Military Rule

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Abstract

Military rule as a form of autocratic governance can mean either rule by a military strongman unconstrained by other officers or rule by a group of high-ranking officers who can limit the dictator's discretion. We label the latter form a military regime. Both military strongmen and military regimes are more likely to commit human rights abuses and become embroiled in civil wars than are civilian dictatorships. The behavior of strongmen diverges from that of more constrained military rulers in other areas, however. Military strongmen start more international wars than either military regimes or civilian dictators, perhaps because they have more reason to fear postouster exile, prison, or assassination. Fear of the future may also motivate their resistance to transition. Military strongmen are more often ousted by insurgency, popular uprising, or invasion than are military regimes or civilian dictators. Their tenures rarely end in democratization, whereas the opposite is true of military regimes.

MILITARY RULE

To defend against foreign and domestic enemies, governments organize military forces supplied with weapons and trained to use them. The concentration of weapons and training in militaries makes them potentially dangerous to those who pay their salaries. Since World War II, military officers have overthrown many civilian governments. Occasionally, they return power to civilians after a few days, but often they do not. Instead, they establish military rule, led by either a single military strongman or a junta representing the officer corps. Although military rule has become less common during the past two decades, the military still governed 19% of the world's countries in the first decade of the twenty-first century.[1]

Military rule entails governance by men who specialize in armed force and maintaining order rather than in political affairs. They are more accustomed to hierarchy and obedience than to bargaining. Because their training and experience differ from those of civilian politicians, military rulers sometimes make different policy choices than would civilian autocrats. The areas in which choices differ include war, response to opposition, and whether to end their own intervention in politics.

Despite their specialization in the use of force, military-led regimes are surprisingly fragile. When officers seize control of governments, they of course retain control over weapons and the men who use them. It thus seems that they would have special advantages in coercive capacity relative to other ruling groups: the abilities to deter opposition through threat of force and to use force to defeat opposition (Debs 2010, Svolik 2013). These apparent advantages, however, do not help military rulers to maintain power. Paradoxically, military regimes survive less long than democracies or other kinds of autocracy (Geddes 1999).

The fragility of military rule seems counterintuitive not only because of military regimes' advantage in coercion but also because military institutions have highly coherent, disciplined internal organization that might be expected to impede challenges from within, while coercion deters challenges from outside. As Finer (1976, pp. 5–9) noted long ago, military institutions are more intensively organized than parties. All individuals in the military go through training, and incentives to enforce the obedience of subordinates to superiors are built into every aspect of military institutions. If intensive hierarchical organization and enforced discipline help maintain communist party rule, as is often thought, then it would seem that military regimes should also benefit from these advantages. And yet, the empirical study of military rule shows that these incentives do not prevent the ultimate disobedience: rebellion against the regime's most senior officer. Leader ouster occurs more frequently in military regimes than in other forms of autocracy, and other officers carry out most of these ousters (Frantz & Ezrow 2011; Gandhi 2008, pp. 176–77). The frequency of both leader ouster and regime breakdown in military regimes indicates their frailty.

The behavior of military rulers challenges expectations in other ways as well. We might expect military dictators to use force against threats to their rule (Davenport 2007a). Yet, military regimes faced with economic crisis or active popular opposition often negotiate a return to the barracks instead (Geddes 1999). Prominent theories of dictatorship see autocratic political actors as agents of the rich (Acemoglu & Robinson 2006, Boix 2003), but military leaders do not routinely represent the rich or indeed the other societal interests that may ally with them (Nordlinger 1977).[2] The

[1] This figure comes from merging the Geddes et al. (2013) (GWF) and Cheibub et al. (2010) (CGV) datasets. Twenty-one of 150 countries have been ruled by autocracies labeled as military in the GWF and/or CGV datasets from 2000 to 2010. We discuss these datasets in more detail below.

[2] For examples of redistribution by military-led dictatorships, see case studies of Myanmar post-1962, Egypt post-1952, Peru 1968–1980, and Burkina Faso 1982–1987. Other military-led governments have of course protected the status quo.

relative autonomy of some military rulers from powerful societal interests and their ability to redistribute economic resources both within and between classes are inconsistent with models of autocracy as systems for maintaining the wealth of the currently rich. If military rulers have some autonomy from societal interests and pursue their own interests just as other political actors do, then theories of autocratic rule should take into account the distinctive interests of military actors. Even where they do not rule, the military is an important faction in authoritarian ruling alliances, as the Arab Spring makes apparent. Currently, most theories of autocracy ignore this gorilla in the room.

The main reason to examine military rule as a distinct subset of autocracies is that empirical studies show that officers who lead nations behave somewhat differently than nonofficers. This article summarizes what is currently known, thought, and theorized about military rule, how it ends, and how it affects the likelihood of democratization. We begin with a review of some foundational studies of military rule before turning to a definition and some basic distinctions. Different scholars have defined military rule in different ways, often without making the definition explicit, and these alternative definitions lead to contrasting conclusions in empirical studies. We show that definitional differences reconcile some of the apparently contradictory findings.

