, reportedly consulting no one."⁴⁷⁵ Military officers were appointed to assume

⁴⁷⁴ Christian Caryl, "Why Does Tunisia Produce So Many Terrorists?" *Foreign Policy*, July 15, 2016

⁴⁷⁵ For more detailed account of these events, see Grawal, "A Quiet Revolution."

command of the nation's top posts in customs and the Ministry of the Interior, and were also appointed to provincial governorships for the first time since 1991.

These tensions were worsened by the structure of the troika government, a coalition between the Islamist party Ennahda and two secular parties, the Congress for the Republic (CPR) and Ettakol, who ruled the country between December 2011 and February 2014. Under the arrangement, the CPR's Moncef Marzouki assumed the presidency and Ennahda's Hamadi Jebali became the prime minister, and the two offices shared responsibility for defense matters. Though the president was named commander-in-chief, the prime-minister was responsible for forming the cabinet and the two offices were jointly responsible for nominating senior defense officials.⁴⁷⁶

This arrangement created animosity between Marzouki's camp, who felt cut out of most defense decisions and were wary of Ammar's ties to the former regime. Prime Minister Jebali and the Defense Minister Abdelkarim Zbidi preferred to keep the military leadership of the old regime intact, leading Ammar to side with them and restrict Marzouki's access to information on defense issues. According to former presidential spokesmen and cabinet director Adnen Mansour:

From the beginning, we had very little confidence in Zbidi, Ammar and Zebali, and we knew they felt likewise. For Marzouki, the real revolution lay in removing the main elements of the old regime, and it wasn't the institutions so much as the personal networks that mattered. These networks were symbolized by Ammar. Zebali, despite his background in Ennahda, had allies in the old regime and felt they were needed in order

⁴⁷⁶ See law 6-2011 concerning the temporary delegation of public powers, December 16 2011.

to succeed. They counted on the popularity of the army, and in particular the personal popularity of Rachid al Ammar.⁴⁷⁷

In an attempt to circumvent the authority of Ammar, Marzouki appointed Major Colonel Brahim Ouechtati, who was outside of Ammar's personal networks, as his military advisor in 2012. He also began to chair monthly National Security Council meetings, which included a broader array of civilian officials and generals.

The most uncertain period for Tunisia's democracy came in mid-2013, with the assassination of the left-leaning politician Chokri Belaid. The assassination, combined with tensions between the troika and the Tunisian military over how to deal with the Islamist group Ansar al-Sharia, led relations between the military and Marzouki to reach a nadir. In early July, a coup undertaken by the Egyptian military ousted Mohamed Morsi – the Islamist leaning prime minister of Egypt. Weeks later, the assassination of a second politician prompted the Tunisian opposition to abandon the constitution-making process and instead take to the streets, calling for an Egypt-like scenario in Tunisia.

Despite the open calls by opposition forces for a coup, the response of Marzouki and his allies were measured, and the political turbulence actually served to reinforce the principle of civilian control over Tunisia's armed forces. For one, though officials close to Marzouki were fearful of an attempt to remove the troika government from power, they did not fear a military coup. According to Tarek Kahlawi, Director of the Tunisian Center for Strategic Studies and former advisor to Marzouki, the troika government intercepted phone calls from leftist movements to officials in the army and the police.

⁴⁷⁷ Interview with Adnen Mansour, former cabinet director and military spokesman, Sousse, October 5 2017.

Representatives from these movements asked security officials to remain neutral during an August 6th attempt to storm parliament, declare a state of emergency, and force the troika government to step down. The appeals fell on deaf ears: security forces thwarted the effort, in addition to a back-up plan to occupy other public offices around the country. “Within the military itself,” Kahlawi added, “we were convinced that there was no desire for a coup, even if we believed the troika government had only tepid support within the armed forces. Any thought of a coup by political forces aligned with the old regime was wishful thinking.”⁴⁷⁸

In fact, Marzouki and his allies capitalized on the tensions that erupted in 2013 in order to reinforce civilian control over the army. After Boulaïd’s assassination, Jebali was forced to resign, and was replaced by Ali Laarayedh as prime minister. Marzouki had a much better working relationship with Laarayedh, who approved of efforts to marginalize and retire holdovers in the military from Ben Ali’s days.⁴⁷⁹ Together, Marzouki worked with Laarayedh to replace the Defense Minister Zbidi in a cabinet re-shuffle. With his two top allies in the regime gone, and increasingly isolated General Ammar resigned shortly thereafter. Marzouki and his allies took Ammar’s resignation as an opportunity to reshape the military’s leadership. Ammar’s position as the chief of staff of the armed forces was not replaced, and civilian officials selected Salah Hamdi of Sidi Bouzid, a general outside of Ben Ali and Ammar’s networks, as chief of staff of the land army. The

⁴⁷⁸ Interview with Tarek Kahlawi, Director of the Tunisian Center for Strategic Studies and Advisor to Former President Moncef Marzouki, Tunis, October 3 2017

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Adnen Mansour, former cabinet director and military spokesman, Sousse, October 5 2017.

other top service chiefs were also replaced by officers with no connection to the old regime.

Most soldiers interviewed expressed support of these reforms while insisting that any fears of a military coup in the aftermath of the revolution and during the Troika government were overblown. “There was a lot of tension between the army and the troika government,” observes Nasser, “but most of it was based on needless fear and a misunderstanding by civilians of how the military saw its role. The appointment of military governors to certain provinces was taken as a precaution to stabilize areas where civilian governors had been threatened or attacked, and it was only for a limited amount of time. The governors left after elections were conducted, and only one remains in the south, on the border with Libya, as a result of the obvious security concerns.”⁴⁸⁰

According to Colonel Bouazzy:

During the transitional government from 2011 to 2014, the army was a victim of intrigue between the CPR, Enhada and Ettakol. The central problem was that both the head of parliament and the chief of government had shared authority over defense matters. The tension between Jebali and Marzouki was played out in the army. Now, with the Defense Minister reporting directly to the head of state, the lines of authority and communication are far clearer.”

As Bouazzy indicates, the conflicting lines of authority promulgated during the interim government have been ameliorated with the Tunisian constitution of 2014, which concentrates more power in the hands of the president by making the President

⁴⁸⁰ Interview with retired Major Colonel Mokhtar Ben Nasser, Tunis, September 22 2017.

responsible for cabinet appointments, presiding over the National Security Council, and setting defense and national security policy.

Moreover, despite the widespread popularity of Ammar in Tunisian society at large, many officers saw him and his cohort as far too close to the former regime.⁴⁸¹ Though there are no genuine ethnic divides within the Tunisian military, Ben Ali and Bourguiba before him had politicized the upper echelons of Tunisia's officer corps by appointing former colleagues and wealthier officers from the coasts over those from the poorer interior regions, who made up much of the rank and file. Though soldiers in the middle and lower ranks never blatantly acted on it, these perceived imbalances, as well as their senior officers' complicity in the aftermath of the Baraket Essahel affair, engendered considerable discontent among lower ranks with their leadership. Yet after the appointment of Hamdi in 2013, "competence became rewarded," in words of Major Colonel Bouazzi.⁴⁸²

Reinforcement of civilian control at the top of the armed forces was accompanied by reforms to offer members of the Tunisian military greater freedoms, and, for some, a sense of transitional justice. No longer is "La Grande Murette" an apt characterization of the military's relation to the public sphere. Under democracy, soldiers have rights to association and assembly. They have created a number of such associations, including the

⁴⁸¹ In the words of Kolsi: "The truth was, at the time, that all of the top military command was indebted to Ben Ali, and did not speak out against him because they benefitted from a very stable lifestyle in which, frankly, all they had to do was show up and collect a paycheck." Interview with retired Major Colonel Hedi Kolsi (ret), Sfax. September 15 2017,

⁴⁸² Interview with retired Colonel Lassad Bouazzi, Tunis, September 27 2017.

