Studies in Conflict & Terrorism

ISSN: 1057-610X (Print) 1521-0731 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/uter20

Pro-Government Militias and the Repertoires of Illicit State Violence

Ariel I. Ahram

To cite this article: Ariel I. Ahram (2016) Pro-Government Militias and the Repertoires of Illicit State Violence, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 39:3, 207-226, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2015.1104025

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1104025

Accepted author version posted online: 09 Oct 2015.
Published online: 23 Nov 2015.

STUDIES IN CONFLICT & TERRORISM
2016, VOL. 39, NO. 3, 207–226
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1104025

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Pro-Government Militias and the Repertoires of Illicit State Violence

Ariel I. Ahram

Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs, Alexandria, VA, USA

ABSTRACT

Most studies of pro-government militias (PGMs) take a narrowly functionalist approach. This article sees PGMs as the product of broader processes of state formation and regime dynamics that generate distinctive repertoires of violence. The article uses a cross-national dataset to shows that low state capacity is singularly correlated with the appearance and activity of all forms of PGMs. Once militias are active, they tend to endure even after initial conditions change, suggesting a strong measure of path dependence in how states PGMs evolve. Democracy curbs the activity of semi-official PGMs but not informal ones. Different authoritarian regime sub-types have varying propensities for militia activity. These findings have major implications for efforts to address state frailty.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 19 February 2015
Accepted 30 September 2015

They came on horses, camels, and in trucks bristling with rifles and grenade-launchers. On the evening of 25 July 2003, a force of four hundred men, some government troops, and some members of the local militias, stormed the villages of Shoba East and Shoba West near Kabkabya in the North Darfur province of Sudan. They looted property and killed forty-two people. This was but the latest in a series of escalating violent incidents in the area. After an attack in April 2002 that killed two dozen, witnesses identified the perpetrators as *janjaweed* ("devil horsemen"), a neologism that denoted members of an Arab tribal militia. Although the perpetrators still loitered nearby, authorities indicated that they were under orders not to give chase and instead confiscated the villagers' own weapons. Sudan's Minister of Interior and the provincial governor visited Kabkabya and arranged for food and aid deliveries. Nevertheless, violence continued as the central government sought to quell the rebellion in the Fur homeland. While Sudan's Defense Minister maintained that these acts were carried out by "gangs of armed bandits" whom the state was unfortunately powerless to stop, Khartoum's complicity with the militias became increasingly apparent.[1]

Sudan is hardly alone in standing athwart Max Weber's touchstone conceptualization of states as monopolists over the legitimate use of force. Since the 1990s scholars have talked about "new wars" featuring a bevy of paramilitary fighters, warlords, criminal gangs, police forces, and mercenaries.[2] The greatest threats to human security—massacres, enslavement, and child soldiers—seem to stem from the inability or unwillingness of states to provide

CONTACT Ariel I. Ahram ahram@vt.edu Associate Professor, Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs, 1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 24060, USA.

security and maintain order.[3] The attacks on Shoba represent another example of the dangerous abdication of state responsibility. For the millions living without the protection of a strong, responsive, and effective state, life can come to resemble Hobbes' terrifying depiction of the war of all against all.[4]

Still, many of the features associated with these new wars are, upon close inspection, hardly novel.[5] The legitimacy versus illegitimacy of violence has always been less an analytical than a normative distinction. Different norms of legitimation can be used to justify different forms of violence, both by the state and by non-state actors.[6] Moreover, most historic states, as Michael Mann notes, "have not possessed a monopoly of organized military force and many have not even claimed it."[7] Rather, states tend to function as oligopolists of violence, competing and cooperating with party leaders, local strongmen, tribal leaders, criminals, and other private actors who retain their own armed retinues.[8] Morris Janowitz discussed the increasing prominence of militias and paramilitaries as critical features in the civil–military relations as far back as the 1960s.[9] More recently, Keith Krause describes the hybridization of violence enacted in concert between state and non-state institutions.[10] Progovernment militias (PGMs) like the ones seen in Darfur collaborate with the state to repress rebels and other common antagonists but do not enjoy the same legal standing or sanction to bear arms as the army and the police. As such, modern PGMs represent a form of state-organized crime.[11]

This article examines the puzzle of when and where PGMs are active and the factors that affect the propensity for PGM's emergence and persistence. Few studies consider the etiology of PGMs, focusing instead on their consequences for human rights and conflict dynamics. Those that do take militias as *explanada* generally rely on a functionalist logic derived from principal-agent (P-A) theory. State principals commission militias as agents to undertake violence where and when the state cannot. PGMs exist because they enact certain kinds of violence more efficiently and effectively than states can themselves. In particular, states deploy PGMs when they intend to inflict violence covertly and want to avoid censure or blame for violations of human rights. But this is a partial explanation at best. If avoiding responsibility were possible, why would a state ever invite blame for its violent suppression by using its legally recognized police and army instead of PGMs? What state *would not* call on armed non-state actors?