Subsequent sections review theories about what happens during military rule and the evidence available to support them, factors that contribute to the breakdown of military rule, and what happens after officers return to the barracks. Our review suggests that military rulers are more likely than civilian dictators to abuse their citizens and more likely to embroil them in civil war. Military strongmen, described more fully below, are more belligerent than either governments ruled by the military institution or civilian autocrats. Despite their propensity for using force against opponents, regimes led by the military institution tend to collapse peacefully and to be followed by democratization. Other forms of autocracy, including military strongmen, are more likely to be overthrown by force and followed by a new dictatorship.

FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES OF MILITARY RULE

Scholars began to analyze military rule as newly independent governments fell to military intervention, especially in the 1960s. The upsurge in military interventions in the richer South American countries with little prior history of military rule also increased academic interest in the phenomenon. Much of the early literature focused on the reasons for military intervention in politics, but some analysts also attempted to generalize about the military's typical strengths and weaknesses in governance, as well as the effect of military rule on economic development, the creation of national identity in new nations, and the spread of modern values and skills.

The intuition that rule by military officers should differ from rule by civilians motivates many of the early studies, but scholars have different ideas about how and why they would differ. Initially, analysts investigated the class and educational backgrounds of officers to see if they explain their policy choices. Studies of officers in many different developing countries find that they usually come from middle- and lower-middle-class families, often from rural areas or small towns. Some officer corps include many sons of peasants, but none seem dominated by sons of the upper classes (Janowitz 1977, pp. 79–91; Nordlinger 1977, pp. 32–34). The policies implemented vary from one case to the next. Officers from the same kinds of backgrounds follow conservative policies benefiting landowners in some settings and leftist policies that expropriate the property of landowners in others.

Whether military rulers serve the interests of the rich seems to depend on local circumstances and specific officers' ideology. Officers are seldom rich when they seize power, although in some settings they become rich after the seizure (Johnson 1962, pp. 105–13; Nordlinger 1977,

pp. 32–43). After seizing power, some military governments defend the economic status quo, yet others destroy traditional elites and nationalize large parts of their countries' economies. Even those who defend the capitalist economic status quo may not serve as agents of existing economic interests, however. General Augusto Pinochet, for example, certainly a defender of capitalism, initiated policies opposed by most Chilean business owners at the time. Only a very abstract account of economic policy making during the Pinochet government would call it an agent of groups it neither consulted nor cared about (Biglaiser 2002, Remmer 1989). Many businesses failed during the Pinochet years, and new businesses were created in response to drastic changes in the policy rules of the game. Pinochet can be seen as an agent of capitalism in the abstract, but not as an agent of the particular capitalists who dominated the Chilean economy in the first years of military rule. In general, scholars of military rule have failed to reach a consensus about whose interests the military serves besides its own. Those who work on some countries see military rulers as allies of the rich, whereas those who work on other countries see them as representatives of the lower middle class or agents of redistribution and change.

In many of the newly independent nations, military forces inherited from the colonial era overrepresented ethnic groups living in less developed areas, but most new governments attempted to recruit nationally. This change in the ethnicity of recruits tended to exacerbate the conflict between senior and junior officers that can motivate the ouster of one military leader by another. Ethnic grievances have motivated many coups, especially when one ethnicity dominated the first government but another the army. Case studies of military intervention in Africa often emphasize ethnicity (e.g., Bebler 1973, Decalo 1976, Luckham 1971), although it has received less systematic attention from comparativists than class background.

Some early observers believed that military governments would help unify ethnically divided societies because of the military's emphasis on internal unity and national identity. As Nordlinger (1977) notes, however, ethnic antagonisms often permeate the militaries in new nations despite such training. He concludes that far from having a special capacity to foster national unity, the military's coercive response to ethnic grievances leads to much more disastrous outcomes than would muddling along by civilians. He points to the bloody civil wars in Pakistan/Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Sudan as evidence of the consequences of intransigent military responses to ethnic demands.

Despite ethnic rivalries in some countries, studies find that officers tend to share interests arising from their military careers (Nordlinger 1977, Janowitz 1977). Some of these interests are mundane: the desire for higher pay and better living conditions; demand for more rapid promotion; and resentment about the politicization of promotions. Other concerns center on the military's potential efficacy as a fighting force: officers value the military's monopolization of the use of force and resent the creation by political leaders of other armed forces, such as party militias and presidential bodyguards. Officers place a high value on discipline and oppose any effort by politicians to unionize enlisted men or introduce dual structures of command in the form of political commissars. Low pay, political interference with promotions, efforts to unionize enlisted men, the creation of workers' militias, and the nicer uniforms of members of the presidential guard have been cited as reasons for military coups (Bebler 1973, Nordlinger 1977, Stepan 1971). Officers also value the unity of the armed forces, an essential feature of an effective fighting organization. The concern about unity can deter coups when plotters fear that their attempt to seize power would divide the army, and it can motivate officers to negotiate a return to the barracks when political factionalism threatens unity after they have taken power (Nordlinger 1977, Potash 1996).

