

**Authoritarian Armies and Democratizing States:
How the Military Influences African Transitional Politics**

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Abstract: Though at times acknowledged as a key veto player, precisely how and why soldiers influence democratic transition, consolidation and survival is a subject of continued scholarly debate. This article uses descriptive statistics, cross-country regression analysis, and cases in Niger, Chad and Mali to investigate how authoritarian civil-military relations impact democratic transition and duration in Africa, a region overlooked by scholars of civil-military relations. It argues that the interaction between military rule and ethnic stacking within the armed forces has led to three predominant democratization patterns. Africa's military regimes have nearly always practiced ethnic stacking, which leads to frequent but often short-lived transitions to democratic rule. When non-military-led regimes stack the armed forces with co-ethnics, the result is most often a blocked transition. Only when authoritarian leaders refrain from manipulating the armed forces along either ethnic or political lines do soldiers tend to side with reformers, leading to durable democratic regimes.

Keywords: democratization, Africa, military rule, ethnic politics, civil-military relations, authoritarianism

Words: 9092

Introduction

Since first seizing power in the 1960s, African armies have undermined democracy through repressive violence, coups, and as instruments of war. Yet armies are at times crucial allies of democratizers, intervening during moments of crisis to sweep aside repressive regimes. Though the importance of the military in transitional politics was evident during the Arab Spring, armies played a similarly decisive and equally ambivalent role in the democratic transitions that swept across the African continent in the 1990s. In their study, Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle found that action by the armed forces to be among the most powerful predictors of democratic transition in Africa: of the 13 cases of overt military intervention during the process of democratic transition, six supported democratizers, seven opposed, and in all but one of the cases was action by military forces decisive.¹

This article argues contributes to a growing scholarship on military loyalty by arguing that military rule and ethnic stacking each play crucial but distinct roles in democratic transition and survival. Drawing on a synthesized dataset of transitions to and from democracy in Africa from 1960-2016 and case studies in the neighboring West African countries of Niger, Chad and Mali, the findings offer two central contributions to the scholarship on the military's role in transitional politics.

First, a recent consensus has emerged that recruitment by authoritarian leaders of their co-ethnics into their armies, a strategy called ethnic stacking, makes authoritarian regimes both more likely to block democratic transitions and undermines democratic survival. I find support for this argument but suggest that democratization outcomes are systematically different in military-led regimes. Ethnic stacking was practiced by nearly every military regime and two-thirds of non-military-led regimes in this study's sample. Yet ethnic stacking in civilian led

regimes resulted in democracy only ten percent of the time, compared to an eighty percent democratization rate for non-military-led regimes that did not ethnically stack their armies.

Second, there is little scholarly consensus on whether military rule undermines or facilitates democratization. I synthesize existing theories that by arguing that the fact that military regimes in Africa have nearly always also been ethnically stacked makes such regimes likely to transition to but unlikely to sustain democratic rule. In Africa, military regimes end in democracy sixty percent of the time, but democracies that succeed military regimes last a median of five years, half as long as those that succeed other dictatorships.

Finally, this paper fills in an important gap in the regional scholarship on civil-military relations and transitional politics. Though the topic has been subject of considerable attention, particularly in Latin America, and more recently, the Middle East, the role of the armed forces in African transitional politics remains undertheorized. Few scholars have cross-nationally investigated the topic since Bratton and van de Walle's pioneering effort, which itself only covered the period from 1990-1994.² The findings presented here indicate that some features of African armies, such as the fact that nearly all African military regimes also practice ethnic stacking, may influence democratic transition and survival through distinct causal mechanisms. These insights suggest a more cautious approach to generalization than some of the extant scholarship,³ and follow a trend towards the use of middle range theory to make targeted inferences.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 briefly summarizes the extant literature and situates this article within it. Section 3 presents the theory, explaining how ethnic divisions and military rule interact to influence transitions to and from African democracy. Sections 4 describes the methodology for collecting the data, including the coding procedures and

definitions for key variables. Section 5 presents the results, using descriptive statistics, logistic regression, and survival analysis. Section 6 traces the causal mechanisms behind the correlations found through case studies of Mali, Niger, and Chad. The final section briefly discusses the article's implications for those seeking to understand the military's role in regime change and discusses strategies for confronting with regimes whose armies carry different institutional legacies.

Previous literature

Are certain types of military institutions more likely to accept democratic transitions and less likely to interfere in the politics of emerging democracies than others? Under what circumstances are countries able to escape legacies of authoritarianism and military interference in politics? Dating back to Samuel Huntington, scholars have argued that attempts by certain groupings within society, which he termed “subjective” civilian control, affect democracy.⁴ Yet precisely how civil-military relations affects democratization, as well as through which mechanisms, remains a subject of controversy. This article contributes to a growing scholarship that, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, has sought to examine anew the role of the military as a “midwife or gravedigger” of democracy.⁵ In recent years, this literature has investigated the role of mass popular mobilization in spurring military defection from authoritarian rulers,⁶ the importance of military cohesion,⁷ parallel military institutions⁸ and ethnic recruitment in enabling authoritarianism, and military rule as an influence on democratic transition and survival.

This article focuses on military rule and ethnic stacking, two common features of African civil-military relations. The role of military rule in facilitating transitions to and from democracy is controversial. For many scholars of African politics, the seizure of power by soldiers is synonymous with misrule⁹. Bratton and van de Walle, the only empirical to test the role of military rule in democratic transitions in Africa, note 12 of 14 cases of blocked democratic transitions in their 1990-1994 were in countries with previous coups or military rule.¹⁰ However, much of the early scholarship on civil-military relations took a more benign view of military governance, believing that the military's organizational capacities and concern for corporate rather political interest made it natural for the military to step when civilians government failed.¹¹ In fact, more recent scholarship finds that military regimes are more likely than average to result in democracy,¹² with one recent study finding that close to two thirds of military regimes since 1945 have democratized, compared to a forty percent of other regime types.¹³ These disparities could exist in part because "military regimes," where a junta of military officers determines who will lead the country and influences policy, may be more likely to democratize than personalist dictatorships, where a single dictator rules with or without a military background.¹⁴

It is equally unclear whether previous military rule causes democratic breakdown. A number of studies, both in Africa and in the general literature, suggest that previous coups can lead to democratic backsliding.¹⁵ Other cross-national studies more directly trace military influence in politics or military rule to poor democratic survival outcomes.¹⁶ However, a number of other studies have found that military rule has no effect on democratic survival.¹⁷ In addition, the literature on democratic survival does not distinguish between military regimes and personalist military dictatorships.

The cross-national evidence in support of ethnicity as a causal factor in driving the armed forces to support or oppose democratization is likewise mixed. In most cross-national studies, ethnicity is either measured as fractionalization, which denotes the overall number of ethnic groups in a country or dominance, which measures the percentage of the population of the largest ethnic group. Some studies find ethnicity measured as such to be correlated with military involvement in politics.¹⁸ Most studies, however, find either no relationship or a negative relationship.¹⁹ Collier and Hoeffler, for example, dismiss the negative correlation they find between ethnic dominance and coup plots, concluding that economic and not social conditions cause coups.²⁰

However, the idea that military ethnicity influences transitional politics is common in the African case literature. 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. The French, for example, deliberately recruited groups they considered to be more ‘warlike’ into the colonial armed forces, including Berbers in Morocco, the Kabrai in Togo, the Malinke in Guinea, and the Fon in Dahomey (now Benin).²¹ African leaders also commonly manipulate ethnic representation within their armed forces. In Dahomey, coups led by junior officers in 1967 and 1972 dislodged the Fon hierarchy and promoted northern co-ethnics to top military posts.