Instead of seeing PGMs as simply the most rational and efficacious response to specific security challenges, I draw on historical institutionalist and contentious politics literatures to argue that the activity of PGMs represents the enactment of distinctive repertoires of violence. These repertoires are the institutionalized interaction between state and non-state specialists in violence. The initiation and continuation of repertoires of violence depend less on overall efficacy than on familiarity, routine, and normative commitments to different kinds of power arrangements. While not directly at odds with the functionalist account, the findings of this article broaden our perspective on PGMs. Not surprisingly, higher capacity states are least likely to see any kind of PGM activity. More interestingly, past history of PGMs is strongly associated with increased chances of PGM activity, suggesting that PGMs are not simply the result of discrete and rational calculation but of habitus and familiarity with certain repertoires and techniques for devolving violence to non-state actors. Once a state has a legacy of PGM activity, PGMs continue to be active regardless of regime type, the degree of regime institutionalization and longevity, and the duration of individual rulers. Equally important, while more democratic regimes are less likely to see activity by semi-official

PGMs, democracies are not significantly different from authoritarian regimes in regards to the activity of shadowy, informal pro-government factions. There is, however, considerable variation between different sub-types of authoritarian regimes. Distinctive arrangements of political power within a different regimes and forms of legitimacy on which a regime is premised also affect the propensities for PGM activity in ways that confound simple functional instrumentalism.

The article proceeds in three sections. The first section discusses how reliance on P-A theory leads to narrowly functionalist understanding of PGMs and offers new hypotheses derived from the literatures of historical institutionalism and contentious politics, particularly its notion of repertoires. The second section presents a quantitative analysis to test these new hypotheses. The data on PGM activation are derived from the Pro-Government Militias Database (PGMD), a new cross-national dataset developed by Sabine Carey, Neil Mitchell, and Will Lowe. PGMD is a human coded dataset that interrogates news reports of the activity of armed groups working in support of or conjunction with government agencies. PGMD differentiates between *semi-official PGMs* that enjoy quasi-legal status but are separate from the regular forces and identified as a distinctive organization, like the Rondas Campsinas in Peru, and *informal PGMs* that are supported by or act on the side of the government but stand farther from the state's legal bureaucracy, like the Young Patriots in Cote d'Ivoire.[12] Using a random effects logit model, I show how state capacity, regime type, and the history of previous episodes of militias decrease and increase the likelihood of different types of PGM activity. The third section concludes by drawing out the implications of these findings for current policy debates regarding how the international community engages with frail states through security sector reform (SSR). The fact that different regimes types construe different relationships with PGMs and that PGMs persist beyond functional necessity suggest that many efforts to reform the security sector and centralize coercive control are bound for resistance or even outright failure. In certain circumstances accommodating PGMs may be the best way to maintain a livable political order.

State Capacity, Regime Type, and the Repertoires of PGM Violence

Two distinct but related groups of researchers have lately taken an interest in PGMs. On one hand, specialists in counterinsurgency (COIN) and irregular warfare have increasingly come to see PGMs as vital auxiliary force supplying local knowledge necessary to identify and root out guerrillas who would otherwise hide among non-combatants. Mandarins of COIN, like David Kilcullen, Seth Jones, and David Ucko, prescribe the recruitment of PGMs from among tribal elders, ethnic leaders, and other local powerbrokers.[13] Studies of Russian counterinsurgent efforts in Chechnya and the U.S. Sons of Iraq (SoI) program show that locally raised PGM forces were better positioned to identify insurgents hiding in their midst and could issue credible threats against uncooperative civilians.[14] Cross-national studies indicate that the introduction of PGMs can increase the odds of state victory during civil war and that PGMs provide counterbalancing against potentially coup-prone branches within the armed forces.[15]

On the other hand, many see PGMs as founts of brutality. Kimberly Marten and Michael Klare both warn that whatever stability states gain from mobilizing PGMs is repressive, parasitic, and ultimately ephemeral.[16] The presence of PGM is correlated with increased rates of torture, extra-judicial killing, and attacks on civilians in general.[17] Two factors lead PGMs to

abuse human rights. First is that regimes themselves commission PGMs to harm civilians in order to get the benefits from repression while avoiding censure from the international community. Second is that PGMs themselves tend to be unprofessional and ill-disciplined and are thus prone to use flagrant violence, regardless of the state's intent.[18] Mitchell, Carey, and Christopher Butler show that quasi-democratic and democratizing regimes—presumably those most sensitive to the audience cost of inflicting fragrant violence—are particularly associated with PGM activity.[19]

Undergirding these otherwise disparate assessments of PGMs is a common understanding derived, at least implicitly, from P-A theory. States commission non-state militia actors as agents to commit violence when specific asymmetries of information or capabilities make it most efficient to do so. The potential for the PGM agent to avert the control of their state principal and "go rogue" further highlights problems of oversight typical of P-A dynamics.[20] Relying on P-A theories, both the COIN and the human rights literatures focus on the impact of PGMs and neglect questions of why PGMs themselves exist and how they are activated. They simply take for granted that states have large pool of armed non-state actors that they can be used at will to respond to specific security challenges. PGMs exist, then, where and when states need them.