Association of Former Military Officers, the Association for Retired Soldiers, and the Association of Justice for Military Veterans, to organize social gatherings, serve as an intermediary between serving soldiers and the public sphere, and advocate for their rights.⁴⁸³ The Association of Justice for Military Veterans, for example, was crucial in fighting for the recognition and re-instatement of the rights of soldiers caught up in the Barraket Essahel affair. In 2012, the state issued an official apology for its involvement, and in 2014 promoting each two or three ranks and rewarding them with pensions. And in 2016, soldiers were given the right to vote in local and municipal elections, a change that many soldiers actually worry will politicize the institution and create divisions within the ranks.⁴⁸⁴ The cumulative effect of these actions, in the words of Major Colonel Kolsi, “gave us back our rights.”⁴⁸⁵

Finally, democracy has also served the military’s fiduciary interests. Though the military budget remains somewhat below the budget of the Ministry of the Interior, it has risen considerably. Since 2011, the defense budget has risen from about half to close to three quarters of the budget of the Interior Ministry, more in line with what it was during

⁴⁸³ For more detail, see Grewal, “A Quiet Revolution.”

⁴⁸⁴ Virtually every soldier interviewed expressed some degree of reticence concerning whether soldiers ought to be given the right to vote. According to retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai: “Politicians recently granted the military the right to vote, in part because they believe it will be in their interest. However, the military is reticent to participate in elections, because of a concern that it could lead to political divisions within their ranks.” Representatives from the Association of Retired Soldiers expressed similar concerns, pointing out that nearly no military officers were registered to vote. Finally, according to a survey of retired officers conducted by Sharan Grewal, only about 20 percent favor granting soldiers the right to vote. See Interview with retired Major Colonel Akyl Manai (ret), Tunis, September 11 2017; Interview with members of the Tunisian Association of Retired Soldiers (*Association Tunisienne des Militaires Retraités*) who did not wish to be named, Tunis, October 10 2017; and Sharan Grewal, “Tunisian Security Forces Rock the Vote,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 16 2017.

⁴⁸⁵ Interview with retired Colonel Major Hedi Kolsi, Tunis, September 15 2017.

the Bourguiba administration.⁴⁸⁶ In absolute terms, overall military spending in Tunisia has nearly doubled since 2011, rising from 1.5 to 2.3 percent of GDP. With the overall number of soldiers remaining more or less the same, spending per soldier has likewise experienced substantial increases. Some of this increase was also spent on raising salaries to be more equal with their counterparts in Tunisia's civilian administration; during the authoritarian era, it was half.⁴⁸⁷ The military budget increases have been in part driven by necessity, including popular unrest and the return of foreign fighters and instability on Tunisia's borders.

Nevertheless, it is premature to call Tunisia's democratic experiment a resounding success. Though military and paramilitary forces are exceedingly unlikely to undertake a coup or support any blatant attempt at authoritarian reversion, many of those associated with the former regime have begun to creep back by more subtle means. With Beji Caid Essebsi's assumption of the presidency in December 2014, some top national security officials with closer links to the old regime have regained their posts, including the re-appointment of Abdelkarim Zbidi as Defense Minister in September 2017. At the same time, the police and intelligence services have capitalized on an environment of insecurity and unrest to form powerful unions, which have fought hard to resist security sector reforms and bolster the Interior Ministry's image. These unions were the motivating force behind the 2016 decision to grant security forces to grant the right to vote, and have pushed hard for the passage of a law decried by human rights groups that

⁴⁸⁶ Grewal / look up.

⁴⁸⁷ Interview with retired Colonel Major Mahmoud Mezoughi, Tunis, August 31 2017

punish speech denigrating the police and exempt security forces from liability if they use excessive force.⁴⁸⁸ Moreover, though intelligence sharing between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense has improved, old animosities linger. “There still remains a considerable amount of mistrust, particularly among senior military officers and members of the Ministry of Defense,” observed a source at an organization responsible for working with both ministries. “Mid-ranking and lower level officers tend to be more open to cross ministry collaboration and do not hold the same grudges. Still, I think it is going to take a long time for the relationship between the two ministries to get better.”⁴⁸⁹

Likewise, Tunisia’s economic ills, insecurity, and slow return of the old regime have created a sense of disillusionment with the fruits of the revolution among civilians and soldiers alike. “Honestly, I now would have preferred it if there had never been a revolution,” said a student present in Tunis during the Arab Spring. “Though I am grateful that we now have our political freedoms, under Ben Ali we lived as secure, inexpensive, peaceful life. Now there is much less security and far more inequality.”⁴⁹⁰

Two members of the Association for Retired Soldiers shared this sentiment:

During and after the revolution, we were proud of our rule and hopeful for the future of the country. Now, like much of the rest of the country, we are disappointed with the results of the revolution. Income inequality has

⁴⁸⁸ Global Voices, “In Tunisia’s ‘State of Emergency,’ a New Police Protection Law Could Allow More Abuse – With Impunity,” August 17 2017. <https://globalvoices.org/2017/08/17/in-tunisia-state-of-emergency-a-new-police-protection-law-could-allow-more-abuse-with-impunity/> <accessed October 11 2017>.

⁴⁸⁹ Interview with Senior International Organization Policy Advisor who did not wish to be named, Tunis, October 9 2017.

⁴⁹⁰ Interview with student of English literature who did not wish to be named, Tunis, September 26 2017.

increased, and if things continue as they are, we'll have one million unemployed 2020.⁴⁹¹

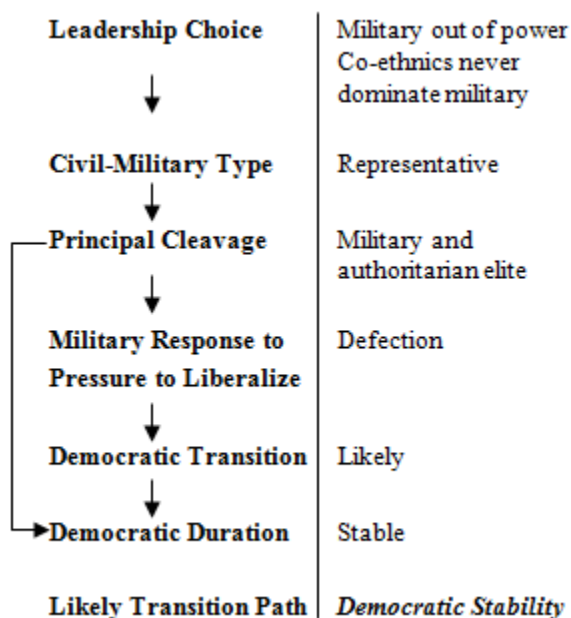
Nevertheless, Tunisian civil-military relations after the revolution largely confirm the argument that the absence of ethnic or political cleavages in regimes with representative civil-military relations tend to result in more stable democracies. By seeking to marginalize the military and instill in it a politically neutral corporate ethos, both Bourguiba and Ben Ali created military institutions ideally suited to democratic control. Free of substantial political divisions, despised by the internal security apparatus, but with limited ability or interest in repressing the population, the army stood to gain much as a result of democracy but did not have the will to seize power for itself. As a result, the Tunisian military only had minimal ties to the previous authoritarian regime, and has been a mostly willing partner in efforts to institutionalize civilian control of the armed forces by redressing the last vestiges of personalism. Moreover, the military's role in the revolution and expanding mandate over the country's security after years of silence have only reinforced the loyalty of Tunisia's soldiers to the country's democracy and enhanced the respect of Tunisia's citizens for men and women in uniform.

⁴⁹¹ Interview with members of the Tunisian Association of Retired Soldiers (Association Tunisienne des Militaires Retraités), Tunis, October 10 2017

7.7: Tracing the Mechanisms: Tunisia's Representative Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Stability

Tunisia, the final case considered in this dissertation, confirms the theory's arguments linking representative civil-military relations to democratic stability. In the empirical chapter, it was established that civilian led authoritarian regimes that do not practice ethnic stacking transition to democracy at 50 percent greater rates than those that do not, and that democracies that succeed such regimes last about twice as long. I argued that it is the lack of political or ethnic cleavages that drives these outcomes by making regimes with representative civil-military relations less likely to support the dictator in the face of pressure to liberalize. The causal logic supporting my argument is reproduced in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2 The Transitional Politics of Representative Civil-Military Relations



The analysis of Tunisia provides evidence that confirms this argument. Following a series of early coup attempts and the spread of military rule across the region, Bourguiba decided to limit the material and political power of the military. He banned the military from political participation of any kind, subordinated it to a civilian Defense Minister, and counterbalanced it with investments in Tunisia’s internal security apparatus. Ben Ali followed essentially the same policy, despite his military background subjecting the army to even more stringent monitoring by the police. Without ethnic divisions to exploit, these decisions forged representative civil-military relations.