Much of the early literature also emphasizes the military's inherent inability to govern countries with modern economies or to handle the negotiation among groups needed to maintain a stable government (Finer 1976, pp. 12–14; Janowitz 1977, pp. 154–56). Finer highlights the need for cooperation with the pre-existing state bureaucracy, and Janowitz (pp. 160–68) the need but likely

inability to develop civilian support bases in order to survive in power. Clapham & Philip (1985) argue that military regime stability "depends on its capacity to acquire civilian allies who are willing to accept subordination to military leadership in exchange for some share in running the state and especially some share in the benefits which it provides" (pp. 12–13). With hindsight, these insights seem prescient. Many studies have noted the military's collaboration with civilian administrators and technocrats. Some authors describe military officers as having a special affinity for bureaucrats or as being "armed bureaucrats" themselves (e.g., Feit 1973). Military leaders who organize civilian support bases have indeed survived longer, but officers have proved more adept at organizing civilian support than many early analysts expected. Dictators who seized power through armed force (most often by coup) later created a civilian support party or allied themselves with a pre-existing party about 60% of the time. Regimes established by military leaders who later created a party survive on average three times longer than those in which military rulers lack a civilian party, as Janowitz would have expected (Geddes 2011).

Most early analysts made no distinctions among dictatorships led by officers, but the surprising establishment of military rule in some of the most industrialized developing countries and the apparent economic success and political robustness of some of these regimes led to a partial reevaluation. Stepan's (1971) very detailed empirical investigation of the changes that occurred in the Brazilian military before the 1964 intervention, along with his analysis of the centrality of the military's professional interests in their decisions, laid the groundwork for the development of new theories. These theories emphasize differences between the rule of juntas representing the officer corps, labeled "rule by the military as an institution," and one-man rule by an officer. O'Donnell (1973), responding to the same military regime in Brazil as well as the contemporaneous one in Argentina, embeds the idea of rule by the military as an institution in a theory about why democracy could tend to break down in more industrialized developing countries. He ties this somewhat collegial form of military rule to a theory about conflict between, on the one hand, the increasing mobilization of ordinary citizens into politics as economies industrialized and, on the other hand, elite interest in policies to favor investors. He thus defines what he labels bureaucratic-authoritarianism not only as rule by the military as an institution but also as dictatorship committed to (*a*) conservative economic ideology facilitated by the delegation of economic policy to technocrats and (*b*) an understanding of national security focused on the challenges of leftist internal subversion rather than external enemies.

Subsequent research, however, has delinked rule by the military institution from the socio-economic conditions and ideological commitments of the cases in which it was first identified. Remmer (1989) shows that collegial forms of military rule have occurred in Latin America at all levels of economic development and have occurred in regimes committed to reformist policies and the greater inclusion of the poor in the benefits of development (e.g., Peru 1968–1980), as well as in those committed to conservative economic policies and exclusion.

In distinguishing one-man rule from more collegial military rule, Remmer emphasizes the dictator's personal control of the security forces as an indicator of his concentration of power. Such control allows the dictator to threaten and coerce fellow officers. She also notes that Pinochet's active-duty status gave him control over promotions and retirements in the army for 16 years, allowing him to craft a highly loyal instrument within a few years (see also Arriagada 1988). In contrast, security services are more likely to remain within the regular military chain of command during collegial military rule, and other officers often insist that the general who becomes dictator retire from active duty in order to limit his control over their own futures. Remmer's (1989) conclusions are drawn from an examination of all autocracies led by officers in Latin America.

Geddes' (1999, 2003) theorization of elite rivalry in autocracies builds on the ideas of O'Donnell (1973), Remmer (1989), Nordlinger (1977), and others. She distinguishes "military regimes," by

which she means rule by an officer constrained by other officers (rule by the military institution), from one-man rule, which she labels personalist. She does not distinguish military-led personalist regimes from those led by civilians. She defines personalist regimes as autocracies in which discretion over policy and personnel is concentrated in the hands of one man, although in the real world that discretion is often maintained by balancing the interests of multiple competing groups within the dictator's support coalition; the military, or the faction of it that supports the dictator, is one of the groups balanced. An important aspect of the concentration of power is control of the security apparatus, as noted by Remmer (1989). An implication of Geddes' stylized depiction of elite rivalries in different forms of autocracy is that more collegial forms of military rule are less likely to survive crises and differences of opinion within the ruling group than are other kinds of autocracy, an expectation that has been confirmed empirically (Brownlee 2009, Geddes 2003, Smith 2005, Wright & Escribà-Folch 2012).

CONTEMPORARY DEFINITIONS OF MILITARY RULE

The different meanings of the term military rule in different studies can create confusion, and theoretical expectations vary depending on the analyst's understanding of military rule. This section describes the three commonly used meanings of the term in order to disentangle apparently contradictory findings. Different definitions of military rule guided the data collection for different datasets used to identify military rule, so the datasets are not interchangeable and the choice of dataset can determine the results. Which dataset should be used depends on the definition of military rule embedded in the theory being tested.

The most inclusive definition of military rule refers to dictatorship led by a military officer, regardless of the make-up and influence of the rest of the leadership group. The second usage, building on O'Donnell (1973) and Remmer (1989), limits the term military regime to dictatorships led by somewhat collegial bodies representing the officer corps (rule by the military institution), in which multiple officers influence decision making. The third usage, sometimes called military strongman rule, refers to the subset of dictatorships in which power is concentrated in the hands of a single military officer.