Still, looking at PGMs solely in terms of their intended effect is an overly narrow perspective. One of the key critiques offered by historical institutionalism is that function does not necessarily account for institutional origins. Rather, institutions established for one purpose can evolve to assume new and unanticipated roles. These roles can be orthogonal or contrary to the purposes intended when the institution first cohered.[21] Take the case of *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC). The AUC emerged in 1997, bringing together a number of regional paramilitary organizations under a common umbrella. Cattle ranchers and other landed elites began to establish these paramilitaries in the 1980s in response to kidnappings, extortion, and other violent tactics by the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—FARC) and other Marxist insurgent groups. The militias received backing from the army and right-wing political factions, which had a long history of supporting armed civilian mobilization in the hinterlands. By the 2000s, though, the AUC began providing protection to drug cartels, which were also targeted by FARC. The AUC soon became a partner in the drug trade itself, even as it avowed loyalty to the Colombian state and continued to fight against FARC.[22] Functionalism alone cannot explain the evolution from the state's ally to its adversary or the unique way the AUC makes claims on the state.

As an alternative to this functionalism, Charles Tilly, Elisabeth Wood, and other specialists in contentious politics offer a theory of violence centered on the idea of *repertoires of violence*. A repertoire of contention is a set of practices groups and individuals routinely engage in as they make claims against one another.[23] A repertoire of violence is a subset of these wider repertoires of contention and features various kinds of violence specialists, men (typically) who control the means of inflicting damage on persons and objects. The army and police are violence specialists, as are guerrillas and rebels. Beside these are a wide array of what Vadim Volkov calls violent entrepreneurs, who use coercion for private or apolitical purposes, including armed guards, tribal warriors, private security forces, thugs, kidnappers, bandits, and enforcers.[24]

Instead of discrete calculations of risk and reward, the concept of repertoires of violence emphasizes the ways state are accustomed and acclimated to managing different kinds of

violence specialists. Collective violence on any significant scale requires coordination, practice, and repetition. Military training in particularly entails nearly endless rounds of repetition ("drilling") that aims to breaking down operations and maneuvers into smaller, readily duplicable tasks. Once these tasks are mastered they can be deployed to a variety of contexts and circumstances, becoming part of a durable repertoire. The codification of standard operating procedure and the creation of norms further solidify certain repertoires of violence while making others more difficult to perform.[25] The debate in the United States and elsewhere about preparing for COIN versus conventional warfare illustrates the crucial role of repertoires of violence. Cultivating counterinsurgent capabilities, what Kilcullen called "armed social,"[26] entails a shift in the military's skills, operations, and procedures. Moreover, it required a new set of norms and redefinition of the military's own identity as a primarily constabulary force. Once institutionalized in training and built up in combat experience, the repertoires of counterinsurgency warfare were transmitted and adopted to other settings. However, many argue that cultivating these repertoires for fighting small wars diverted resources from training in large-scale joint forces operations. The atrophy of these alternative repertoires makes it progressively harder to respond to conventional threats like China or Russia.[27]

Thinking in terms of repertoires yields a number of important hypotheses that go beyond explaining PGM activity simply by pointing to rational calculation. The first such hypothesis focuses precisely on the path dependent nature of repertories:

Hypothesis 1: *States with a history of PGM activity at t_n are more likely to have PGM activity at t_{n+1}.*

Beyond mere functionality, familiarity, norms, and elite interests guide how states respond to security challenges and repertoires, in this sense, delimit the menu of available options.[28] Consequently, PGMs are not activated instantaneously at the whim of the state. Rather, states must adjust their repertoires of violence to accommodate the very idea of PGMs, identify violence specialists willing and able to collaborate, and find ways to assert control over their actions through incentives and rewards. The U.S. recruitment of Sunni tribes in Iraq as PGMs, for instance, emerged haphazardly through improvisation. In 2003, tribal leaders had offered to aid the United States in rooting-out foreign Al Qaeda infiltrators in return for guarantees of autonomy from the new Shi'i-dominated central government. Committed to upholding the coercive authority of the newly installed government, the United States initially demurred. Most U.S. attention was focused instead on rebuilding and retraining Iraq's security forces along the mold of the American military. With the security situation worsening dramatically through 2004 and 2005 and the state security forces still more or less dysfunctional, though, American field commanders sought out tactical partnerships with the tribes. It was only in 2006 and 2007 that the recruitment of Sunni tribes into SoI militias became officially sanctioned policy. The emergence of SoI hinged on a crucial bargain: The United States would provide weapons and jobs and prevented Baghdad's security forces from entering Sunni zones of western Iraq. In return, the tribes, for all intents and purposes, would be self-governing and responsible for rooting out insurgency.[29] Importantly, though, once these relationships were established, they became a template for future mobilization. With the Iraqi government facing renewed threat from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the United States worked again to recruit and arm Sunni tribes into a localized militia-based Iraqi National Guard.[30]

Two mechanisms are crucial in transforming undifferentiated violence specialists into illicit state agents, in essence creating the PGM as a categorical entity. First is brokerage, the building of connections between violent specialists and state officials that establish common targets for violence. Brokerage is also critical to establishing remuneration, reward, or other incentives for inflicting violence. Second is boundary activation and negotiating, which effectively identify the PGM as working on behalf of the state while remaining outside its legally designated bureaucracy.