The resulting cleavages were distinct from most other nations in the region. On the one hand, the military’s marginalization succeeded in rendering it uninterested and

incapable of seizing power. After Bourguiba's reforms, Tunisia experienced only one coup attempt that was devised and implemented the internal security apparatus to replace the nation's ailing leader. Moreover, the military's marginalization did not preclude its willing participation in the relatively few instances in which it was called upon to assist the internal security services to maintain order. Yet, by investing so heavily in the police and intelligence services to serve the regime's central coercive functions, the Defense Ministry became riven by institutional and personal rivalries with the Interior Ministry, and, by extension, the regime. The cleavages between the army and the rest of the authoritarian coercive apparatus were particularly acute during the Ben Ali regime in the aftermath of Barraket Essahel affair.

These cleavages proved the Ben Ali regime's downfall. At precisely the moment when a crackdown by the military on civilian protestors might have saved the regime, the Tunisian armed forces found itself unwilling, incapable and ultimately uninterested in turning its guns on the opposition. Unlike previous episodes of political unrest, the 2010 and 2011 uprisings were unprecedented in their scope, scale, and explicit demands for the end of the dictatorship. The Tunisian military did not disobey direct orders to shoot on protestors, but it did stand idly by as their colleagues in the internal security apparatus were attacked, protected protestors from being attacked, and, when it was clear the regime was crumbling, engaged the remaining elements of the police forces that remained loyal.

The Tunisian military's lack of willingness to oppress demonstrators was crucial in ending the authoritarian regime, and led to the country's transition to democracy. After

Ben Ali's flight, the Tunisian military emerged as the hero of the revolution. Yet its previous political marginalization and ethos of corporate neutrality rendered it uninterested in seizing power for itself despite some calls to do so. A transitional council made up entirely of civilians was put into place, who guided the country into a multiparty democracy in which the military remained politically neutral and subordinate to civilian control. With neither ethnic nor political ties to the authoritarian elite, the military had little to lose from the transition and, by elevating its status next to the internal security apparatus, much to gain.

Finally, the same lack factors that inhibited the military from intervening during its authoritarian days have contributed to Tunisia's democratic stability. Despite a poor economy and a fragile security environment, the Tunisian military resisted calls by members of the old elite for a coup, helping to ensure that the country did not meet the same fate as Egypt. Moreover, the replacement of the old guard, the easing of restrictions of freedoms of speech, increased budgets, and transitional justice for members of the army that were caught up in the Barraket Essahel affair have reinforced the principals of civilian control and served the army's institutional interests.

Like the regimes of Nigeria and Sudan, the Tunisian case confirms the degree to which present security institutions are shaped by decisions of the past. Tunisia's dictators did not have the stability of Tunisia's democratic institutions in mind when they made decisions to politically marginalize the armed forces. Nevertheless, the same ethos of corporate neutrality, lack of use as an instrument of authoritarian repression, and counterbalancing that prevented the Tunisian armed forces from threatening their rule

have also rendered the army an ideal democratic civil servant. Most countries in Africa have not been so fortunate.

It is evident that the cases confirm this project's argument concerning how democratic outcomes are shaped by how dictators choose to manage their armies. Though each chapter has served principally to illustrate that the causal mechanisms internal to each case is constituent with the causal logic of the theory, the analysis presented here can benefit from a more systematic comparison between all three cases. It is to this task, as well as to some concluding thoughts, to which this enterprise now turns.

Chapter 8

Transforming Authoritarian Armies into Democratic Ones: Conclusions, Recommendations, and Further Questions

So far, the quantitative and qualitative evidence in favor of this project's argument has been mostly presented separately. The quantitative empirical chapter demonstrated support for the argument that military regimes, dictatorships with ethnic civil-military relations and those with representative civil-military relations tend to transition in and out of democratic rule through different pathways. The cases treated in far greater detail the causal mechanisms through which these varying outcomes are achieved, but only compared divergent outcomes and causal mechanisms in passing. The first task of this final chapter will be to briefly present the evidence used in this dissertation in a comparative fashion in order to arrive at a more integrated understanding of this project's theory.

Next, this chapter discusses the policy recommendations. Four main insights are discussed. First, I follow a long line of Africanist scholarship in arguing that investments in military capabilities have little bearing on democratization outcomes. Second, I argue for an approach to foster democratization tailored to the types of challenges, repressive capacities, and institutional histories of each civil-military relations identified in this dissertation. Third, I observe that due to the principally domestic and sensitive nature of these civil-military relation types, the ability of international actors to foster constructive change is limited. Nevertheless, I argue, fourth, that the international community could be

doing far more to give African nations positive incentives to foster more meritocratic security institutions.

The final section meditates on this project's shortcomings. Though providing strong evidence that military regimes and ethnic stacking have had significant influence on political transitions over the past fifty years, the project does not consider how this influence might have changed over time. The decline of military rule and the democratization of most authoritarian regimes with representative armies means that ethnic stacking remains perhaps the principal source of resistance to democratization within Africa's armies. Future research should more closely investigate cases where civilian-led authoritarian regimes with ethnically stacked armies democratize, as well as how differences in ethnic representation along lines of rank and within parallel military institutions affect transitional politics. An additional topic worthy of further investigation concerns how the civil-military relations considered in this dissertation affect the length and resilience of authoritarian rule.

8.1: Comparative Conclusions

This project began its argument with the observation that authoritarian leaders in Africa have made varying choices concerning how to manage their armies. The authoritarian civil-military relations of Nigeria, Sudan, and Tunisia each represent very different series of choices that in turn led to divergent transitional pathways. Here, I compare how authoritarian civil-military relationships in each country created different

cleavages within the army and between the army and the state, and how these cleavages generated or precluded opportunities for political transition.

In Nigeria, the choice made by military officers who seized power was military rule. This choice was in part a product of the political experience and ambitions officers had gained during Nigeria's previous military regime, which ruled the country from 1966 until 1979. In 1983, a clique of officers surrounding General Ibrahim Babangida took Nigeria's struggles with civilian rule as an opportunity to act on their political aspirations. During Nigeria's second period of military rule which lasted until 1999, a new generation of officers ruled, served as ministers, governed states and maintained effective veto power over key policy decisions. The problem of how to concentrate power and control violence was solved by an attempt at fusion between the army and the state.

Sudan likewise inherited a history of previous military rule when Colonel Omar al-Bashir seized power in 1989. However, the 1989 coup was not just the work of ambitious military officers, but of an Islamist political party that had infiltrated the military and sought deeper reforms of state institutions. The military junta was disbanded shortly after the coup, and Bashir was appointed as party leader and civilian president. Ultimately, Bashir leveraged his status as both head of party and military officer to cultivate a system of personalized dictatorship. Bashir relies on a tight-knit group of Northern riverine Arab co-ethnics to run the army and also directly controls a constellation of predominantly Arab militias and other parallel security institutions. The choice of authoritarian leaders in Sudan was thus to create a civilian-led government with an ethnic army.

In Tunisia, both Habib Bourguiba and Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali also cultivated personalist dictatorships in which each ruled as a civilian head of state. Yet, due to Tunisia's status as an overwhelmingly Arab nation, they did not practice ethnic stacking. Instead, both dictators politically marginalized the army by subordinating it to a civilian defense minister and forbade soldiers from voting, party membership, or political association. In lieu of the regular army, the Tunisian regime invested heavily in police, intelligence, and paramilitary forces to serve as the regime's main instruments of coercion. The choice of authoritarian leaders in Tunisia was a civilian led regime with a representative army.

The result of these choices was to foster different civil-military cleavages, both within the army itself and between the army and the regime. In Nigeria, military rule created cleavages between the ruling class of officers from the country's North and Middle Belt and the rest of the officer corps serving in more traditional capacities. Most members of this ruling class sought and competed against one another for power, with little regard to how the wealth they accumulated and the steps they took assure their rule affected the military's corporate unity. As a result of frequent purges and the steady deterioration of the Nigerian army's institutional integrity, their actions were resented by more traditional officers and soldiers serving in subaltern roles. The divide between traditional and praetorian officers Nigeria experienced under military rule is consistent with this project's argument concerning the principal cleavages in military regimes.