For clarity, in this article our label for autocratic rule by a member of the military, regardless of the nature of the rest of the leadership, is "military-led autocracy." Military-led autocracy encompasses two distinctive forms of rule: domination of decision making by a group of officers representing the military institution, which we label a "military regime"; and dictatorship controlled by a single officer absent elite constraints, which we call "military strongman" rule.

Examples of military-led autocracy include Idi Amin's tyranny in Uganda; the Egyptian dictatorship initiated by the Free Officers in 1952, which ended with the ouster of Hosni Mubarak in 2011; and the Brazilian dictatorship from 1964 to 1985. In each case, the leadership post was always held by a current or former military officer. Here, the career of the dictator before the seizure of power determines the regime label. No additional information about the autocracy is taken into account.

In the second usage, autocracies are only labeled military regimes if the dictator consults with other high-ranking officers and can be constrained by them. This definition emphasizes the difference between somewhat collegial forms of military leadership and more narrowly based dictatorships such as those led by General Amin in Uganda or General Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. Amin and Trujillo were also military officers (and their governments would be considered military according to the first definition), but the military did not rule "as an institution" because the dictator had concentrated so much power in his own hands that he did not usually need to bargain with other officers. Of the dictatorships mentioned in the paragraph above, only

the Brazilian would be considered a military regime. In contrast to the other examples, the Brazilian dictatorship was initiated via a coup supported by the great majority of officers; consultation among them remained important through the many years of military control, most visibly during negotiations over planned presidential successions every few years (Stepan 1971). Rule by the military institution implies not only that a man in uniform occupies the top leadership post but also that other officers have some political influence. The strongest indicator of influence is the ability of the officer corps to enforce term limits and manage succession.

In contrast, Amin, who had many other officers murdered, is classified as a military strongman. Other officers held some key positions in the dictatorship, but they had little influence on basic political decisions. Military strongmen are made, not born, in a process that usually occurs after seizures of power. Immediately after seizures of power, most military governments are unstructured and somewhat chaotic. How decisions will be made and enforced is unclear even to participants. Leadership within the junta or other governing entity tends to be collegial. Hierarchies and routines for making and implementing decisions are not yet established; personnel within the junta may change rapidly; and citizens, especially those with personal links to members of the governing group, often have considerable ability to influence decisions (Geddes 2006).

The transition from unstructured military rule to strongman rule results from bargaining and conflict among high-ranking officers after the seizure of power. The man initially chosen to lead a military dictatorship needs the continued cooperation of other officers in order to retain his post because any officer with control over a few hundred troops could potentially oust him. To retain that support, he must make credible commitments to share spoils and policy influence with other officers in return for their commitment to refrain from overthrowing him. A military dictator can take a number of actions to make his own commitment more credible; for example, he can retire from active duty in order to limit his ability to control other officers' careers and postings, and delegate ministries and control over security services to other officers. The ability of other junta members to commit their subordinates to refrain from ousting the dictator, however, is more problematic. In a disciplined, unified military, high-ranking officers can credibly bargain on behalf of their subordinates, who can be expected to follow orders. Such bargains stabilize collegial military regimes.

In factionalized militaries riven by ethnic or personal rivalries, however, junta members cannot guarantee the behavior of subordinate officers. In that situation, leaders may try sharing spoils and influence more broadly by creating larger military command committees to rule rather than small juntas. Leaders who cannot trust lower-ranked officers to obey their superiors' orders also have strong incentives to organize a civilian support base to counterbalance potential military opposition. An organized civilian support network, a party, partially liberates the military leader from dependence on other officers and creates the opportunity for the dictator to play the factions in his alliance off against each other.[3] Strongmen are the dictators who prove especially adept at the manipulation of factions within the ruling alliance, leading to the gradual marginalization of other officers from decision making.

Analysts define military rule in particular ways because they expect specific features of the definition to have behavioral consequences and thus to affect what happens after a military dictator takes power. Many assume that officers play a large enough role in actual governance and policy making for their special competences and disabilities to affect political outcomes. Janowitz (1977),

[3] See Geddes (2011) for a more detailed statement of this argument and some evidence to support it. For a description of the transition from collegial military rule to strongman rule under General Barrientos in Bolivia, see Corbett (1972, pp. 408–16) and Wagner (1989); under Captain Sankara in Burkina Faso, see Britain (1985, pp. 43–45) and Englebert (1998, pp. 54–65); under Colonel Saleh in Yemen, see Burroughs (1987, pp. 92–131).

for example, describes officers' competence in administering many specific tasks but emphasizes their lack of experience and training to oversee a complicated national economy or other tasks that require arbitration among competing goals. From this he infers that military dictatorships will not improve growth rates after seizing power. He thus assumes that officers will be making basic economic policy decisions, or at any rate interfering in them, rather than delegating economic policy to civilian experts. Some theorizing about military rule explicitly assumes decision making through bargaining among a group of top officers, rather than one-man rule. Geddes' (1999) depiction of bargaining among military factions as similar to a battle-of-the-sexes game, for example, only makes sense if we assume consultation among officers about important decisions. The suggestion that military dictators can use the military as the institutional basis for organizing government (Gandhi 2008, pp. 25–28, 93) or implementing policies also seems to imply rule by the military as a whole rather than by one man who has marginalized other officers from most decision making. These analysts all seem to have in mind military regimes.