More recent scholarship, particularly in Africa, suggests that 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.²² Philip Roessler associates ethnic stacking with authoritarian resilience, arguing that leaders who choose to ethnically stack their

armies trade immediate coup risk for future risk of civil-war.²³ Ethnicity-based recruitment may shorten the lifespan of emerging democratic regimes as well. Kristen Harkness finds that coup attempts resulted within 4 years in 75 percent of cases where an elected leader did not share the same ethnicity as officers privileged by the previous ruler, compared to a 20 percent coup attempt rate for other regimes.²⁴

The soldier and the African state: ruling, ethnic, mixed and representative armies

This article synthesizes literatures on military rule and ethnic stacking by arguing that each have distinct, context-dependent consequences for democratization. I propose a typology of authoritarian armies based on the interaction of these two variables, leading to four types of civil-military relations with distinct democratization patterns.

My argument is driven by two assumptions about the nature of both military rule and military ethnicity that draw on recent scholarship. Following an emerging consensus, I define military rule as “a group of officers that determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy,” and maintain that the distinction between the military regimes and other forms of government have important consequences for a regime’s democratization prospects.²⁵ Under this definition, regimes where current or former military leaders rule with few constraints on their power are not classified as military-led regimes.

Second, I argue that it is how ethnic politics shapes the army rather than the polity more broadly that determines when the armed forces will support democratic change. Here, I draw on and extend the work of Kristen Harkness, who examines the role of ethnic armies in post-colonial African politics. Harkness identifies two strategies that 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.²⁶ Following Harkness, I refer to these strategies, which are not mutually exclusive, as ethnic stacking.

Overlaying these two concepts yields four logically possible types of authoritarian civil-military relations, each with distinct civil-military cleavages and each of which I maintain experience distinct democratization outcomes. The derivation of this typology is depicted in Table 1 below.

First, there are military-ruled regimes that do not practice ethnic stacking, which I refer to as *ruling* militaries. Ruling militaries are not common in Africa; Mali, where the military briefly entered and exited power following a 2012 coup, qualifies as one such case. I argue that the cleavages in military-ruled regimes mostly clearly reflect those described by the broader literature on military rule, where a small faction rules and seeks power and tends to be opposed by a majority who carry out more traditional military functions.²⁷

Second, there are non-military ruled regimes that practice ethnic stacking, which I refer to as *ethnic* militaries. The principal cleavages in regimes with *ethnic* militaries are between privileged soldiers and officers who share ethnicities with the dictator and soldiers, politicians, and civilians that do not. Despite his status as a former military officer, Sudan's Omar al-Bashir rules Sudan as a civilian president and has won numerous rigged elections. His Arab co-ethnics dominate Sudan's regular army, parallel military institutions and militia groups, making Sudan a classic example of an *ethnic* military. Other such in Africa countries include Burkina Faso, Uganda, and Chad.

Third, there are military-ruled regimes that do practice ethnic stacking, which I refer to as *mixed* militaries. Mixed militaries tend to be divided between both professional and power-seeking soldiers, as well as between soldiers that share co-ethnicity with the ruling class and those they do not. These types of cleavages are more reflective of the factionalism, infighting, and lust for power that the Africanist literature has at times associated with military rule.²⁸ Such regimes are also far more numerous in Africa than *ruling* militaries. Nigeria, which was ruled by a junta of military officers from the country's North and Middle Belt between 1983 and 1999, is one example of a military regime. Others include Niger, Algeria, and Ghana (prior to 1981).

Finally, there are non-military led regimes that do not practice ethnic stacking, which I refer to as *representative* militaries.²⁹ *Representative* armies possess neither cleavages along ethnic or professional lines and are often marginalized by dictators as part of a deliberate strategy to keep the armed forces from seizing power. Tunisia is one such example: beginning with the reign of Habib Bourguiba in 1956 and lasting until the Arab uprisings of 2011, officers in the Tunisian military could neither vote nor serve in the dominant party. Other examples of *representative* African militaries include Malawi, Zambia, Ghana (after 1981), and Mali.

Table 1. Ethnic stacking, military rule and military type

		Military Rule (ruling / traditional cleavages)	
		Yes	No
Ethnic Stacking (in-group / out group cleavages)	Yes	<u>Mixed Armies</u>	<u>Ethnic Armies</u>
	No	<u>Ruling Armies</u>	<u>Representative Armies</u>

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

Theoretical Expectations

I argue that the differing civil-military cleavages in each of the four authoritarian army types described above lead to different democratization outcomes. Here, I derive theoretical expectations for each military type for the two key variables in my analysis: the probability that a regime ends in democracy and, if so, how long the democracy that survives the authoritarian regime will endure.

I hypothesize that, compared to regimes with other civil-military relation types, regimes with ruling militaries have a higher than average probability of ending in democracy, but that such democracies have lower than average survival chances. Where the traditional faction of the military tends to prefer to be out of power and the ruling faction prefers to be in power, both factions prefer to act together in order to avoid conflict. The result, as argued Geddes and others, is that officers within military regimes are more likely to strike a bargain that negotiates a voluntary exit for the military on institutionally favorable terms.³⁰ This explains why such

regimes are more likely to result in democracy than other regimes, where a retreat to the barracks is not an option.

There is no reason, however, to expect that regimes with *ruling* militaries tend to end in stable democratic settlements. At best, the existing literature finds little evidence that military rule is associated with democratic backsliding.³¹ At worst, it suggests that institutionally powerful militaries with politically experienced military officers face powerful incentives to continue to intervene.³² I therefore generally hypothesize that authoritarian regimes with ruling militaries result in democracies that are moderately more prone to failure than average.

I hypothesize that regimes with *ethnic* militaries are the least likely to democratize of any type and that democratic settlements are less stable than average. Because officers that are co-ethnics with the authoritarian leadership receive unique institutional privilege, their fate tends to be tied to the fate of the regime. As scholars such as Eva Bellin and Ore Koren observe, we would expect them to be more likely to defend the status quo and more likely to repress on behalf of the regime when faced with pressure from below.³³ In the aftermath of a democratic transition, we might expect certain elements of the military to remain hostile to democracy and attempt to regain power, making them less stable than average.³⁴

I hypothesize that *mixed* militaries transition to democracy at roughly average rates, but that democracies that succeed regimes with mixed militaries are most highly prone to collapse. Where rule by the military as an institution generates pressure for democratic transition, we would expect an ethnically stacked faction within the army to remain opposed, resulting in ambiguous transition outcomes. However, the existence of an institutionally powerful, ethnically divided, and politically experienced military could be expected to loom large over an emerging democracy. African history is littered with military rulers of mixed militaries, from Ghana's

Jerry Rawlings to Benin's Christophe Soglo, who voluntarily exited power only to re-seize it several years later. At other times, democratization has been exploited by lower ranking officers, such as Nigeria's Ibrahim Babangida, to retire their seniors and clear an eventual pathway to power for themselves.³⁵ I suggest, therefore, that in *mixed* militaries, the incentive to re-enter power is strong: soldiers may attempt to re-enter politics for purposes of ambition, to protect the military's broader institutional interests, or to preserve or seek privileges for their ethnic groups. As a result, democracies that succeed *mixed* militaries are more likely to end prematurely, reflecting the outcomes in the Africanist scholarship and some of the broader literature.