Like other civilian-ruled dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies, the principal civil-military cleavages in Sudan fell along ethnic lines. Unlike in Nigeria, there

existed no praetorian class of soldiers who harbored political ambitions and served in extensive political roles. Instead, soldiers were more focused on the traditional military mandate of maintaining external defense and internal order, as so defined by the authoritarian leadership. In Sudan, the conflicts between the center and the periphery meant that security institutions were structured, and the military's mandate defined, along principally ethnic lines. While Sudan's Arab-dominated regular army worked with ethnic militia groups to wage war first in the South and then in the West, an even smaller subgroup of riverine Arab elite maintained an overwhelming grip on Sudan's state institutions, including top military posts. The Sudanese case likewise confirms this project's argument that the principal civil-military cleavage in regimes with ethnic civil-military relations is between co-ethnic and non-ethnic soldiers and regime elites.

In Tunisia, the principal civil-military cleavage that emerged was between the authoritarian regime and the army. As a result of the Tunisian military's political marginalization and lack of incorporation into Tunisia's internal security apparatus, the army adopted a neutral corporate identity apart from the regime. Institutionally forbidden from political roles of any kind and unbound through ties of co-ethnicity to authoritarian elites, Tunisia's soldiers defined their loyalty to state institutions and Tunisian citizens above all else. The Tunisian case confirms this dissertation's argument that the principal cleavages in authoritarian regimes with representative militaries fall along neither political nor ethnic lines.

These cleavages, in turn, were crucial to shaping military responses at critical junctures, when the regimes under which they served came under pressure to foster

democratic reforms. In Nigeria, a stagnant economy, calls for liberalization from international actors in the aftermath of the Cold War, and opposition from a resurgent civil society placed considerable pressure on military rulers to allow democratization in the early 1990s. The military fractured in response to this pressure. Much of the officer corps serving in traditional roles favored democratization, while opinions were more divided among the ruling class of officers who governed the country. Some believed a transition to democracy best served the military's corporate interests. Others were opposed to a transition at any cost, or viewed the political instability caused by the pressure to liberalize as a potential opportunity to seize power for themselves.

As a result, Nigeria experienced divergent transition outcomes. The annulment of the 1993 election results forced Babangida's resignation because he was caught between pro-democracy officers who were furious with him and anti-democratization officers who smelled opportunity. After forcing Babangida's resignation, Sani Abacha and other praetorian officers launched a coup to seize control of Nigeria's state institutions from an interim government after the pro-democracy officers proved unwilling to organize a coup of their own. The result was a blocked democratic transition. However, upon Abacha's death in 1998, Nigeria's pro-democracy officers gained the upper hand. Either because Abacha was poisoned or because he died of natural causes, by 1999 military rule had so devastated the military as an institution that it was clear there was little appetite to stay in power. Nigeria's remaining senior officers engineered a swift transition to democracy.

In Sudan, ongoing civil war meant that the opposition was more internally divided, yet its government nevertheless faced intense pressure to liberalize from other

political parties, protests, and calls for a peaceful solution as the north-south conflict became increasingly unwinnable. The external pressures for Sudanese liberalization were particularly acute in the aftermath of the conflict in Darfur and the imposition of international sanctions. Nevertheless, the bulk of Sudan's regular military and parallel armed forces remained supportive of continued authoritarian rule and loyal to Bashir. For the regular army, the prospect of political liberalization was a threat to the continued domination of Arab elite within its ranks. For parallel security institutions, ethnic conflict in peripheral regions has become the principal means through which soldiers gain access to patronage and resources.

As a result, authoritarianism has endured in Sudan even as much of the rest of Africa has democratized. Despite losing half the country to southern separatists, international sanctions, and indictment by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, Sudan's army has remained steadfast in their support of Bashir. Bashir's policy of using Sudan's ethnically stacked security institutions to oppress the country's peripheral regions in order to keep the riverine elite's monopoly on power and resources intact has led him to become the longest-serving dictator in Sudan's history.

For Tunisia, the critical juncture came nearly entirely from internally organized opposition, as the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi led to millions into the streets on a scale the country had never seen. Though the international community eventually rallied behind the protestors, analysts and policymakers in capitals across the world were caught off guard and had not been actively pressing for reform. The scale of the protests and their demands for the end of Ben Ali's regime placed the Tunisian military in a

situation in which it had never been before. Faced with a choice of repressing the protestors or remaining neutral during increasingly tense confrontations between protestors and police, Tunisian soldiers stuck mostly to their mandate of protecting public buildings, allowed demonstrations to unfold, and even attacked police and paramilitary institutions loyal to the regime who were attempting repress protestors.

After Ben Ali fled the country, the army, who had become the country's central power broker, emphatically declared itself in support of the revolution and stood by as a civilian-led interim government transitioned the country to democracy. The Tunisian military's lack of interference in the creation of an interim government and in the process which led to elections is not surprising given the military's institutional history of political neutrality and solidarity with protestors and opposition groups. With neither the will to repress demonstrators nor the desire to rule, a transition to democracy was the overwhelming preference of Tunisian soldiers.

The outcomes in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia therefore confirm the causal mechanisms laid out in the argument section and the central tendencies observed in the empirical analysis. Like other countries who have experienced military rule, divisions between and among Nigeria's ruling class of officers and the rest of the army led to ambivalence in the face of popular protest and inconsistent democratization outcomes. Like the four fifths of countries with ethnic armies led by a civilian or personalist dictator, Sudan's armies and parallel military institutions have been more unified in their support for authoritarian rule, more ruthless in their willingness to fight wars and repress civilians, and have therefore effectively vetoed the possibility of a democratic transition.

And like the four-fifths of countries with civilian dictators and representative armies, the Tunisian military defected from the dictator in a case in which the widespread repression of mass protest would likely have been the only action that could possibly have saved the regime.

Finally, the historical legacy of each authoritarian army and how leaders confronted these legacies have impacted the quality and the length of the democratic regimes that followed, if they followed. The length of Nigerian democracy, having lasted nearly two decades, is an exception to the rule that democracies that succeed military regimes tend not to consolidate. Yet a close reading of the Nigerian case also suggests reasons that the Nigerian democratic experiment has not yet ended in failure at the hands of a military coup for reasons that are largely consistent with this project's argument. Unlike Nigeria's brief transition to democracy in 1979, the 1999 transition changed not only the fundamental character of the state, but also that of the army. The politicized class of officers, who had been responsible for every successful coup in Nigeria's history dating back to 1966 were voluntarily or involuntarily retired, many having themselves gone into careers in government or the private sector; the top levels of the army were re-balanced to reflect a more even geographic representation of the country; and Nigeria's first post-democracy president himself was a widely respected former military head of state. Though the issue demands further investigation, it is unlikely that most armies in Africa have undergone such radical change in the aftermath of military rule.

For Sudan, enduring authoritarianism means that it is only possible to speculate on the kind of democratic settlement that could emerge. For the moment, Bashir's

personalist control over Sudan's political system and the continued dominance of Sudan by the Arab, riverine elite in Sudan's government and in her armed forces make democratization unlikely save as a result of outside intervention or internecine conflict. Bashir's exile, death, or other event that ruptures Sudan's current civil-military configuration is likely Sudan's best hope at democratic transition and consolidation. Ironically, a democratic transition would have been a more probable outcome had Hassan al-Turabi emerged as Sudan's undisputed leader after his confrontation with Bashir. Turabi's vision of an Islamist state that included non-riverine and non-Arab groups might have laid the foundation for democracy, particularly after the secession of the South from Sudan in 2011. Whether or not a democratic Sudan would follow this dissertation's predictions that democracies that follow autocracies with ethnic armies are moderately likely to last and most likely to die from coups by co-ethnic officers affiliated with the former regime is probable but impossible to verify.

Though Tunisia's democracy is still young, the country's experience nevertheless confirms this project's argument that democracies that succeed authoritarian regimes with representative armies are likely to last far longer than average. Having never tasted power and with close to fifty years since soldiers last attempted a coup, the Tunisian military chose not to play an active role in the transition process. Absent political ties, ethnic loyalties to the former authoritarian regime or the will to repress Tunisia's population, the Tunisian military has little incentive to intervene to upend the country's democracy. Like some representative armies, the Tunisian military actively gained due to its role in the revolution, becoming the country's most well-respected security institution and receiving

increases in salaries and equipment. The restoration of the army's status relative to the much-feared internal security apparatus further dampens the possibility that security forces will attempt or succeed in overturning Tunisia's nascent democratic institutions. Tunisia's civil-military institutions are essential to understanding why Tunisia remains the only country to have consolidated its democracy in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, despite the poor economic growth and simmering conflict that continues to buffet the region.