These mechanisms interact to generate a range of different types of state–PGM relationships. Off-duty security officials can act as death squads carrying out extrajudicial (i.e., illegal) killings, representing an informal PGM that is nevertheless closely connected to the state.[31] PGMs can also be associated with the ruling party, becoming effectively incorporated as arms of the state. The Nazi Schutzstaffel (SS), for example, originated as a party militia but became so closely tied to the state that SS *gauleiters* held simultaneous posts in the state and party apparatus.[32] Some PGMs emerge through the splintering of rebel groups. With states providing material rewards to defectors and collaborators, some erstwhile antagonists form tacit and tactical alliances with the government. Here, boundary activation is especially important in the re-definition of foes and friends, either individually or at the factional level. In Sri Lanka, the Colonel Karuna Faction was formed by a senior officer defecting from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This group quickly became effectively an arm of the Sri Lankan military.[33] Other PGMs emerge from the "bottom up" in response to local conditions of insecurity and are subsequently deputized by the state. Thus, violent entrepreneurs—tribes, local village guards, youth groups, gangs, mafiosos, and even members of athletics clubs—can be pulled into the government's orbit by offers of material rewards, favors, or spoils.[34] In Syria the dreaded *shabiha* (apparitions) originated in smuggling and racketeering networks that operated under the protection of the ruling Assad family regime. In the midst of civil war that erupted in 2011, these young men flocked to defend their regime patrons and have been implicated in some of the worst atrocities against civilians.[35]

Once repertoires of PGM activation are solidified, institutional inertia makes their modes of managing violence progressively easier to duplicate and harder to displace. In this way, that state–PGM relationship takes on a measure of path dependence and durability.[36] Since gaining independence in the revolution of 1945–1949, the Indonesian state has repeatedly relied on a host of different armed civilian groups in confronting internal challengers. Nationalist leaders tried to find ways to recruit and control local guerrilla forces that had emerged during the revolution. By the 1950s the idea of recruiting militias in "people's war" was solidified on a doctrinal basis and was being used in counterinsurgency campaigns in Java, Sulawesi, Aceh, and elsewhere.[37]

Importantly, though, while the institutional replication of PGMs may help solve some security challenges, it can exacerbate others. The Indonesian army's focus on arming and mobilizing civilian volunteers took away from ambitions to replace the decentralized guerrilla army of the 1940s with a leaner and more centralized professional army. Militias had pronounced functional liabilities. Due to a lack of organization and training, militias proved woefully ineffective during the 1965 *Konfrontasi* with Britain and Malaysia. In fact, Indonesia's high military command knew that they had no effective way to counter Britain's better trained and organized professional army and worried about provoking a British counterattack.[38]

What inhibits or enables the emergence of repertoires involving PGM activity? Echoing Mann's work on infrastructural and despotic state power and Anthony Giddens on the relationship between the scope of state penetration and the intensity of violence, Tilly argues that there is an inverse relationship between the state's administrative capacity through formal and legal channels and the resort to extra-legal PGMs.[39] State capacity interacts with a second master variable, the level of openness and democracy. Democracies permit citizens leeway for the enactment of nonviolent repertoires of contention, such as petitions, demonstrations, and strikes. Democratic regimes face fewer challengers to incite a coercive response.[40]

This leads to two more hypotheses on the likelihood of PGM activity:

Hypothesis 2: *States with high measures of democracy are less likely to have PGM activity.*
and
Hypothesis 3: *States with high measures of state capacity are less likely to have PGM activity.*

As shown in Figure 1, capacity and democracy broadly define the parameters of the PGM repertoires. High capacity democratic regimes (top-right) tend to enjoy the greatest degrees of domestic peace. By providing equal rights and broad participation, high capacity democratic states can intervene in many conflicts through nonviolent means. They also have the most effective control over all manner of state and non-state violence specialists. They have a large enough bureaucratic apparatus to monitor their population and can use force overwhelmingly but also selectively, leaving little room for PGM activity.[41] High capacity authoritarian regimes (top-left) also tend to seek to uphold the distinction of the legal versus illegal sphere, but still make use of PGMs in times of crisis or when formal authority seems to be ineffective. Low capacity democratic regimes (bottom-right) may aim to uphold norms of equality and inclusion, but often lack the means to control coercion definitively. This is especially the case in new and inchoate democracies and semi-authoritarian regimes, where the distribution of political power and authority is often uncertain. Uncertainty gives rise to situations where elites themselves use informal PGMs to neutralize opponents.[42] The most likely place to see PGMs is among low capacity autocracies (bottom-left), in what Tilly calls the "Zone of Fragmented Tyranny." In regimes like the Democratic Republic of Congo or Burma, states themselves are teetering and the means of violence are widely disbursed. Here, according to Tilly, "warlords, bandits, and other political predators typically work their ways in collusion with or in defiance of the nominal rulers."[43]

	LOW DEMOCRACY	HIGH DEMOCRACY
HIGH CAPACITY	Moderately Likely	Least Likely *"Domestic Democratic Peace"*
LOW CAPACITY	Most Likely *"Fragmented Tyranny"*	Moderately Likely

Figure 1. Likelihood of PGM mobilization, based on regime democracy (openness) and state capacity.