Finally, I posit that *representative* militaries that are most likely to end in durable democracy. Without either a core of officers who seek power or ethnic privilege, we would expect officers in representative armies to avoid political interference. This might be expected to potentially lead to fewer regime-ending coups, but also to an army without extensive political or ethnic factions that is indifferent to whether the military remains in power. Particularly in situations where dictators might need the army to repress popular protests, we might expect the army to be more likely to remain neutral or side with the political opposition. In the aftermath of a transition to democracy, a history of a lack of interference in politics and a lack of ethnic factionalism within the military can be expected to be stabilizing. Thus, I expect that transitions in authoritarian regimes with *representative* armies tend to be most likely of any type to end in democracy, and that democratic settlements following such regimes to be the most stable of any type.

Table 2 summarizes the main predictions of the theory. It is important to note that, while I derive general predictions for each type, three central arguments should be most evident from the observable data: 1) democracies which succeed mixed militaries face the poorest survival

prospects 2); regimes with ethnic armies face poorest transition prospects, and 3) regimes with representative armies will be most likely to transition to stable democracy.

Table 2. Authoritarian civil-military relations and predicted transition paths.

Military Institutional Feature	Key features	Most Likely Transition Path	Likelihood of Transition to Democracy	Democratic Durability
Military Rule	Military divided along personal, professional and sectarian lines	Democratic Instability	Moderately likely	Least durable
Sectarian	Military divided along sectarian lines favoring one or several ethnic groups	Democratic Obstruction	Unlikely	Moderately durable
Civil	United military little used in internal police action	Democratic Stability	Most likely	Most stable

Data collection and coding procedures

To test these claims, I compiled and expanded on existing data relating to *democratic transitions, democratic duration, military rule, and ethnic stacking*. The data was culled principally from pre-existing data sets, but supplemented by scholarly accounts, newspaper articles, and reference books.

To code transitions to and from democracy, I drew on the work of Geddes, Wright and Frantz (GWF) 2014 data on democratization. Their data 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.³⁶ As GWF 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.

Drawing on GWF data, regime spells are used as my data’s primary unit of observation, following the approach taken by other Africanist scholars.³⁷ A transition is considered successful

if the authoritarian regime spell ends in democracy, blocked if the result is a new authoritarian regime or a loss of control over a country's territory. If an authoritarian regime is succeeded by a democracy, I record the number of years that the democracy has survived through including 2016, as well as whether the democracy has survived ten years or more. I manually extended to 2015 the GWF database, which previously ran to 2010. The resulting dataset initially yields 94 observations.

Authoritarian military type, my primary independent variable, characterizes authoritarian regimes in Africa based on whether they possess *ruling*, *ethnic*, *mixed* or *representative*. The variable was coded by combining Kristen Harkness' data on ethnic stacking with the GWF data on military rule, according to the concepts laid out in the previous section.³⁸ In six cases, ethnic stacking status could not be determined, yielding a missing observation.³⁹ Among the 88 cases remaining, 37 transitions led to democracy; 51 were blocked. the armed forces were in power or whether they were subject to ethnic stacking. Ethnic armies, where a non-military dictator stacks the army with co-ethnics, was the most common authoritarian army type in Africa, comprising 40 different authoritarian regimes. Mixed armies, where military dictators stack the army with co-ethnics, was the next most common type, occurring in 25 cases. In 20 regimes, a non-military ruler did not stack the army with co-ethnics, creating representative armies. Only three regimes in Africa were ruling militaries, where a military dictator rules but refrains from stacking the army with co-ethnic soldiers. Further information on all coding procedures can be found in the data appendix.

In the following section I test my theory that these institutional differences can help predict pattern of democratic transition and collapse.

Empirical analysis

In this section, I test my hypotheses that ruling, ethnic mixed and representative armies in authoritarian regimes experience distinct democratization outcomes using an database of African transitions dating back to 1960.

Descriptive data

The descriptive statistics in Figure 1 depict basic transition probabilities disaggregated by ruling, ethnic, mixed and representative armies. The results confirm my hypotheses and assert a powerful association between authoritarian military type and democratic transition patterns. Though there were only three cases, all ruling militaries ended in democracy. Among Africa's predominant types of authoritarian armies, representative armies had the highest transition rates, with 15 out of 20 (75%) regime-spells resulting in a democratic transition. By contrast, only 4 of the 40 cases of regimes with ethnic armies ended in democracy, a democratization rate of just ten percent. Mixed militaries also ended in democracy fairly frequently, with 15 of the 25 regimes with such armies (60%) in the sample ending in democratic rule.

Figure 1. Authoritarian military types and transition outcomes.