Both the qualitative and quantitative evidence, then, supports the argument of this dissertation. Authoritarian civil-military relations, by defining the cleavages that exist between the army and the state and within the army itself, profoundly influence democratization outcomes. When armies seize power for themselves, soldiers who serve as rulers compete amongst themselves for control of the state, in opposition to traditional soldiers who serve as subjects and are torn between their desire to respect the chain of command and desire to leave power to protect the military's institutional integrity. Historically, these cleavages have given military rulers a reasonable likelihood of transitioning to democracy but a poor likelihood of sustaining it. When civilian or personalist dictators stack their armed forces with co-ethnic clients, their privileges, benefits and even status as soldiers depends upon the continuation of authoritarian rule. Under these circumstances, armies become much more likely to be willingly used as instruments of oppression and veto the possibility of democratization. Civilian-led authoritarian regimes who do not stack their armies with co-ethnics tend to be stable, but at the cost of the military's will to repress. In the face of mass popular protest, the

defection of the military from these regimes most often leads to democracies that are uncommonly robust and durable.

8.2: Policy Recommendations

The argument presented here is not just meant to inform the historical understanding of African civil-military relations. Despite the fact that this study concludes that civil-military institutions have an important, path dependent influence on processes of political transition and change, the findings do not necessarily privilege structure over agency. If anything, this dissertation has equally sought to highlight the importance of choices made by individuals, be they authoritarian elites considering how to structure their relations with their armies or citizens choosing to organize for the sake of political freedom. This dissertation's findings from Nigeria, where officials from inside and outside the military helped break the military's cycle of intervention by forcing changes in military recruitment, leadership, and incentive structure, is illustrative of the fact that the past does not always predict the future and that probability is not destiny.

In fact, one of the central motivations behind this study was to contribute to contemporary policy debates concerning how to foster security institutions supportive of democratic transitions and that refrain from political interference in emerging democracies. The pivotal role that Africa's military institutions play in this process has historically been and continues to be woefully understudied. Without a better

understanding of the historical origins and political incentives faced by the continent's men and women in uniform, efforts to make Africa's armies more loyal to the states that they serve and better able to fulfill their mission will fall short. Here, then, are four practical implications of this project for armies and governments in Africa and for their partners across the world:

- 1) Improving military capacity will not foster democracy. This study finds, along with a long tradition of Africanist scholarship, that efforts to improve military professionalization via enhancing the capacity of the armed forces to commit and manage violence is unlikely to pay democratic dividends. The mission of the U.S. and other international partners to train, equip, and supply partner militaries in Africa and elsewhere may have sound strategic logic and may help partners manage domestic threats. But it is abundantly clear from this study that these missions will do little to foster political stability by preventing military seizures of power or authoritarian elites from using soldiers and other security forces as tools for repression and political violence. Too often it is assumed, mostly by policymakers and military officers but also at times by scholars, that efforts to improve the capacity of the armed forces under the general rubric of "professionalism" will somehow reduce a soldier's appetite for power or lessen her willingness to kill civilians on behalf of the regime. Because professionalism has long led scholars and policymakers to conflate

powerful armies with loyal ones, it is past time to heed Peter Feaver's advice and cast the concept aside.⁴⁹²

- 2) Democratic reformers need to vary their approach depending on the nature of a country's civil-military relations. An understanding of African military history and politics can help foster the kind of democratic reform to which policymakers often pay lip service. One of the central findings of this study is that the institutional legacies of African militaries are not all the same, and in fact have quite striking effects on a country's probabilities, prospects and pathways to consolidated democracy. The analysis presented here therefore suggests that the variation of institutional legacies within African armies merits a variation in approaches to those interested in fostering peaceful democratic change. The approach that elites, protestors, the international community, and democracy advocates take towards getting the military to support democracy ought to vary depending on whether the military ruled or did not, and whether the armed forces experienced ethnic stacking or not.

For authoritarian regimes with representative armies, reformers can be reasonably assured that mass protest will place sufficient pressure on military leaders to lead to democracy. A lack of ethnic ties or political role leads such armies to define themselves apart from the regime, lessening their will to

⁴⁹² See Peter Feaver, "Civil-Military Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 211-241.

repress on its behalf. Provided that protests are sufficiently widespread that they cannot be contained by non-military or paramilitary forces, the result will usually be that the army chooses to defect, or at least that the army is unwilling to deploy the level of violence necessary to sustain the regime. Moreover, representative armies are accustomed to their roles as civil servants tend to not maintain ties to political elites and, as we saw in Tunisia, can stand to benefit in terms of institutional resources and social prestige that result from their role in leading to democratic change. Therefore, once democracy occurs, it is likely to consolidate.

As a result, a bottom-up approach to democratization is likely to be effective. Local opposition groups should attempt to organize coalitions that peacefully protest for greater political freedoms, and the U.S. and its regional and international partners should support such groups. They also ought to view their country's army as an ally, and not an opponent, in achieving their goals of democratic reform. Though the widespread claims that army chief of staff Rachid al-Ammar refused orders to fire on protestors were false, they may have helped reinforce the solidarity between Tunisia's armies and her citizens at a critical moment during the revolution.

For military rulers, internal and external pressure will place pressure on the regime to reform, but is not in and of itself sufficient to lead to democratic consolidation. Mass protest and international sanction are also effective tools

against military regimes. Military rulers tend to become divided at critical junctures, and more often than not these divisions create incentives for democratic reform. The central challenge reformers face in confronting military regimes lies not so much in forcing the regime to cede power, but in ensuring that soldiers refrain from political interference after they have returned to the barracks. Historically, the prospects for survival of a democracy succeeding military rule are dim. For military regimes, internal and external pressure is best characterized as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for lasting democratic reform.

Fortunately, the divisions between the traditional and the ruling class of soldiers that characterize military regimes, as well as the Nigerian case, suggest a potential strategy that opposition forces ought to adopt in confronting military regimes. The strategy involves working with officers in the army who favor democratization to marginalize their praetorian colleagues. Reformers must realize that they are not negotiating with a unified body, and that the key obstacle to lasting democratization is not the majority of soldiers who serve in traditional roles, but the faction of the army that seeks and covets power. In negotiating the terms of the transition, reformers will be best served by undertaking a strategy that increases the influence of the traditional faction and disadvantages the praetorian faction. As experience from the Nigerian case indicates, reforms that the ruling class of soldiers might appear violently opposed to – such as the mass retirement of officers

serving in previous political roles and efforts to even the regional and ethnic balance of the armed forces – are actually likely to be welcomed by most soldiers. Democratic reformers may therefore have more leverage in negotiating with military regimes than they often realize, particularly in the aftermath of a political transition.

Authoritarian regimes with ethnically-stacked armies are unlikely to be responsive to external pressure and will most often meet mass protest with repression. For ethnically stacked armies led by civilian dictators, the response to political pressure is to unite behind the authoritarian regime. As clients who owe their livelihoods to the dictators they serve and who are often used as instruments of violence, soldiers in ethnic armies stand to lose the most as a result of a transition and so are more likely to support the status quo at whatever cost. This means that not only might external pressure and popular resistance fail to force the army to support regime change, but could even provoke a violent response that means the state becomes more repressive and leads to widespread, intractable conflict. Because they are likely to be met with violence, bottom up protests against civilian dictatorships with ethnically stacked armies is risky.

Thus, would-be reformers are caught between Scylla of empty engagement with the regime and Charybdis of an often-non-credible threat of hard intervention. Sudan's experience here is instructive. Despite the enforcement

of international sanctions, Sudan's territory is too large and its politics too unstable for the international community to seriously contemplate military options that might cause Sudan's armies to rethink their support of the regime. Reformers are thus left with few good options, and the best opportunity for democratization is likely to come only once Bashir leaves power.