New literature on the persistence and breakdown of authoritarian regimes allows an even finer-grained perspective on the ways different arrangements of power and premises of legitimacy affect the way states organize coercive institutions. [44] Picking up a thread first developed in Samuel Huntington's seminal work on political order,[45] new research on authoritarianism recognizes a tension between the solidification of an impersonal bureaucratic arm to carry out functions of the state under law and the ruler's personal prerogatives to punish and reward arbitrarily. Different political arrangements, such as the prominence of ruling parties, the creation of checks and balances, the periodic staging of elections, all affect this delicate balancing act. But while this literature frequently mentions different types of violence specialists, there has been little attention to specific relationships that exist between states and PGMs.[46] Notes Jennifer Gandhi apologetically, "dictators sometimes rely on paramilitary groups to terrorize both the civilian and military population. Systematic work on coercive institutions, however, is lacking."[47] Deductive reasoning and inductive data derived from qualitative studies of individual regimes, however, can address this lacuna and offer testable hypotheses about the link between the organization of various authoritarian regime sub-types and different forms of PGM activity.

***Hypothesis 4**: Personalistic regimes with very weak or no political parties are more likely to have informal PGM activity and less likely to have semi-official PGM activity.*

In patrimonial, personalistic, and sultanistic regimes, the individual ruler takes precedence over political parties, regime, or even state consolidation. Coup-proofing, not state-building, is their primary concern.[48] The Samozas in Nicaragua and the Duvaliers in Haiti, for instance, gutted the formal army while creating private forces answerable to the ruler alone. The policy of divide-and-rule within the elite even seemed to go so far as orchestrating small scale civil wars in which potential challengers were one by one pitted against each other and then rooted-out from within.[49] For this type of regime, activation of informal PGMs amounts to what Joel Migdal calls a "dirty trick" of leadership survival.[50]

***Hypothesis 5**: Military regimes are more likely to have informal PGM activity and less likely to have semi-official PGM activity.*

Military dictatorships tend to try to remain aloof from political engagement. They often regard semi-official militias as unprofessional interlopers encroaching on the army's monopoly over the use of force. But when military regimes adopt a wide purview of their mission to ensure national security, they may use informal and illicit means of suppression to neutralize perceived threats to stability. The military regimes of Latin America, for instance, were notorious for commissioning assassinations by off-duty police and military officers.[51] Interestingly, then, we would expect military regimes to have much of same characteristics as informal militias at least in quality, if not in actual scale of violence devolution.

***Hypothesis 6**: Single party authoritarian regimes are less likely to have informal PGM activity and more likely to have semi-official PGM activity.*

Single party regimes, as discussed above, are likely to construe very different types of relationship to PGMS and have a different attitude toward the devolution of violence from military and personalistic no party regimes. These regimes rely less on the personality of a ruler or

the army's relatively narrow institutional shoulders. Instead, the party apparatus itself is an instrument for popular mobilization. Party organs complement or supplement the state bureaucracy, and semi-official party militias effectively substitute for the state in enacting surveillance and deploying coercion, especially in small scale skirmishes and intimidation. [52] Since many of these regimes emerged from the struggles of revolutionary decolonization, they are more amenable to the idea of arming civilians. The links between party control and popular mobilization through militias may help explain the unique stability of this regime type.[53]

Hypothesis 7: *Monarchical regimes are more likely to have informal PGM activity and less likely to have semi-official PGM activity.*

Monarchical regimes held a special fascination for Huntington, who anticipated that these regimes would soon be overthrown by technocrats and army officers. In contrast, the more recent trend in authoritarian studies is to marvel at monarchical longevity. The understanding of civil–military relations in monarchical authoritarian regimes is empirically and theoretically cloudy. The inherent conservatism of a monarchical system can inhibit the creation of semi-official militias to serve as organs of ideological mobilization or coercion.[54] Yet, similar to personalistic regimes, informal militias may appear acting through personal loyalty to the king. For instance, pro-government militias loosely organized by the government and swearing allegiance to the throne have played a major part in suppression in Bahrain.[55]

Hypothesis 8: *Hybrid regimes, multiparty authoritarian regimes are more likely to have informal PGM activity and more likely to have semi-official PGM activity.*

So-called hybrid "electoral" or "competitive" authoritarian regimes that involve multiple political parties, such as in Malaysia, Kenya, Zambia, and Peru under Fujimoro, have perhaps the most daunting task of balancing institutionalization and personalization. They therefore have the most complicated and ambiguous relationship to PGMs. On one hand, the embedded power of a long dominant political party leads these regimes to behave in some respect like single party authoritarian regimes. Ruling parties reinforce their control over the state by creating semi-official, party-run PGMs. On the other hand, even controlled or "managed" elections provide moments of uncertainty about who is really in control—or who will be in control in the future. These moments are similar to the kinds of ambiguity witnessed in low capacity states and young democracies, in which informal PGMs can be mobilized both to strong-arm potential regime collaborators and to bar opposition from contestation.[56] Additionally, as Mitchell and Carey stress, it is exactly this type of regime that is especially sensitive to the audience cost of repression and likely to seek out informal PGMs to inflict violence with impunity.