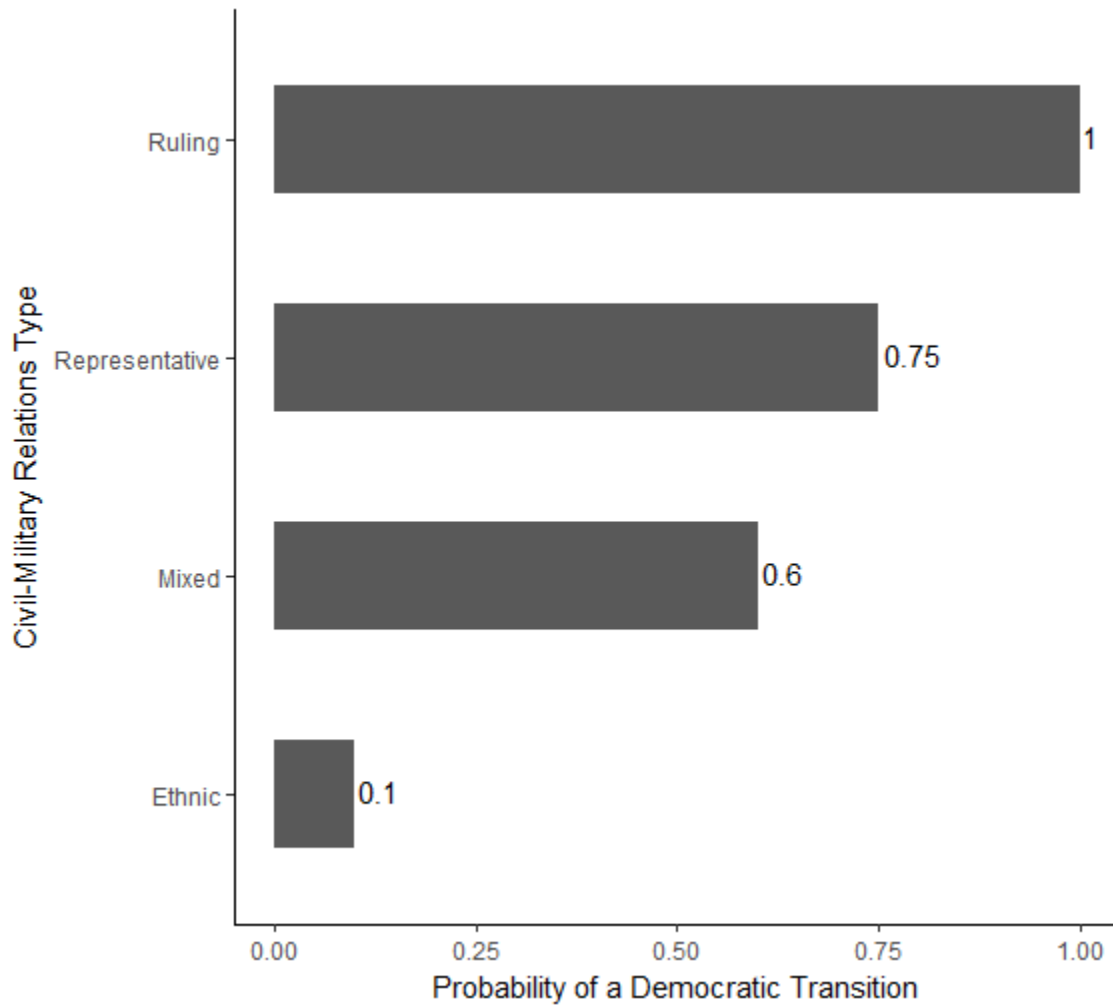
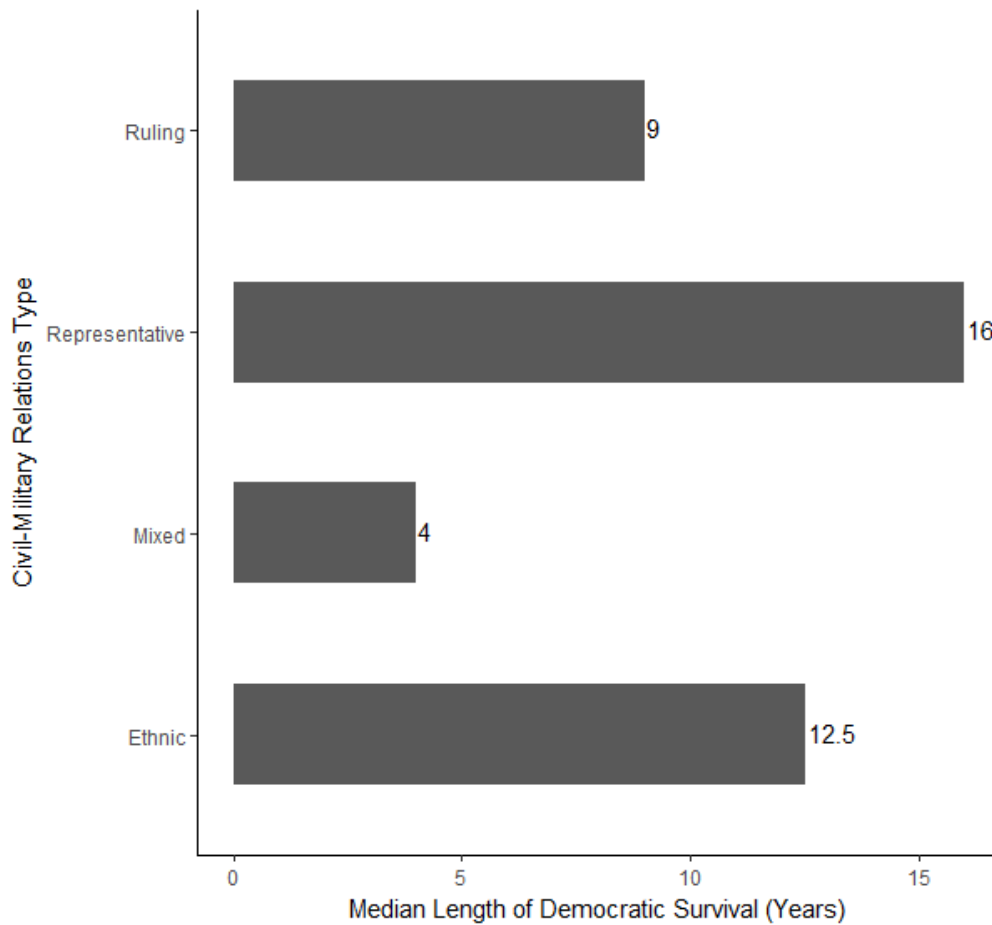


Figure 2 depicts the median survival times for the 33 democracies in the sample who transitioned prior to 2011. Median survival among regimes with representative armies was the longest, with a median time of sixteen years. By contrast, the median survival time for mixed militaries was just four and a half years. Perhaps in part because of their relative rarity, democracies succeeding regimes with ethnic armies face decent survival prospects, surviving a median of 12.5 years, three years longer than the sample median. Ruling regimes lasted an average of 9 years, shorter than regimes with ethnic armies but longer than regimes with mixed armies.

Figure 2. Authoritarian military types and survival outcomes.



These descriptive statistics provide strong support in favor the central arguments advanced here. Regimes with ruling armies experience higher than average democratization rates but lower than average consolidation rates, in line with my synthesis of the arguments in the existing literature. Regimes with ethnic armies are six times less likely than any other regime type to end in democracy, providing strong evidence in support of the argument that soldiers in such regimes favor the status quo. Regimes with mixed armies are moderately likely to transition to but unlikely to result in sustained democracy, supporting my argument that the combination of factionalism and military institutional dominance leads to uncertain democratization and poor

consolidation outcomes. By future of their high transition and survival rates, only regimes with representative armies face a strong likelihood of resulting in stable democratic rule.

Empirical results

To test the statistical significance of the hypotheses concerning democratic transition, I conduct logistic regressions below. The independent variables in the analysis are indicator variables constructed from Table 2. For all models, I used categorical dummies to denote authoritarian regimes with ethnic, mixed and representative armies; due to the small number of observations, ruling armies are either included in the reference category or dropped completely. A series of controls were selected both for significance and for common use in other studies of both democratization and military intervention. They are, in order of their appearance: GDP per capita, population size, military expenditure, former colonial status, and ethnic fractionalization. Further information about these controls, their sources, and some additional controls used can be found in an online data appendix.