- 3) The international community's ability to foster democratic change by working through or with military institutions in other countries is limited. The analysis presented in this dissertation suggests that democratic reform of political and military institutions is rarely externally driven, but is led internally, by coalitions of moderates within authoritarian regimes and by civilians willing to risk fire and fury for a more democratic future. Most often these actors, and not outside forces, negotiate the terms of a transition and determine the nature of a country's political institutions, organizations, and parties. The centrality and sensitivity of the army's mission as the guarantor of the state's monopoly on violence means that the leverage of outside actors is likely to be limited except in the most extreme of circumstances, such as cases where international actors can credibly threaten military intervention or the military is dependent on U.S. military assistance for a substantial portion of its budget and cannot seek another great power patron.

Cases such as Sudan make abundantly clear the constraints the U.S. and the international community's face in trying to impose democracy from above.

Policies of military intervention or covert action may succeed in toppling authoritarian regimes, but substantive democracy is effectively impossible without the right political conditions. For now, the best the United States and allied countries can do is continue with the present policy and perhaps attempt to encourage the Sudanese government to adopt more meritocratic recruitment practices, under the argument that the adoption of such policies is likely to be stabilizing, both for the dictatorship but also, over the long term, for a future democracy.

- 4) The U.S. and the international community could be doing far more to foster meritocratic security institutions that embrace democratic norms. The U.S. cannot foster change where the conditions for it do not exist, but it can and should do more to nudge its partner militaries to undertake more meritocratic recruitment practices and assist armies who already adopt such practices. Like U.S. development aid, much of U.S. military assistance relations are products of longstanding strategic relationships, such as that between the United States and Israel, or ad-hoc responses to immediate crises, such as U.S. military cooperation with Niger to confront terrorism in the Sahel. Nothing is going to change the fact that most of U.S. security assistance relationships serve strategic purposes.

Nevertheless, U.S. security assistance partners, such as armies in Senegal and Tunisia, receive little recognition for the apolitical role of their armies,

whereas repressive strategic allies such as the armies of Egypt and Ethiopia are rewarded with lavish security assistance contracts. Though Leahy laws exist in practice to prevent the U.S. from lending military hardware to regimes that engage in human rights abuse, these laws are frequently bypassed and ignored.

One modest way to address these perverse incentives would be to actively reward countries who foster meritocratic security institutions that are apolitical and nationally representative. A program like the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation, which provides development assistance to countries who meet minimum criteria of governance, could be set up to acknowledge developing countries or other strategic partners with meritocratic security institutions. The program could reward such countries with military hardware, budget support, or specialized training programs suited to the country's needs, or even be used for non-military purposes.

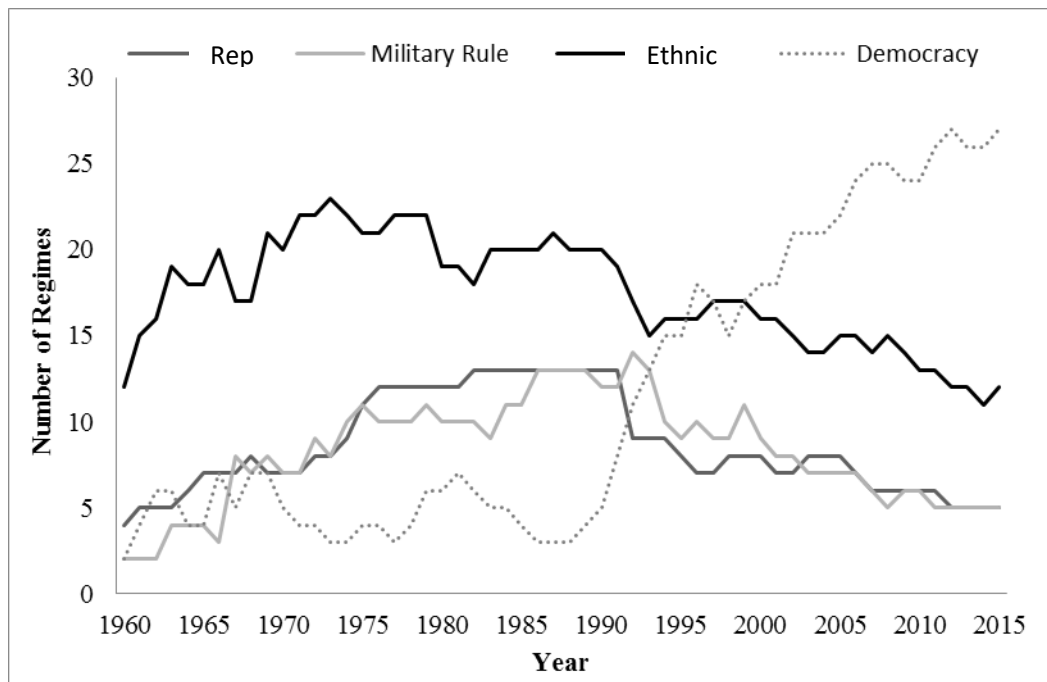
8.3: Implications for Future Inquiry

The goal of this project was to provide an answer to the question of why soldiers in Africa are so fickle in their support of democratic change. Though it is my hope that the analysis presented in this dissertation succeeds in providing novel insight, the process of conducting the research for this project has rendered me painfully aware of this study's

limits. Perhaps the most important conclusion to be drawn is that there remain many unanswered questions and thus, many topics at the nexus of African armies and African politics that merit further investigation. I end with a meditation on five of this study's more serious shortcomings and suggestions for further research.

First, the study provides strong evidence that between 1960 and 2015, the nature of authoritarian civil-military relations impact democratic transition outcomes and consolidation possibilities. However, an extensive investigation of whether these effects have changed substantially within the time frame analyzed is beyond this project's scope. As Figure 1 indicates, the overall number of authoritarian regimes have declined since the early 1990s, the civilian led regimes with ethnic stacking appear most resilient. These declines illustrate the importance of changes in both the international and domestic political context, and suggest that factors other than the study variables have contributed to this decline. More work is needed to examine interactions between these factors and the authoritarian civil-military relations.

Figure 8.1: Democratization Outcomes of African Armed Forces Under Authoritarianism, 1960-2015



Sources: Marshall, Jagers, and Gurr, “Polity IV Project”; Geddes, Wright and Frantz, “Authoritarian Breakdown.”

Second, with the decline of military regimes and the successful democratization of most regimes with representative armed forces, perhaps the most pressing unexplored implication of this dissertation is the need to better understand how to confront regimes with ethnically stacked armies. Non-military led authoritarian regimes that practice ethnic stacking are now the most common form of authoritarian civil-military relation in Africa, in no small part because they have proven so resilient to pressures to democratize. More research is needed to understand if and when there are circumstances under which regimes with ethnically stacked military institutions can be coaxed into democratic

reform. The analysis most suited for such a project would be single case studies or structured comparisons including the few countries with civilian led authoritarian regimes who have successfully democratized. In Africa, the only such countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Kenya and Comoros, meaning large-n analysis would be fruitless with such a small sample size.

Third, there is an additional need to understand more about the nature of ethnic stacking and how it influences civil-military relations. The data used for this dissertation draws on previous work to define ethnic stacking as either present or absent depending on whether the regime leadership recruits co-ethnics into the officer corps or other parallel military institutions. In reality, it is probable that there exists substantial variation in transitional outcomes dependent not just on the practice of ethnic stacking itself, but on other differences in the nature of ethnic representation within a country's security forces. Future work should seek to examine these differences on outcomes such as military intervention, democratization, authoritarian durability, and military willingness to oppress conditional on 1) variance in ethnic representation within security institutions, either as a percentage of over or under-representation of various ethnic groups or differentiating between cases where certain ethnic groups are completely excluded or merely marginalized; 2) cases where ethnic stacking or imbalances are present either in the army, parallel military institutions, or both - the results here may be particularly revealing in light of recent research suggesting that parallel military institutions improve

authoritarian resilience;⁴⁹³ and 3) differences in ethnic representation between the officer corps and rank-and-file soldiers. These differences may be particularly critical, because there is considerable qualitative evidence to support the idea that generational cleavages between high and low-ranking officers and between officers and enlisted men influence military responses to external pressures and propensities to intervene.⁴⁹⁴ So far, such efforts have been hampered by a lack of available data.