Empirical Analysis

Data and Methodology

To understand when and where PGMs are active and inactive, I use the PGMD produced by Mitchell, Carey, and Lowe. PGMD is a human coded dataset that interrogates news reports of the activity or inactivity of armed groups working in support of or conjunction with government agencies. It covers 178 countries between the years 1981 to 2007, identifying 331

PGMs operating in 88 countries. Informal PGMs appear roughly twice as commonly as semi-official PGMs. On the other hand—and not surprisingly—semi-official PGMs have greater longevity, accounting for 654 of the 1,123 country-years, of 58 percent, in which all PGMs were present.

I employ a random effects logistical (RE logit) model to parse out the factors that lead to the emergence of all PGMs, and then to disaggregate between semi-official and informal subtypes. The RE logit model is similar to binary time-series cross sectional (BTSCS) with splines or cubic polynomials. Both use logit models to analyze dichotomous outcomes. Both are longitudinal and cross-sectional, meaning they can control for both inter-case and inter-temporal variation. There are two main reasons to choose RE logit over BTSCS for the purposes of this study. The first is the problem of left-censored data. BTSCS, like its cousin hazard/survival models, is primary geared toward understanding the time until a particular failure event occurs, in this case, the activity of PGMs. Cases that enter the dataset in 1981 with PGMs already active or have PGMs active for every year are essentially dropped. The second is the problem of multiple failures. A country-case that switches back and forth multiple times from active to inactive PGMs also create significant problems for BTSCS, which essentially treats each occurrence as a different case, even if it is in the same country.[57]

The first model uses three variables to establish a baseline for PGM activity. The first variable is the level of democracy (democracy_scale), measured by taking the average of the annual Freedom House and POLITY scores. The second variable is per capita GDP (GDP_PC) reported to the United Nations, which is a rough (but admittedly imperfect) indicator of overall state capacity in general and potential military force in particular. As James Fearon and David Laitin have shown, lower per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is strongly associated with elevated risk of state failure can serve as a proxy for overall state capacity.[58] Higher per capita GDP is also hypothesized to reduce the likelihood of PGM activity. The third variable is a one year lag on the dependent variable (lag1) to measure whether or not PGMs were active in that country that previous year.

In addition, I add a control variable to capture whether a country is actively experiencing civil war in the given country-year (internal_conflict). I produce this variable by cross referencing PGMD with the annual Uppsala/PRIO dataset on armed conflict.[59]

To measure regime type I use the Authoritarian Regime Dataset (ARD) developed by Michael Wahman, Jan Teorell, and Axel Hadenius. ARD is preferable to the other regime type dataset for the purposes of this study because the dataset focuses on the institutional means by which elites regulate the access to and maintenance of public authority rather than the social origins and characteristics of the elite itself. Second and more practically, ARD covers more relevant country cases (particularly small countries).[60] ARD classifies five types of authoritarian regimes, which will each be incorporated as dummy variables. Each type is robust and excludible, meaning each country case can only take one value: military (mil), monarchy (mon), one-party (onep), no-party (nop), and hybrid, multiparty authoritarian regimes (mul). The inclusion of hybrid multiparty authoritarian regimes is a crucial distinction not available in comparable datasets on autocratic regimes, such as the dataset developed by Barbara Geddes and her collaborators.[61] Using the ARD data, I also include control variables for regime's duration (regime_dur) and individual ruler's tenure (leader_tenure) measured in years, which may affect the propensity for PGM activity apart from regime characteristics overall. An overview of all variables is available in the Appendix.

Table 1. Random effects logit.