The regression results are reported in Table 3 and are supportive of the argument. The *ethnic* coefficient is negative, strongly statistically significant and robust to the inclusion of all significant control variables, indicating that authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies are far less likely to transition to democracy than those with mixed or representative armies. Though the *mixed* coefficient is also negative, it is statistically significant only in the regression with the controls, indicating more modest support for the argument that regimes with mixed armies to democracy at less frequent rates than regimes with representative armies.⁴⁰

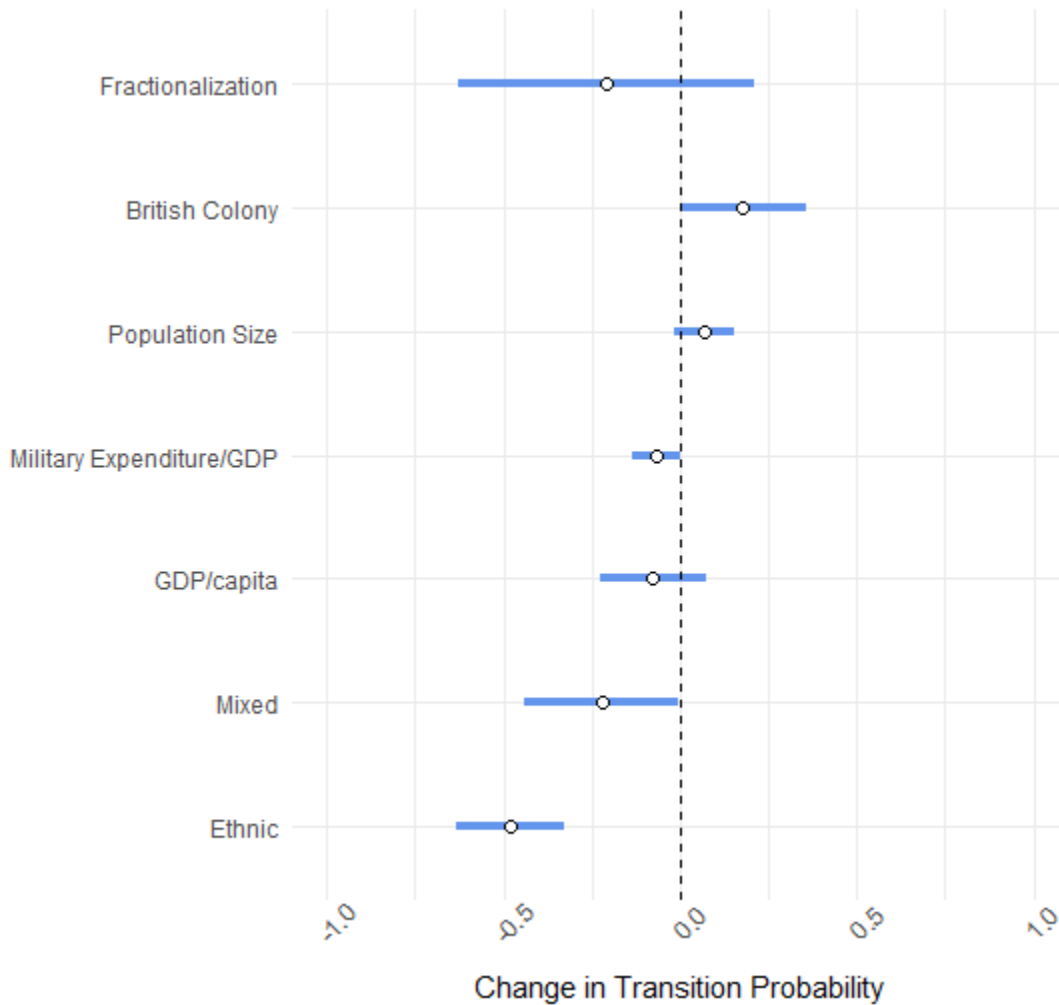
Table 3. Determinants of democratic transition.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Probability of Democratic Transition			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ethnic	-3.478*** (0.730)		-4.327*** (1.123)	-4.107*** (1.140)
Mixed	-0.875 (0.650)		-2.106** (1.014)	-1.895* (1.041)
GDP/capita		-0.638 (0.480)	-0.745 (0.668)	-0.655 (0.677)
Military Expenditure/GDP		-0.458* (0.253)	-0.562* (0.310)	-0.572* (0.317)
Population Size		0.680** (0.307)	0.633* (0.380)	0.582 (0.384)
British Colony		1.571** (0.707)	1.508* (0.853)	1.530* (0.850)
Fractionalization		-2.508* (1.492)	-1.985 (1.857)	-1.809 (1.873)
Constant	1.281** (0.506)	-4.553 (5.262)	-0.838 (6.084)	-0.916 (6.076)
Observations	88	71	71	68
Log Likelihood	-41.871	-37.808	-25.519	-25.255
Akaike Inf. Crit.	89.742	87.617	67.038	66.509

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Observations for *Ruling* militaries included in models 1-3 and excluded in 4.

Figure 3 presents a marginal effects plot from model 4, illustrating that the magnitude of the effects of authoritarian armies on democratic transition probabilities are quite large. Controlling for all covariates in Models 4 and 5, the last two coefficients suggest that authoritarian regimes with ethnic armies are 48% less likely and military regimes are 22% less likely to transition to democracy than authoritarian regimes with representative armies.

Figure 3. Marginal effects plot for transition probabilities.



The small sample size makes the testing of the survival hypotheses more challenging. Because only four regimes with ethnic armies transitioned to democracy, are either included in the reference category or dropped, along with the three ruling military observations. I therefore tested only the most two important observable implication of the theory: that democracies that succeed dictatorships with mixed armies face poor survival prospects, and that democracies that succeed dictatorships with representative armies face healthy survival prospects. To measure the impact of military type on democratic survival, I tested ten-year survival rates using logistic regression and on overall survival rates using a Weibull hazard model. For the logistic regression

model, all transitions after 2007 were dropped, leaving these models (1-5) with 32 observations. The survival model estimates overall survival time, and keeps all 37 observations by treating the 19 extant democracies in the data as right-censored. Due to the small sample size, a more limited set of controls was included. The selection of these controls, which include GDP per capita, economic shocks, and total population divided by the number of military personnel, were informed by bivariate correlation analysis with outcomes and with other statistically significant variables. These analyses are included in the data appendix.

The results of these regressions, presented in Table 4, support the argument. The mixed coefficient is negative and statistically significant in every specification, suggesting that military regimes are both less likely to last ten years and less likely to last as long on average than other authoritarian regimes. The representative coefficient is likewise statistically significant in every model except model 10, the Weibull hazard model with all controls and both ethnic and ruling military observations included in the reference category. These results provide strong evidence that democracies that succeed representative militaries last longer than those that succeed mixed ones, solid evidence that they last longer than average, and less evidence that democracies succeeding representative militaries last longer than either those that succeed ruling or ethnic militaries; without more data, the last proposition is not possible to empirically verify. A bivariate correlation matrix, presented in the appendix, indicates that none of the statistically significant variables are correlated with either mixed or representative armies, which further suggests that their effect on democratic survival is independent of the controls.

Table 4. Determinants of democratic survival.