The designation "military strongman" implies that the dictator is relatively unconstrained by the need to consult with other officers. The lack of constraint implies that military strongmen's decisions depend on their own preferences and expectations about their personal futures. Debs & Goemans' (2010) argument that dictators' fear of imprisonment or assassination after ouster may motivate them to initiate diversionary wars suggests individual decision making, as would be expected under strongman rule, rather than collegial.

In contrast to both strongman rule and rule by the military institution, the concept of military-led autocracy implies that the analyst believes the distinction between constrained and unconstrained military dictators will not affect the behavior under study. One might hypothesize, for example, that any military-led autocracy, regardless of the dictator's relationship with fellow officers, would be likely to use more coercion against protestors than would a civilian-led dictatorship. More generally, some characteristics of the military, such as hierarchy, discipline, and a propensity to use force, can be expected to influence the behavior of all military-led autocracies because the dictator and other officers share these traits.

The analyst's understanding of military rule or the understanding implied by the argument being investigated determines which data should be used for testing. Currently, three regime-type datasets identify periods of military rule. Cheibub et al.'s (2010) update (hereafter CGV) of the Democracy/Dictatorship dataset identifies country-years as democratic or not and identifies individual dictators as civilians, military officers, or monarchs. These authors code political leaders as military if they wear or have ever worn a uniform (with an exception for participation in World War II). Leaders whose only military experience was in an insurgency are coded as civilian. Spans of country-years that are both nondemocratic and ruled by a military leader are treated as periods of military-led autocracy.

Hadenius & Teorell's (2007) dataset (hereafter HT) also identifies military dictatorships.[4] They classify autocracies as "pure military" if Banks & Wilson (2012) code the executive as military and the legislature as nonexistent or ineffective.[5] "Rebel" regimes, that is, regimes that achieved control via insurgency, are included in the military category. Military hybrids, as coded by HT, have military executives but "effective" legislatures. Using these data, analysts can also identify military-led autocracies by combining spans of country-years ruled by pure military and military hybrid dictatorships.

[4]See Wahman et al. (2013) for additional information about this dataset.

[5]Other scholars also use Banks & Wilson's codings (or earlier versions by Banks) to identify military control, including Lai & Slater (2006), Poe & Tate (1994), and Poe et al. (1999).

Emphasis on rule by the military institution underpins the identification of military rule in the dataset created by Geddes et al. (2013) (GWF). In these data, a number of coding rules are used to distinguish collegial military rule from strongman rule (described in Geddes 2003). Because this dataset relies on a more restrictive definition of military rule, it identifies significantly fewer periods of dictatorship as military. CGV identify 1,737 country-years between 1946 and 2008 as military, whereas GWF identify only 575.[6] The GWF data capture periods in which autocracies are governed by "military regimes."[7] The CGV and GWF datasets could be combined to create a measure of autocratic rule by military strongmen. This would entail identifying the consecutive country-years coded both as personalist by GWF and as military by CGV.[8]

For the purpose of investigating arguments about how the military as an organization or institution affects decision making or autocratic breakdown, the GWF dataset is more appropriate because it limits the regimes coded as military to those in which multiple high-ranking officers influence decision making. If, however, one wants to know whether the dictator's training and past career in the military affect his decision making, longevity, or likelihood of starting wars, the CGV or HT dataset is appropriate. If instead one seeks to compare the behavior of military autocrats constrained by other members of the military with the behavior of those who are not thus constrained, or to evaluate whether civilian strongmen differ from their military counterparts, the CGV and GWF datasets combined, as described above, are appropriate. Readers should note which data were used when deciding how to interpret analysts' empirical results.

With these differences in mind, we now discuss some of the central findings of studies of military rule. We interpret them in light of the definition of military rule implied by the dataset(s) used.

MILITARY RULE AND VIOLENCE

It seems that, because militaries have professional expertise in the use of force, military governments would use more violence against domestic opponents than autocrats not from the military (Debs 2010, Svolik 2013). As Davenport (1995) summarizes this idea, repression "can easily be applied because armies are prepared to use force at all times" (p. 120).

But the relationship between military rule and repression is not completely straightforward. Policzer's (2009) case study of repression during the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, for example, provides insight into why a dictator might prefer to avoid using regular military forces to repress opposition. During the first months after the 1973 coup, the responsibilities of officers who were assigned to administer subnational areas included dealing with domestic "enemies." In some regions, extremist commanding officers killed many civilians thought to be leftists, sometimes after a perfunctory military trial. In others, however, commanding officers enforced preexisting democratic legal norms and treated political prisoners humanely. Some even had the courage to resist the Arellano mission, Pinochet's effort to impose a hard line on local commanders. The Chilean

[6]The GWF figure combines pure military regimes, indirect military regimes, and military-personalist regimes. Figures mentioned below rely on the same combination.

[7]The GWF dataset also identifies beginning and end dates for regimes, defined in terms of the (often informal) rules that determine membership in the regime's leadership group, how policy decisions are made, and how leaders are selected, rather than leaving analysts to infer regime changes from certain kinds of leadership changes (as in the CGV dataset). In the HT dataset, changes in the number of legal parties are recorded as regime changes, regardless of whether the identity of the dictator and other regime insiders has changed. These different implicit or explicit understandings of the concept "regime" also affect which dataset an analyst should use for different purposes.