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5
DV	All	Informal	Semi-official	Informal	Semi-official
Lag1	28.5280**	50.49217***	18.4748**	46.0736**	17.5292**
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
GDP_PC	0.9998**	0.9997**	0.9999*	0.9997**	0.9999*
	(.002)	(.000)	(.048)	(.000)	(.034)
Internal_conflict	8.4675**	5.1591**	5.5140**	4.9096**	6.3229**
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Democracy_scale	0.8843**	1.0011	0.8326**		
	(.002)	(.978)	(.001)		
Mon_r				0.0815**	0.2688
				(.038)	(.360)
Mil_r				1.2511	1.4559
				(.405)	(.311)
Onep_r				0.3822*	2.7399**
				(.018)	(.008)
Nop_r				2.3367	3.8263
				(.224)	(.232)
Mul_r				1.3172	1.7956*
				(.211)	(.034)
Leader_tenure				1.0111	1.0320
				(.535)	(.222)
Regime_dur				0.9985	1.0025
				(.893)	(.880)
Constant	0.05403**	0.0257**	0.0110**	0.0241**	0.0020**
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Wald chi_sqr	458.6000	472.210	240.7500	489.220	266.4200
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Obs.	3775	3775	3775	4077	4077
Groups	158	158	158	168	168

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Results

I run a series of RE Logit models using with the dependent variables any and all types of PGM activity. I then separate out informal PGM activity and semi-official PGM activity. The results are reported in odds ration format that calculates the marginal change in the odds for militia activity on a yearly basis. Coefficients greater than one are essentially positive, indicating that a factor is positively correlated with an increased likelihood of PGM activity. Coefficients less than one are essentially negative, correlated with a decreased likelihood of PGM activity.

Table 1 presents the results from looking at the entire data pool. The results broadly support the hypotheses about the impact of past history of PGM activity (H1). The relationship between regime openness (H2) and state capacity (H3) is more subtle. In general, richer, stronger states have a much lower likelihood of all forms of PGM activity. Higher levels of democracy are singularly associated with lower rates of semi-official PGM activity, but do not affect informal PGMs.

To test the finer grained hypotheses about regime dynamics and individual regime types, I add the ARD dummy variables for each regime types and include capacity, conflict, leadership tenure, and regime duration, and the lagged dependent variables as controls. The results show some significant variation among authoritarian regimes sub-types when compared to democratic regimes. Single party autocracies (H6) have lower chances of informal PGM activation

and higher chances of semi-official party-based militias. The results do not support many of the other hypotheses about regime type. Monarchies (H7) have lower rates of informal PGM activation and are indistinguishable from democracies in semi-official PGM activation. Personalistic, no-party regimes (H4) and military regimes (H5) are also indistinguishable from democracies. Interestingly, hybrid multiparty authoritarian regimes (H8) in fact have *greater* likelihood of semi-official PGM activation. Overall, the lack of a specific pattern regarding informal PGMs reinforces the evidence from the earlier models that democracies and authoritarian regimes all make use of informal PGMs at similar rates. Most importantly, the inclusion of all the regime specific variables plus the control variables for regime duration (regime_dur) and for ruler's tenure (leader_tenure) does not substantially change the impact that past legacies of militia activity had. In sum, strongly consistent with H1, militias tend to endure even when regimes and individual leaders disappear.

Table 2 re-runs the models after taking out all conflict cases. A great deal of interest in PGMs focuses on their role in insurgencies. The findings in Table 1 clearly show that countries in the midst of civil war have much greater rates of PGM activation. But PGMs are not merely creatures of war. Within the dataset, country-years with internal conflict account for fifty six percent of all reported PGM activity and non-conflict years for 44 percent of PGM cases. Still, cases of internal conflict overall account for only 17 percent of the total country-year cases.

Bracketing only non-conflict cases, the findings in Table 2 emphasize the ways different regimes types adopt and deploy the different repertoires of PGM activation. Again, higher capacity states have lower rates of PGM activation. In contrast, states with a history of PGM

Table 2. Random effects logit (non-conflict years only).

	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
DV	All	Informal	Semi-official	Informal	Semi-official
Lag1	42.9226**	66.1564**	41.4048	64.3121**	33.63004**
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
GDP_PC	.9999**	.9996**	.9999*	.9996**	.9998*
	(.004)	(.004)	(.091)	(.008)	(.041)
Democracy_scale	.8453**	.9503	.7673***		
	(.001)	(.350)	(.001)		
Mon_r				.0000	.9634
				(.998)	(.982)
Mil_r				1.8681	3.145†
				(.105)	(.053)
Onep_r				.2938*	3.5679†
				(.047)	(.050)
Nop_r				1.2008	.3561
				(.871)	(.616)
Mul_r				1.7387†	1.7075
				(.090)	(.307)
Leader_tenure				1.0372	1.0226
				(.148)	(.578)
Regime_dur				.9949	1.0293
				(.761)	(.578)
Constant	.0084**	.0264**	.0113**	.0139**	.0005**
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Wald chi_sqr	260.69	210.57	117.73	226.93	118.55
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Obs.	3091	3091	3091	3365	3365
Groups	152	152	152	164	164

†$p < .1$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

activation have much higher chances of subsequent PGM activation. Levels of democracy decrease the rate of semi-official PGM activation but not informal PGMs. Regarding informal PGMs, the overall level of democracy does not seem to have a significant impact, but differences in authoritarian regime types do. Providing some support to H6 and H8, once conflict periods are removed, one party regimes have significantly lower likelihood and hybrid multiparty authoritarian regime have significantly higher likelihood of informal PGM activity. Again, though, the most substantial and most consistent finding in Table 2 is support of the hypotheses about the legacies of past militia activity, regardless of differences in regimes, leadership, or regime duration.