Fourth, ethnic stacking is not the only type of authoritarian civil-military relation in need of further investigation. In the words of a recent article, “our knowledge of military regimes is much less coherent than often thought.”⁴⁹⁵ This study has provided some clarity, providing additional evidence that regimes where the military rules as an institution, and not those ruled by a personalist military strongman, appear to have distinct and complex patterns of democratization. More research is needed to investigate whether military regimes, particularly in Africa, experience additional outcomes that significantly differ from other kinds of authoritarian regimes, such as conflict, economic growth and equality, and authoritarian durability. Especially valuable would be a more systematic attempt to explain the variation in democratic transition outcomes among military regimes. The evidence from Nigeria tentatively suggests that democratic

⁴⁹³ Erica De Bruin, “Preventing Coups d’état: How Counterbalancing Works,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2017), 0022002717692652.

⁴⁹⁴ See, for example, Robin Luckham, *The Nigerian Military a Sociological Analysis of Authority & Revolt 1960-1967* (CUP Archive, 1971).

⁴⁹⁵ Nam Kyu Kim and Alex M. Kroeger. "Regime and leader instability under two forms of military rule." *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 1 (2017), pp. 3-37.

transitions in military regimes depends on whether praetorian or traditional officers exert greater control over the junta at critical junctures.

Finally, the scope of this dissertation was limited to the role of authoritarian civil-military relations on the probability of democratic transition and the duration of emerging democratic regimes. It did not examine the equally important and timely topic of the role of civil-military relations on authoritarian durability. Table 1, culled from this dissertation's dataset, suggests that the typology advanced by this project is also an important factor in predicting the length of authoritarian rule. Unsurprisingly, military regimes appear to be the least durable civil-military relation type, with the splits between and among praetorian and non-praetorian officers fairly quickly leading to democracy or other forms of authoritarian civil-military relations. Non-military led regimes with ethnic stacking appear to last around an average length of time, likely a function of the tendency of ethnic competition for control of the state and the state's coercive apparatus. Finally, at an average of thirty-five years, authoritarian regimes with representative military institutions last the longest, highlighting the potential trade-off between authoritarian stability and stable democratic consolidation. These are potentially important theoretical insights with practical implications here that deserve far more detailed examination than given here.

Table 8.1: Average Duration of Authoritarian Regime by Civil-Military Relation Type

<u>Authoritarian CMR</u>	<u>Average Duration (yrs)</u>
Military	17
Ethnic	22
Representative	35
<i>Average</i>	23

Above all, this study reinforces the Clausewitzian notion that militaries are political entities. The objective control so idolized by Huntington is not birthed organically, but comes about as a result of choices made by military officials and senior policymakers to pursue strategies that limit military interference and maximize authoritarian control over a country's means of violence. By understanding something of how the political allegiances of Africans in uniform are influenced by these choices, the veil shrouding the face of the military Janus is lifted. Instead of wondering at the mercurial decisiveness of military action in favor or against democracy, we find that these actions are comprehensible, predictable, and profoundly influenced by the institutional ties that bind soldiers to one another and to the nations they serve.

Appendix A. List of Persons Interviewed

Nigerian Fieldwork

NAME	AFFILIATION	DATE	LOCATION
Elor Nkweurem	PhD Candidate, Johns Hopkins University	Apr 2016	Washington, DC
Peter Lewis	Associate Dean, Johns Hopkins University	Apr 2016	Washington, DC
Matthew Page	Foreign Affairs Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations	Apr 2016	Washington, DC
Paul Lubeck	Director of African Studies, Johns Hopkins University	Apr 2016	Washington, DC
Dapo Olorunyomi	Reporter, Premium Times	May 2016	Silver Spring, MD
Amb Princeton Lyman	Special Advisor to the President, U.S. Institute of Peace	May 2016	Washington, DC
Darren Kew	Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts Boston	May 2016	Phone Interview
Olu Jacobs	Special Advisor, Nigerian Minister of State for Solid Mines and Minerals	May 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Gen. Kola Bakare	Brigadier General, Nigerian Army and Faculty, Nigerian National War College	May 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Idayat Hassan	Director, Center for Democracy and Development	May 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Keleche Iwuamade	Fellow, Institute for Innovations in Development	May 2016	Abuja, Nigeria

Com Chinedu Udeh	Navy Commodore and Faculty, Nigerian National Defence College	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Com Ayo Ayobanjo	Air Force Commodore and Faculty, Nigerian National Defence College	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Ed Chukwu	Research Fellow, Nigerian National Defense College	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Jackie Farris	Director General, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Dubem Onyia	Board Member, Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Chido Onumah	Journalist and Democracy Advocate	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Maj. Sunny Stevens	Staff Officer, Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Nigerian National Security Advisor	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Alwan Abdussalam	Principal Staff Officer, Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Nigerian National Security Advisor	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Maj. Gen. Regis Nicholas	Major General and Chief of Civil-Military Affairs, Nigerian Army	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Okey Onyejekwe	Special Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Solid Minerals Development	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Jibrin Ibrahim	Senior Fellow, Center for Democracy and Development	June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Chief Olusegun Obasanjo	Former President, Federal Republic of Nigeria	June 2016	Abeokuta, Nigeria
Maj. Gen. Biodun Role (rtd)	Retired Major General, Nigerian Army	June 2016	Lagos, Nigeria

Stella Ahunanya	Senior Lecturer, Nigerian Army School of Finance and Administration	June 2016	Lagos, Nigeria
Maj. Gen. Olusegun Lartey (Rtd)	Retired Major General, Nigerian Army	June 2016	Lagos, Nigeria
Femi Falana	Barrister, Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria	June 2016	Lagos, Nigeria
Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Senior Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Retired Senior Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
U.S. Government Official Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Senior Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Private in the Nigerian Army Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		June 2016	Phone Interview
Lt. Gen. Azubuike Ihejerika (rtd)	Retired Lieutenant General and Former Army Chief of Staff	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Max Siollun	Historian and Author	July 2016	Phone Interview
Chom Bagu	Civil Society Activist and Former Director, Search for Common Ground	July 2016	Jos, Nigeria
Maj. Gen. (Rtd) John Temlong	Retired Major General, Nigerian Army	July 2016	Jos, Nigeria

Atiku Abubakar	Former Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigerian	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Brig. Gen. John Shagaya (rtd.)	Retired Brigadier General, Nigerian Army and Senator, Plateau State	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Musikilu Mojeed	Editor, Premium Times	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Babagana Kingibe	Former Vice-Presidential Candidate, Social Democratic Party	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Mohammed Haruna	Columnist, Daily Trust and Former Press Sectary, Abdulsalami Abubakar	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Cyriaque Agnekethom	Director of Regional Peacekeeping, ECOWAS	July 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
John Dara	Former Special Assistant, Nigerian Ministry of Defense	Aug 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Freedom Onouaha,	Research Fellow, National Defense College	Aug 2016	Abuja, Nigeria
Maj. Gen. Ishola Williams	Retired Major General, Nigerian Army	Aug 2016	Phone Interview

Tunisian Fieldwork

NAME	AFFILIATION	DATE	LOCATION
Karim Mezran	Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council	Nov 2016	Washington, DC
William Zartman	Professor Emeritus, Johns Hopkins University	Feb 2017	Washington, DC
Maj. Col. Mahmoud Mezoughi (ret)	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army and President, Association of Retired Military Officers	Aug 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Maj. Col. Habib Ouesalati (ret.)	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia

Maj. Col. Mohamed Ahmed (ret.)	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Maj. Col. Akyl Manai (ret.)	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Maj. Col. Hedi Kolsi (ret.)	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Sfax, Tunisia
Col. Mohsin Mighri (ret.)	Retired Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Faycal Cherif	Historian, University of Manouba	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Maj. Col. Mokhtar Ben Nassir (ret.)	Retired Major Colonel and Former Spokesperson, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Laryssa Chomiak	Director, Center of Maghreb Studies in Tunis	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Col. Lassaad Bouazzi (ret.)	Retired Colonel, Tunisian Navy	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Maj. Col. Moussa Khalfi	Retired Major Colonel, Tunisian Army	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Oussama Ayara	Professor of English Literature, University of Kairouan	Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Interview with Student of English Literature Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		Sep 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Tarek Kahlawi	Director, Tunisian Center for Strategic Studies and Advisor to Former President Moncef Marzouki	Oct 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Adnen Mansour	Spokesperson for Former President Moncef Marzouki	Oct 2017	Sousse, Tunisia
Interview with International Organization Senior Policy Advisor Who Did Not Wish to Be Named		Oct 2017	Tunis, Tunisia