Dependent Variables:

	Ten Year Democratic Survival (Logit)		Democratic Duration (Weibull)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Military	-1.974** (0.785)	-2.955** (1.408)	-1.397*** (0.521)	-0.814** (0.387)
GDP/capita		-2.460* (1.487)		-0.517** (0.227)
Military Personnel		2.154** (1.072)		0.711*** (0.232)
Economic Shock		-2.113 (1.338)		-0.717 (0.403)
Constant	1.099* (0.577)	4.793 (9.306)	3.684*** (0.442)	2.289 (2.196)
Observations	33	29	38	34
Log Likelihood	-19.30	-9.61		
Log Scale			-0.005 (0.185)	-0.314 (0.197)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	42.60	29.22		

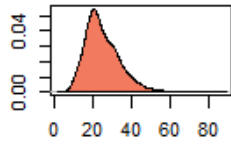
Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 4 presents the results of Monte Carlo simulations from models 8 and 10 to get a sense of the magnitude of the impact of mixed and representative armies on democratic survival. The effects are quite striking. The blue graphs depicts the distribution of expected survival times for democracies following mixed armies and representative armies (X1), the orange graph the expected survival times for other regime types, and the purple graph the difference between the two. According to these simulations, democracies that succeed dictatorships with mixed armies can be expected to last about 9 years, compared to 27 years for other types of regimes. Democracies that succeed dictatorships with representative armies can be expected to last 21 years, compared to 13 years for dictatorships that succeed other regime types.

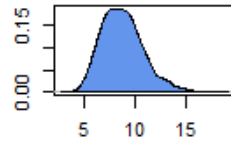
Figure 4. Predicted democratic duration, non-military vs military regimes (100,000 simulations)

Mixed Armies

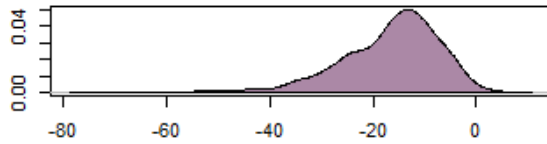
Expected Values: $E(Y|X)$



Expected Values: $E(Y|X1)$

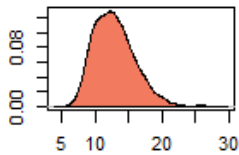


First Differences: $E(Y|X1) - E(Y|X)$

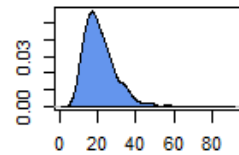


Representative Armies

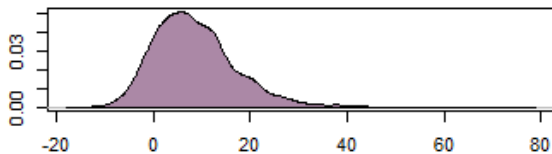
Expected Values: $E(Y|X)$



Expected Values: $E(Y|X1)$



First Differences: $E(Y|X1) - E(Y|X)$



A series of robustness checks, including dropping of cases where new coding was added or previous coding was modified, including only ruling or ethnic regimes in the reference category for the regressions on democratic survival, and adding in additional controls for the regressions on democratic transition are contained in an online appendix. None of these changes substantially impacts the results.

Case studies

The results of the regression analysis suggest that democratization in African countries is influenced by the interaction of military rule and ethnic stacking. The remainder of this paper uses case studies in Niger, Chad and Mali to trace the causal mechanism at work. The analysis adopts a “most similar systems” design: Niger, Chad, and Mali are three neighboring, landlocked former French colonies that are among the poorest countries on earth. Despite their similar size, GDP, shared colonial heritage, demographic and social similarities, and the fact that, prior to the early 1990s each was ruled by a dictator with a military background, the three countries have experienced markedly different democratization patterns (see Table 7).

The typology of authoritarian armies advanced in this article can help explain these divergent outcomes. For each case, the impact of military of the authoritarian regime in power as of 1990 is considered on the subsequent transitional politics and, if the result was democracy, the duration of the successor regime. In the first case study, I show how divisions with the Niger’s politico-military elite generated as a consequence of military rule engendered support for Niger’s democratic transition in 1991, and how a democracy-ending 1996 coup resulted from continuing political ambitions within Niger’s officer corps. In the second case study, I show how the Chadian regime’s obstruction of democratic change is undergirded by ethnically stacked parallel military institutions dependent upon the patronage of Idriss Déby, who successfully transmuted himself into a civilian dictator after seizing power in 1990. In the final case study, I show how Mali’s 1991 democratic transition and over twenty years of uninterrupted democratic role was a product of choices made by the regime of Moussa Traoré regime to limit the military’s political role and to refrain from cultivating ethnically stacked armies.

Table 5. Comparison of cases.

	1990 GDPk	1990 Life Exp	Pop (mlns)	Land Area (sq km)	Major Ethnic Groups	Major Religions	Army Type	Democracies since 1990
Mali	\$2,300	46	17.5	1.2mn	Bambara (34%), Fula (15%), Sarakole (11%)	Muslim (95%)	Representative (1968-91) Ruling (2012)	1991-2012, 2012-
Chad	\$2,600	47	11.9	1.3mn	Sara (26%), Arab (13%), Kanembu (8%)	Muslim (58%), Christian (34%)	Ethnic	None
Niger	\$1,100	44	18.6	1.3mn	Hausa (53%), Zarma (21%), Tuareg (11%)	Muslim (80%)	Military Rule	1991-1996, 1999-2009, 2011-

Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank World Development Indicators.

Case 1: Niger 1974-1996

On April 15th, 1974, the government of Hamani Diori, who had served as Niger's president since its independence in 1960, was overthrown in Niger's first coup d'état. Diori was replaced by Lt. Col. Seyni Kountche, who ruled at the head of Niger's first military regime. The supreme decision-making body of Kountche's government was the Supreme Military Council (SMC), which was initially composed of twelve military officers who helped implement the coup and four civilian technocrats. Military officers were also appointed to govern all of Niger's major departments, including the capital Niamey, and served extensively in other aspects of Niger's territorial administration.⁴¹ Like most African military regimes, both Diori and then Kountche after him stacked the armed forces with co-ethnic Zarma, who comprise about 20% of the population.

In 1987, Kountche died of a brain tumour and was replaced by the SMC with Ali Seibou, Kountche's army chief of staff and cousin. Seibou founded the National Movement for the Society of Development (MNSD) in an attempt to transmute Niger's governing structure into a

single party which the military controlled from behind the scenes. In December of 1989, the military appeared well on its way to continuing in power when Seibou ran uncontested and received 99% of the presidential vote. Two months after Seibou's election, however, mass protests broke out across Niger after soldiers attacked and killed fourteen unarmed student protestors. The killings prompted labor leaders to begin organizing mass strikes and demonstrations across. These culminated in a November 1990 general strike, in which an estimated 100,000 people marched on the streets of Niamey.⁴² With the civilian components of the MNSD supportive of a return to civilian rule and the military unwilling to enact the level of repression necessary to sustain the regime, Seibou was forced to cede power to a National Conference that led to the founding of Niger's first multiparty democracy in 1993.

The existence of a pro-military political party made the military's initial acceptance of Niger's democratic transition easier. Instead of maintaining its status as a single party, the MNSD simply transmuted itself into one of many parties. After close to two decades in power, the military was firmly entrenched itself into the country's political elite; both serving and retired officers served as ministers, mayors, prefects, ambassadors, and business leaders. The MNSD's leadership included these former officers as well as virtually all of the country's top businessmen and bureaucrats, and became the strongest party to contest the 1993 elections.⁴³ Though Seibou was forced to resign, party leadership passed on to retired colonel and former Interior Minister Tandja Mamadou. The MNSD did not end up winning the 1993 elections outright, but it did win the most overall seats (29 out of 87) and the widest national spread.⁴⁴ In order to prevent the MNSD from continuing in power, opposition forces were forced into an alliance of nine parties.