[8]See the coding rules on the GWF data website, **http://dictators.la.psu.edu**, for information about how these two datasets relate to each other. Because CGV is coded as of December 31 and GWF as of January 1, an adjustment is necessary to align the years of the two datasets.

junta's decision to remove control of internal subversion from the military's hands and create a specialized and centralized internal security service arose from its inability to control the implementation of repression under the existing arrangement and the threat to military unity posed by deep disagreements within the officer corps over how regime opponents should be treated (Policzer 2009, pp. 56–85). Janowitz (1977) and Nordlinger (1977) both stress the deep reluctance of most regular military officers to carry out domestic repression. In short, although the hypothesis that military-led autocracies are especially repressive is plausible, the story may be more complicated.

The empirical record so far is mixed. Poe et al. (1999) find that military rule increases human rights violations relative to civilian government. Their measure of military control identifies governments that achieved power via coup and were either led by a military executive or had mixed military and civilian cabinets with an officer apparently controlling the government from behind the scenes (Poe & Tate 1994, p. 858). They thus include most of the governments that would be labeled "military-led autocracy" in the CGV data. Davenport (2007b) investigates the effect of different types of autocracy on civil liberties as well as personal integrity violations (torture, execution, incarceration, and disappearance) using a very early version of the GWF data. He finds that military regimes and dominant-party regimes are less likely to repress civil liberties than personalist regimes (which in the GWF data include both military strongmen and civilian despots). Dominant-party regimes are also less likely to violate personal integrity, but military regimes exhibit the same level of human rights violations as other autocracies (Davenport 2007b). Neither Davenport (2007b) nor Poe et al. (1999) cover a very long period of time, and they could be challenged in other ways, but together they suggest that more physical integrity violations are committed in military-led autocracies than under civilian-led ones. Davenport's research indicates, however, that the opposite is true for repression of civil liberties. Gandhi (2008) also shows, using CGV data, that military-led autocracies are less likely than civilian dictatorships to repress speech or workers' rights, though more likely to interfere with media freedom.

Although military governments commit human rights violations, regular officers and soldiers may not carry out most atrocities. This responsibility often lies in the hands of internal security services and the national police instead. Indeed, the case-study literature notes that dictators often use internal security services to spy on and to counterbalance the regular military.[9] Officers from the regular military may head internal security agencies, but the agencies are often not subsumed within the regular military chain of command or staffed by regular soldiers. Janowitz (1977, p. 46) observes "again and again. . .the conscious effort made by military officials to remove their regular units from the distasteful task of internal security." Besides distaste, officers fear that their subordinates will disobey orders to fire on civilians.

Soldiers have resisted using arms against fellow citizens at crucial historical junctures. The Serbian military's unwillingness to shoot anti-Milošević protesters, for example, contributed to the dictator's ouster after fraudulent elections in 2000 (Binnendijk & Marovic 2006). The first military interventions in some African countries occurred when civilian dictators ordered the army to repress opposition demonstrations; officers ousted dictators rather than firing on fellow citizens (Englebert 1998, Decalo 1976). Arguably the Egyptian military ousted Mubarak in 2011 because it was faced with the same choice (Barany 2011). These experiences highlight the military's ambivalent approach to the domestic use of force. Military leaders are, as Nordlinger (1977), Svolik (2013), and Debs (2010) suggest, likely to turn to force sooner than civilian dictators, but they usually use specialized security agencies to implement repression because they do not trust regular

[9]See, for example, Policzer (2009) on Pinochet's strategic use of the security service to monitor the military, and Burggraaff (1972) on the similar use of security forces by Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela.

officers and soldiers to follow orders about repressing fellow citizens.[10] In short, the propensity of military dictators to use violence seems to arise from their training, or perhaps lack of training in bargaining, rather than their control of a reliable instrument of coercion in the army.

Military regimes are also more likely than single-party autocracies to become involved in civil wars (Fjelde 2010). Nordlinger (1977) argues that officers' attitudes and training hinder their ability to compromise and lead to kneejerk violent responses to challenges, especially challenges to national integrity. He describes events leading to civil war in Nigeria, Pakistan/Bangladesh, and Sudan to illustrate his argument. Fjelde's (2010) discussion of the usefulness of parties for coopting opposition complements and extends Nordlinger's argument. Fjelde tests her ideas using two different measures of military rule, the HT dataset and an early version of GWF. Her specification also goes some way toward showing that military rule increases the likelihood of civil war rather than vice versa. She uses an interaction between regime type and time in power to show that civil war becomes more likely over time as the military remains in power. This result makes it unlikely that the correlation between military rule and civil war is caused by the tendency of military leaders to seize power during the conflicts leading up to civil wars. Using HT data, Fjelde finds that civil wars are more likely to start during military-led autocracies and electoral autocracies (dictatorships with multiparty legislative elections) than during single-party dictatorships or monarchies. Using GWF data, she finds that civil wars are more likely in military regimes, personalist dictatorships, and monarchies than in dominant-party regimes. Military regimes are somewhat more prone to civil war than the other types coded by GWF, but the differences among military, personalist, and monarchic regimes are small relative to the difference between these types and dominant-party regimes.[11] In short, military-led autocracies seem to be less skilled at avoiding the escalation of grievances into civil war than other kinds of autocracy, a finding that holds even when the definition of military rule is restricted to military regimes.