Member of Association of Retired Soldiers Who Did Not Wish to Be Named	Oct 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Member of Association of Retired Soldiers Who Did Not Wish to Be Named	Oct 2017	Tunis, Tunisia
Military Officer Who Did Not Wish to Be Named	Oct 2017	Tunis, Tunisia

Appendix B. Data Appendix

Country	Regime Start	Regime End	CMR Type	Transition Outcome	Democracy End	Years Democratic
Algeria	1963	1992	Military	Blocked		
Algeria	1992	2004	Military	Democratic	ongoing	12
Angola	1975	1992	Represent ative	Blocked		
Benin	1961	1963	Military	Blocked		
Benin	1963	1965	Military	Blocked		
Benin	1965	1967	Military	Blocked		
Benin	1967	1969	Military	Blocked		
Benin	1969	1972	Military	Blocked		
Benin	1973	1992	Ethnic	Democratic	ongoing	24
Botswana	1966	2016	Represent ative	Founding Dem	ongoing	50
Burkina Faso	1960	1966	Ethnic	Blocked		
Burkina Faso	1966	1978	Ethnic	Democratic	1980	2
Burkina Faso	1980	1982	Military	Blocked		
Burkina Faso	1983	1987	Ethnic	Blocked		
Burkina Faso	1987	2002	Ethnic	Democratic	ongoing	14
Burundi	1962	1966	Ethnic	Blocked		
Burundi	1967	1987	Military	Blocked		
Burundi	1988	1994	Military	Democratic	1997	3
Burundi	1997	2006	Military	Democratic	2015	9
Burundi	2015	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Cameroon	1960	1983	Ethnic	Blocked		
Cape Verde	1975	1991	Represent ative	Democratic	ongoing	25

Central African Republic	1960	1965	Ethnic	Blocked		
Central African Republic	1966	1979	Ethnic	Blocked		
Central African Republic	1979	1981	Ethnic	Blocked		
Central African Republic	1982	1993	Military	Democratic	2003	10
Central African Republic	2003	2013	Ethnic	Blocked		
Chad	1960	1975	Ethnic	Blocked		
Chad	1975	1979	Military	Blocked		
Chad	1983	1990	Ethnic	Blocked		
Comoros	1976	1990	Ethnic	Democratic	1999	5
Comoros	1999	2002	Military	Democratic	ongoing	14
Congo Brazzaville	1961	1963	Ethnic	Blocked		
Congo Brazzaville	1963	1968	Ethnic	Blocked		
Congo Brazzaville	1969	1993	Military	Democratic	1997	4
Congo Brazzaville	1997	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Congo Kinshasa	1961	1997	Ethnic	Blocked		
Congo Kinshasa	1997	2006	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	10
Cote D'Ivoire	1961	1999	Ethnic	Blocked		
Cote D'Ivoire	1999	1999	Ethnic	Blocked		
Cote D'Ivoire	1999	2000	Military	Democratic	ongoing	16
Djibouti	1977	1999	Ethnic	Democratic	ongoing	17
Egypt	1953	2013	Military	Blocked		
Equatorial Guinea	1968	1979	Ethnic	Blocked		
Equatorial Guinea	1979	1993	Military	Blocked		

Eritrea	1993	2016	Representative	Founding Auth		
Ethiopia	1890	1974	Representative	Blocked		
Ethiopia	1974	1994	Military	Democratic	2005	10
Ethiopia	2005	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Gabon	1961	1990	Ethnic	Blocked		
Gambia	1966	1994	Ethnic	Blocked		
Gambia	1994	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Ghana	1960	1966	Ethnic	Blocked		
Ghana	1967	1969	Military	Democratic	1972	2
Ghana	1972	1979	Military	Democratic	1982	2
Ghana	1982	1996	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	20
Guinea	1959	1984	Ethnic	Blocked		
Guinea	1984	2010	Military	Democratic	ongoing	6
Guinea-Bissau	1974	1980	Representative	Blocked		
Guinea-Bissau	1981	1994	Representative	Democratic	1999	5
Guinea-Bissau	2003	2005	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	11
Kenya	1964	2002	Ethnic	Democratic	ongoing	14
Lesotho	1971	1986	Ethnic	Blocked		
Lesotho	1986	1993	Military	Democratic	ongoing	22
Liberia	1945	1980	Ethnic	Blocked		
Liberia	1981	1991	Ethnic	Blocked		
Liberia	1998	2016	Representative	Founding Dem	ongoing	18
Libya	1951	1969	Ethnic	Blocked		
Libya	1969	2011	Ethnic	Blocked		
Madagascar	1960	1972	Ethnic	Blocked		
Madagascar	1972	1975	Military	Blocked		

Madagascar	1975	1991	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	25
Malawi	1965	1995	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	21
Mali	1960	1968	Representative	Blocked		
Mali	1968	1991	Representative	Democratic	2012	21
Mali	2012	2013	Military	Democratic	ongoing	3
Mauritania	1960	1978	Ethnic	Blocked		
Mauritania	1979	2005	Ethnic	Blocked		
Mauritania	2005	2007	Military	Democratic	2008	1
Mauritania	2008	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Mauritius	1968	2016	Representative	Founding Dem	ongoing	48
Morocco	1956	2016	Representative	Founding Auth		
Mozambique	1976	1992	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	24
Namibia	1990	2016	Representative	Founding Dem	ongoing	26
Niger	1960	1974	Ethnic	Blocked		
Niger	1974	1992	Military	Democratic	1996	4
Niger	1996	1999	Military	Democratic	2009	10
Niger	2009	2011	Military	Democratic	ongoing	5
Nigeria	1967	1979	Military	Democratic	1983	4
Nigeria	1984	1993	Military	Blocked		
Nigeria	1993	1999	Military	Democratic	ongoing	17
Rwanda	1962	1973	Ethnic	Blocked		
Rwanda	1973	1995	Military	Blocked		
Senegal	1961	2000	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	16
Sierra Leone	1967	1968	Military	Democratic	1972	4

Sierra Leone	1972	1992	Ethnic	Blocked		
Sierra Leone	1992	1996	Military	Democratic	ongoing	20
Somalia	1969	1991	Ethnic	Blocked		
South Africa	1994	2016	Representative	Founding Dem	ongoing	22
Sudan	1958	1964	Military	Democratic	1969	5
Sudan	1969	1985	Ethnic	Blocked		
Sudan	1986	1989	Military	Democratic	1990	1
Sudan	1990	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Swaziland	1973	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Tanzania	1964	2015	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	1
Togo	1960	1963	Ethnic	Blocked		
Togo	1963	1993	Ethnic	Blocked		
Tunisia	1957	2011	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	5
Uganda	1966	1971	Ethnic	Blocked		
Uganda	1971	1979	Ethnic	Democratic	1984	5
Uganda	1985	2016	Ethnic	Founding Auth		
Zambia	1972	1991	Representative	Democratic	ongoing	25
Zimbabwe	1987	2009	Ethnic	Democratic	ongoing	7

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Biography

Nathaniel D.F. Allen was born in 1985 in Denver, CO, USA.

Nathaniel did his undergraduate work at Swarthmore College, PA, where he majored Political Science and Public Policy. During his undergraduate studies, he spent six months studying and working for the U.S. Agency for International Development in Mali, West Africa, where he wrote his senior thesis on the coordination of international aid donors. After graduating from Swarthmore in 2008, he worked for the U.S. House of Representatives and as a Research Analyst for NORC at the University of Chicago, where he conducted program and impact evaluations for foreign aid programs across the world. He spent his last year at NORC working in Morocco.

From 2012-2014, Nathaniel studied and receive a Masters Degree in Development Studies from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, where he serves as an associate editor of the school's *Journal for Public and International Affairs* and was a Harold W. Rosenthal Fellow at the State Department's Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations.

In 2014, Nathaniel began his PhD at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Study. His research has been supported by grants from the U.S. Institute of Peace, American University's Bridging the Gap, and has been published or is forthcoming in *International Negotiation*, *The Washington Quarterly*, and *Orbis*. He was a teaching assistant for Allison Berland's Comparative National Systems class and taught a self-designed course entitled The Soldier and the African State to undergraduates.