The military's continuing leverage over the political system also ensured that the politically experienced and ambitious officer corps remained more or less intact after the

transition. Indicative of the continued close linkages between the military and political spheres was the experience of Colonel Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara, a who had served as Kountche's chief of staff and held various ambassadorships before being promoted to army chief in Niger's democracy in 1995.

The continued political influence of serving and retired military proved fatal to Niger's democratic experiment. A strong showing by the MNSD in the 1995 elections forced its opponents to attempt a coalition government, which created a political impasse when it became clear that neither the MNSD nor its opponents were willing to make the compromises needed to share power. Amidst the impasse, Maïnassara, who had participated in the 1974 coup, organized his second democracy-ending coup in 1996. Over the protests of the opposition party and the international community, he attempted to legitimate his rule by entrenchment of a new military-dominated single party regime. Maïnassara's orchestration of the coup, previous political and coup-making experience, and attempts to entrench himself in power confirm the causal logic of the argument advanced here: that the principal threat to the consolidation of democracy after military regimes lies from the continued political influence of the former ruling class of soldiers.

The Niger case illustrates this article's argument concerning the tendency for military regimes to result in democratic instability. In his analysis of Niger during this period, Decalo writes: "the entry of the army into the political centerstage directly and immediately exacerbated intra-military and personality rivalries, gave political ambitions to officers hitherto subservient to civil and superior military authority, and tempted others to use their office for political gain."⁴⁵ After experiencing only one coup attempt (1964) in its first fifteen years of independence under civilian dictatorship, Niger would experience three successful coups along with at least three more failed coup attempts over the next twenty-five years of alternation between military rule

and democracy. The Niger case thus confirms the causal mechanisms of the argument advanced here: the fractured nature of Niger's military institutions lead the armed forces to support the 1993 transition to democracy, but the military's network of politically minded officers and close ties to the political elite led to Maïnassara's 1996 coup, which ended democracy after just six years.

Case 2: Chad 1974-present

In December 1990, Idriss Déby seized power from then-dictator Hissène Habré at the head of a successful rebellion. In contrast to Niger's steady stream of military heads of state and despite Déby's status as former chief of the Chadian army, Déby declared himself civilian president after three months of provisional governance. Though support from Chad's armed forces are crucial to Déby's grip on power, military officers have never served in extensive political roles.

Déby's base of power comes from his Zaghawa ethnic group and related sub-clans, which together represent just two percent of Chad's population but dominate all ranks of the armed forces and government.⁴⁶ The backbone of Chad's armed forces is a well-funded and highly trained Republican Guard of Zaghawa co-ethnics answerable only to Déby. It is composed of roughly 10,000 soldiers, most of whom were battle-hardened veterans of wars against Habré or who were recruited in Sudan, where a significant number of Zaghawa live. Chad's regular army is composed of as many as 60,000 troops, most of whom are not nearly so well-funded or equipped and many of whom have been incorporated into the military payroll in exchange for renouncing rebellion.⁴⁷

Loyal military institutions who did not want to lose their access to ethnic patronage are a key reason why Chad failed to liberalize after Déby seized power and why the country remains authoritarian. In 1993, Déby convened a national conference in response to pressure from France and other external donors, but was little phased by internal pressure from trade unions and other protestors, who staged mass demonstrations.⁴⁸ As the national conference was taking place, Déby's Republican Guard was busy committing "intermittent massacres" in the south, which were "roundly condemned" but which the delegates were powerless to stop.⁴⁹ Knowing he could act with impunity, Déby used the advantages of incumbency to prevent the formation of a viable opposition and won the 1996 presidential elections in a vote that was neither free nor fair.

Déby has gone on to win four subsequent elections, abolishing term limits in 2005. To this day, the southern temptation to rebel "has been discouraged by the brutality of security crackdowns that followed earlier rebellions."⁵⁰ In fact, the Zaghawa stranglehold over Chadian politics is so complete that, in recent years, Déby has faced more opposition from within his own party than from other ethnic groups.

Under Chad's dictatorship, soldiers serve as clients governed principally by ties of patronage and kinship to political elites, not as statesmen as they did in Niger. As a result, Chad's authoritarian security apparatus proved to be both more oppressive and more resilient. Without extensive corporate interests beyond the continuation of Zaghawa political hegemony nor political connections or experience equivalent to their colleagues in a military regime, Chad's soldiers have supported the regime's attempts to thwart democratization at whatever cost. The Chadian case therefore confirms this article's argument that a lack of political experience and close ties to the authoritarian elite lead ethnically stacked armies in civilian-led dictatorships tend to resist pressures to democratize.

Case 3: Mali 1968-2012

From 1968 until 1991, Mali was ruled by General Moussa Traoré, who seized power in a 1968 at the head of a military junta. Like the military rulers of Niger, Traoré attempted to stabilize his rule by civilianizing it, retiring, expelling, or arresting fellow officers that conspired against him during the early years of his dictatorship. Unlike them, Traoré ultimately succeeded in marginalizing the military's influence on Malian politics and personalizing his rule. Between 1974 and 1979, Traoré orchestrated a transition of power from the junta to the Democratic Union of the Malian People (UPDM). With the final dissolution of the junta in 1979 "Troaré effectively shifted his power base from a narrow military committee to a broad-based, grassroots political party of which he was secretary-general."⁵¹

Though the initial plotters of Mali's coup did appear to share some regional and ethnic affiliations,⁵² there appears to have been no further attempt by the Traoré regime to privilege the recruitment of co-ethnics into the officer corps or other parallel military institutions. Tuareg soldiers, for example, were actively recruited into the Malian army and continued to serve despite the region's history of rebellion.⁵³ The army's lack of direct political involvement and ethnic patronage of the regime initially helped stabilize Traoré's rule. Of the five-alleged coup plots against Traoré, only one occurred after Traoré became head of the UPDM, a 1981 plot by junior officers of the national police that was quickly discovered and put down.⁵⁴ The economy stagnated throughout much of the 1980s and popular unrest increased, yet Traoré nevertheless managed to remain in power through a combination of the selective use of force and concessions.

In 1991, Malian troops acting under the orders of Traoré opened fire on peaceful demonstrators, killing hundreds.⁵⁵ It was this act of repression, the countermobilization from civil society, and the international pressure it provoked that convinced Mali's soldiers to defect.

Shortly after these killings, soldiers across the country began laying down their arms, culminating in the arrest of Traoré by Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré. Touré and the officers who led the coup handed over power to civilian leadership, which organized multiparty elections in which the military played no role and endorsed no candidate. In June 1992, Alpha Konaré was inaugurated as president after his party won 76 of 116 seats in peaceful, free and fair elections.

The same lack of ethnic preferences or overt political role that led the Malian armed forces to support the country's transition to democracy helped keep it from attempting to seize power over the next 20 years. As former U.S. Mali Ambassador Robert Pringle argued in 2006: "the army is relieved to no longer be identified with a dictatorial regime" and "is very aware and genuinely proud of President Touré's role as the coup-maker who promised to return power to the people and actually kept his word."⁵⁶ Touré did end up succeeding Konaré as president. However, he did so after retiring from the military, without its explicit backing, and was a successful presidential candidate in no small part because of the reputation he had gained for his efforts to end military rule. In March 2012, Touré was ironically thrown out of power in a coup by mid-level officers shortly before he was due to leave office.