Evidence also suggests that military strongmen engage in more belligerent international behavior than other dictators. Lai & Slater (2006) find that military-led autocracies are more likely to initiate conflict than are party-based autocracies. They argue that the military's uncertain hold on power leads it to initiate diversionary wars to shore up domestic support. Lai & Slater use an earlier version of Banks & Wilson's (2012) dataset to identify military-led autocracies and Polity scores to capture constraints on the executive by civilian actors. They interpret unconstrained military executives as military strongmen and find no difference between the behavior of these dictators and that of military executives who share formal powers with civilian elites. This finding suggests that civilians with formal powers to constrain military partners cannot really do so.

In contrast, other officers do seem able to constrain some military dictators. Using data that distinguish military juntas from unconstrained military strongmen, Weeks (2012) finds significant differences in conflict propensity between strongmen and regimes led by the military institution. Consistent with earlier research (Frantz & Ezrow 2011, Peceny & Beer 2003, Peceny et al. 2002, Peceny & Butler 2004), Weeks argues that personalist dictatorships start more wars than other autocracies or democracies because they face little domestic accountability. She departs from earlier research, however, in arguing that the preferences of leaders with military backgrounds make them more prone to using arms to achieve their ends than are civilian personalists. To

[10]The Argentine military regime (1976–1983) is an exception. It spread the responsibility for fighting internal subversion across many military units and individual officers (Buchanan 1987).

[11]Wilson (2013) revisits Fjelde's work in an attempt to better understand how the specific measure of military rule influences her empirical results. He shows that although similar results emerge from an earlier version of GWF and the HT data, results differ substantially if CGV's coding of military dictatorship is used. His study lends further weight to the claim that the data used to capture military rule can affect the answers obtained.

test these ideas, she combines some of the components used by Geddes (2003) to classify regime types with other variables to distinguish military juntas (i.e., rule by a group of officers) from military strongmen. Juntas thus largely overlap with military regimes as defined in the GWF data, but Weeks distinguishes military strongmen from civilian personalist dictators, which is not possible using GWF data alone. Her data analysis shows that military strongmen are more likely to initiate war than are juntas or civilian personalist rulers, who are in turn more belligerent than dominant-party regimes and democracies. Weeks' findings thus challenge Lai & Slater's (2006, p. 114) argument that military regimes start more wars because they lack parties "to help manage elite factionalism and curb mass dissent." Although she does not make this point, most military strongmen—who are the most likely to start wars—are supported by parties created after their accession to power, whereas most juntas are not.

Another strand of research on the causes of war notes that dictators who face a high probability of death, imprisonment, or exile after ouster should be more tempted to start diversionary wars in order to avoid ouster by rallying domestic support (Chiozza & Goemans 2011, Debs & Goemans 2010, Goemans 2000). Evidence is mixed, however, on the type of autocrat most likely to suffer a terrible fate following ouster. Debs & Goemans (2010), using CGV data, show that military dictators are more likely to face costly fates, whereas Escribà-Folch (2013) and Geddes et al. (2014), using GWF data, show that leaders of personalist regimes are. The difference in datasets explains the difference in findings. Men who once wore uniforms lead a little over half of personalist regimes. Although these military strongmen are coded personalist in the GWF dataset, they are considered military in the CGV dataset and make up about half of military-led autocracies.[12] Taken together, these findings suggest that military strongmen are more likely to face bad fates after ouster than are leaders of military regimes. Such an interpretation is consistent with Weeks (2012), who finds military strongmen more belligerent than military juntas. Her study is unique in comparing different types of military rule.

HOW MILITARY RULE ENDS

Although the literature on diversionary war emphasizes dictators' efforts to cling to power at all costs, other observers have noted that some coups against military rulers are motivated by the desire to return power to civilians and that military regimes often negotiate their extrications rather than being forced out. Factionalism within military regimes can lead to decisions to return to the barracks because officers often care more about the unity of the fighting force than they do about remaining in power (Nordlinger 1977, Geddes 1999). Because officers usually return to the barracks without being forced out, they tend to negotiate their extrication and thus are less likely to be violently removed. Between 1946 and 2010, only about 43% of military regimes fell to insurgency, popular uprising, or invasion compared to 64% of dominant-party regimes and more than 90% of personalist dictatorships, as shown in **Figure 1** (Geddes et al. 2014). Nearly all nonviolent breakdowns of military regimes resulted in democratization.

Usually military regimes extricate themselves from power by overseeing an election among civilian contenders. In contrast to dominant-party and personalist regimes, outgoing members of military regimes do not typically run in transitional elections. Military incumbents have participated in transitional elections only 19% of the time, whereas incumbents from dominant-party regimes ran in 83% of transitional elections and personalists ran in 78%. Incumbent participation

[12] Fifty-four percent of country-years between 1946 and 2008 coded by GWF as personalist dictatorships are coded as military-led by CGV.

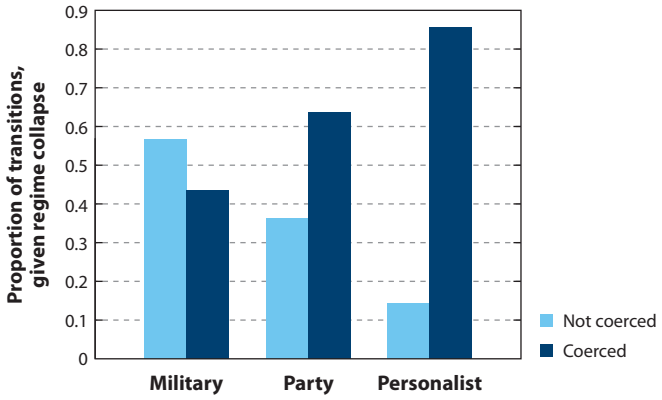

Figure 1

Coerced regime collapses sorted by incumbent autocratic regime type. Coerced transitions (*dark blue*) include foreign invasions, coups, uprisings, and ouster by insurgents; noncoerced transitions (*light blue*) include elections and rule changes made by regime insiders.

in transitional elections is the strongest predictor of government harassment of the opposition in transitional elections (Ofosu 2013).[13] This finding helps to explain why military regimes are more likely to end in democratization than are other kinds of autocracy (see **Figure 2**). Nearly 62% of military regimes democratize, whereas less than 45% of dominant-party regimes and 36% of personalist dictatorships do (Geddes et al. 2014)

The expectation that splits within the military ruling group lead to decisions to return to the barracks depends on the existence of a ruling group able to constrain the dictator. Consequently, the same results should not be expected if CGV or other data that combine military regimes with military strongmen in a single category are used.

CONCLUSION

We have highlighted the theoretical development of different understandings of military rule and the consequences of those differences for empirical studies. Most of the early comparative literature on military rule built on the expectation or observation that military dictators behave differently than other political leaders and did not distinguish between military strongmen and military dictators constrained by a junta (Finer 1976, Janowitz 1977, Nordlinger 1977). Scholars motivated by military seizures of power in most of the richest countries of Latin America, however, emphasized the distinction between dictatorships led by the military institution and rule by military strongmen (O'Donnell 1973, Remmer 1989).

Each of these understandings of military rule is associated with a dataset. The CGV and HT datasets (and their precursor, earlier versions of Banks & Wilson 2012) identify as military all autocracies led by dictators who wear or once wore uniforms. They thus reflect the understanding of military rule as any dictatorship with a military leader, regardless of the power or identity of others in the leadership group. The GWF dataset, in contrast, distinguishes military regimes in which the dictator is constrained by other officers from one-man rule, which is labeled personalist regardless of whether the dictator wears a uniform. The difference in the country-years identified as "military" across these datasets is substantial. The GWF dataset identifies as military fewer than

[13] Calculated from GWF data. Transitional elections were identified using Hyde & Marinov's (2012) Nelda dataset.

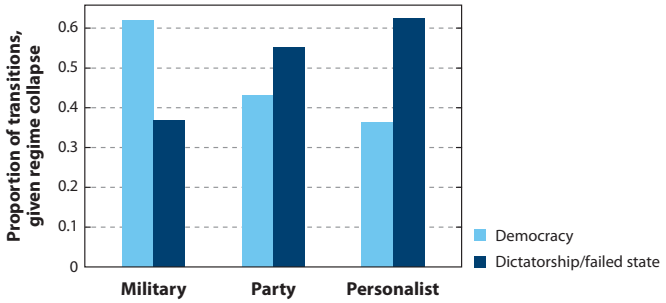

Figure 2

Autocratic regime type and democratization. Light blue bars show the proportion of regime breakdowns that ended in democratization for military regimes, dominant-party regimes, and personalist dictatorships.

half of the country-years that the CGV dataset identifies as military. Consequently, studies using different datasets can reach apparently contradictory conclusions, most of which can be reconciled by keeping in mind how the definition of military rule implied by the author's choice of data affects the interpretation of results.

The second part of this article summarized the results of important recent empirical studies of military rule. Preliminary results suggest that military-led autocracies are responsible for more human rights violations and wind up embroiled in more civil wars than nonmilitary regimes. The distinction between military strongmen and military regimes may not affect the propensity to use violence against opponents, since both the dictator and his military allies share the training and attitudes toward compromise that increase reliance on force to deal with challenges.

Military strongmen differ from military regimes, however, in their greater propensity to start wars and resistance to negotiating transitions to democracy. We see this difference as arising from differences of interest between the dictator and other high-ranked officers. The dictator faces a greater risk than other officers of imprisonment, execution, assassination, or exile if the regime falls. Consequently, he may be more willing to start a diversionary war or to refuse to negotiate a return to the barracks, even in the face of mobilized popular opposition and possible violent ouster. Military dictators who face little constraint on their actions, that is, military strongmen, are more free to start wars and resist negotiating with domestic opponents than are leaders of military regimes, who must negotiate their responses with fellow officers.

The findings about war and transitions show that military strongmen behave differently in some policy domains than do military rulers whose decisions are constrained by other officers. In all the areas examined, military dictatorships behave differently than civilian-led dictatorships. These findings suggest that theories of authoritarianism should take the military and its distinctive interests into account.

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