Despite Touré's untimely demise, by that point Malian democracy had lasted twenty years, nearly twice as long as the average length of democracies in this study's sample. The Malian case thus confirms this article's argument that civilian dictatorships who do not ethnically stack their armies tend to result in durable democracy. Unlike Niger, the Malian military lacked direct control over the country's political system and was not nearly so well networked into the ruling elite. Mali's military did not transmute itself into a political party and willingly retreated to the barracks after removing Traoré from office. Unlike Chad, Mali's

personalist dictator did not seek to stack the armed forces with co-ethnics as part of a broader strategy of ensuring the political hegemony of an ethnic elite. With no ethnic patron, the Malian military had no motive to use excessive force to quell mass protests for democratization, and instead acted to overthrow the dictatorship.

Conclusion

The results of this study illustrate the marked effects that military rule and ethnic stacking within the armed forces have had on democratization patterns in Africa. In order to be able to understand the military's likely role in future opportunities for democratization, two factors are crucial: whether the military rules as an institution and, if not, whether the officer corps or parallel military institutions contain officers primarily or exclusively recruited from the same ethnic group as the dictator. In the former case, a democratic transition is likely to occur but unlikely to last, as in Niger, whereas in the latter case, the military will likely support efforts to block the transition, as in Chad.

These findings carry two further implications for those interested in preventing political violence, war, and in fostering peaceful social change. First, rather than increase the capacity of partner military organizations in the name of fighting terrorism, a more effective approach is to encourage African regimes of all varieties to cultivate merit-based military institutions. Though this article reveals little firm conclusions concerning the relationship between military capabilities and democratization, strong evidence exists that soldiers who exceed their mandate by seizing power and military institutions that discriminate along ethnic and ethnic lines cause great harm. Authoritarian regimes who eliminate discriminatory recruitment practices in the

armed forces and keep the military out of power assure both political stability and vastly increase the chances of peaceful democratic change.

Second, my findings illustrate that different types of authoritarian military institutions require different approaches for those seeking to foster democratization while maintaining political stability. For countries with neither military rule nor ethnic stacking, mass popular protests may be particularly crucial in encouraging military officers to defect from the dictators they serve, and, after a transition, the military will likely continue to maintain a marginal political role. Tensions between officers who wield power and the broader military likewise make military rulers likely to stand aside in the face of unified protest. However, for democracy to last, officers that have served in a political capacity ought to be retired, dismissed, and recruited into alternate career paths. For civilian regimes with ethnic armies, efforts to force the regime to democratize through mass popular protest may result in further repression. Softer approaches to place pressure on such regimes to organize elections or integrate the armed forces may foster less risky and more meaningful reforms.

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- ¹ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, p.210.
- ² For an exception, see Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State” and “Military Loyalty.”
- ³ See, for example, Lee, *Defect or Defend*, 6.
- ⁴ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p.81.
- ⁵ Kuehn, “Midwives or Gravediggers?”
- ⁶ Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness”; Chenoweth and Stepan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*; Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolutions*.
- ⁷ Lee, *Defect or Defend*; Morency-Laflamme, “A Question of Trust.”
- ⁸ De Bruin, “Preventing Coups d’Etat.”
- ⁹ First, *Barrel of A Gun*; Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule*; Luckham, “The Military.”
- ¹⁰ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, p.215.
- ¹¹ Huntington, “Political Development”; Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*.
- ¹² Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization”; Geddes, Wright and Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown”; Debs, “Living by the Sword”; Kim and Kroeger, “Regime and Leader Instability.”
- ¹³ Geddes, Wright and Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown,” p.325.
- ¹⁴ Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization,” p.124; Geddes, Frantz and Wright, “Military Rule.”; Kim and Kroeger, “Regime and Leader Instability.”
- ¹⁵ Johnson et al, “Explaining African Military Coups”; Belkin and Schofer, “Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk”; Collier and Hoeffler, “Coup Traps.”
- ¹⁶ Tusalem, “Bringing the Military Back In”; Svulik, “Authoritarian Reversals.”
- ¹⁷ Teorell, “Determinants of Democratization”; Brownlee, “Potents of Pluralism.”
- ¹⁸ Jenkins and Kposowa, “The Political Origins of African Military Coups.”
- ¹⁹ Jackman, “The Predictability of Coups d’Etat”; Johnson et al, “Explaining African Military Coups”; Collier and Hoeffler, “Coup Traps.”
- ²⁰ Collier and Hoeffler, “Coup Traps,” p.16.
- ²¹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.449.
- ²² Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*.
- ²³ Roessler, “Ethnic Politics and State Power.”
- ²⁴ Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State.”
- ²⁵ Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization,” p.124.
- ²⁶ Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State” p.594.
- ²⁷ Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization”; Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics*; Kim and Kroeger, “Regime and Leader Instability.”
- ²⁸ Eg, Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule*; First, *The Barrel of a Gun*.
- ²⁹ Such regimes might also be considered “professional” regimes. Following the advice of Peter Feaver, I avoid the use of this terminology to avoid implying that non-ruling, non-ethnically stacked militaries are more operationally capable, another characteristic often associated with professionalism. See Feaver, “Civil-Military Relation” pp. 235-236.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Teorell, “Determinants of Democratization.”
- ³² Tusalem, “Bringing the Military Back In.”
- ³³ Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness”; Koren, “Military Structure.”
- ³⁴ Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State,” Op cit.
- ³⁵ See, for example, Siollun, *Soldiers of Fortune*, 6. See also Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule*.
- ³⁶ Geddes, Wright and Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown,” p.315.
- ³⁷ Bratton and van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*; Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State”; Harkness, “Military Loyalty.”
- ³⁸ Geddes, Wright and Frantz, “Autocratic Breakdown”; Harkness, “The Ethnic Army and the State.”
- ³⁹ The cases were: Burkina Faso (1981-1982, 1983-1987), Comoros (1976-1978, 2000-2006), Ethiopia (1975-1991), and Lesotho (1971-1986).
- ⁴⁰ For Model 4, a Wald test rejects the proposition *ethnic* and *mixed* coefficients are equal to one another, despite both being negative and significant ($\chi^2= 6.6, p=.01$).
- ⁴¹ Souley, “L’Armée et le Pouvoir.”

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- ⁴² Ibrahim, "Political Exclusion," p.29.
⁴³ Ibid., p.32-33.
⁴⁴ Ibid.
⁴⁵ Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule*, p.247.
⁴⁶ Massey and May, "The Crisis in Chad," p.444.
⁴⁷ Decalo, *Historical Dictionary of Chad*, pp.67-68.
⁴⁸ Ibid., p.23.
⁴⁹ Ibid.
⁵⁰ ICG, "Chad," p.12.
⁵¹ Imperato, *Historical Dictionary of Mali*, p.229.
⁵² Bebler, *Military Rule in Africa*, p.91.
⁵³ Keita, "Conflict and Conflict Resolution," p.127.
⁵⁴ Imperato, Op. cit.
⁵⁵ Pringle, *Democratization in Mali*, p.22.
⁵⁶ Ibid.

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