Conclusion

The prevalence of private violence specialists working in conjunction with states pushes against the Weberian notion that states alone possess the monopoly over force. Of course, Weber's definition is more a maximal ideal-type than empirical description. Looking beyond this presumption is crucial for understanding the role that both state and non-state actors play in maintaining different forms of political order.

This article shows that high capacity democracies are least likely to devolve coercive power to armed non-state actors. Low capacity autocracies, like Zimbabwe, Laos, or Mauritania, are the most likely to see PGM activity. Looking closer at the sub-types of authoritarian regimes, single party regimes, no-party regimes, and multiparty authoritarian regimes are the most likely to see activity of semi-official militias, while military and monarchical regimes are virtually indistinguishable from democratic regimes. Multiparty authoritarian regimes are uniquely associated with informal militias (once active conflict years are removed).

These findings support some aspects of the functionalism explanation for PGMs but also highlight its limitations. Plausible deniability can account for why hybrid multiparty authoritarian regimes have a special affinity for informal PGMs. Opaque, informal relationships with violence specialists provide a means of inflicting violence while skirting domestic and international audience cost. In conditions of civil wars, PGMs can offer ways to attack insurgents that go beyond the means of the regular army policy. Still, such explanations cannot account for why single party regimes and other types of autocracies seem to abjure informal PGM while relying more heavily on semi-official ones. It also cannot explain the durability of PGMs. Once a state has active PGMs, it is less likely to see them disappear, even as individual leaders turn over and regimes themselves transform or dissolve. States are, in effect, "locked-in" to modes of violence devolution. These empirical results push for a broader perspective that includes how norms, legitimacy, and power relationships within regimes contribute to the crystallization of different repertoires for managing interaction between state and non-state violence specialists. Once these repertoires are embedded, they become progressively harder to dislodge and easier to repeat.

Greater attention to the variegated forms state–PGM relationships has significant implications for the way the international community responds to the proliferation of armed non-state actors. Weber's notion of a violence-monopolizing state is deeply engrained in orthodox approaches to SSR and post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). These measures are generally couched as part of a wider process of diffusing democratic norms.[62] The international community funnels technical advisors, funding, and

equipment to weak states in the hope of providing them the means to centralize control over violence. Increasing the effectiveness of licit agents of coercion and improving civilian oversight obviates the need to resort to repertoires of PGM violence.[63]

Yet such a generic approach fails to account for the durability of PGMs or the ways different types of regimes generate diverse forms of relationship with violence specialists.[64] PGMs often expect better treatment than rebel combatants during DDR as a reward for their perceived loyalty and service to the state. This makes PGM disarmament especially difficult.[65] Democratization itself has an uneven impact in curbing PGMs. States whose political systems combine democratic and undemocratic elements are among the most prone to the activation of informal PGMs. Rather than preventing human rights violations, externally sponsored SSR and democratization may then empower regimes to use their new-found coercive power for ulterior purposes of repression.[66] A further obstacle comes from the nature of the external interventions into weak states themselves. The international community itself may subvert SSR and DDR processes and turn to PGMs if indigenous armies and police prove irredeemably inept or corrupt.[67] For instance, the United States cultivates its own relationship with Afghan warlords to provide local security rather than rely on the still-dysfunctional Afghan national army and police.[68]

The conjunction of partial regime opening and security sector reform can intensify the propensity for militia mobilization by introducing new elements of uncertainty that offer incentive and opportunity to attack opposition. In these circumstances, informal militias acting as vigilantes provide the ideal surreptitious means to do so. Thus, militias play a particularly prominent role in electoral and post-election in violence in places like Kenya, even as SSR proceeds apace.[69] Rather than strengthen formal state controls over the implementation of violence, these measures often only further reinforce the repertoires of illicit PGM activation.[70] Libya offers another recent illustration of this predicament. Three years after revolutionary forces toppled the Qaddhafi regime, efforts to streamline the state's armed forces continue to falter. Former rebel commanders not only refuse to stand down, but also insist on retaining their autonomy and independence. Despite impressive official-sounding imprimaturs, they operate with only nominal oversight from the central government. The government has little choice but to continue relying on militias, especially those associated with the larger tribal groups.[71]

More research must be conducted on the varieties of PGM–state relations and the different forms that PGM activity take. The proclivity of no party, personalistic regimes for semi-official militias (rather than informal ones) is especially puzzling and warrants further consideration. The apparent path dependence of the repertoires of PGM activation also highlights the need to investigate PGM durability and longevity, the ways in which state–PGM relationships evolve and why certain PGMs recede. Some PGMs may be easily inducted and integrated into the formal security apparatus. Others can be fully disarmed and disbanded. Still, in the absence of an effective and responsive state, some militias may even continue to provide local security. Such a hybrid solution can get societies to a "good enough governance" condition that allows at least some measures of human development.[72] More effectual policies toward state weakness and the devolution of violence can only emerge by understanding the embedded institutional arrangements that constrain collaboration between the state and the myriad of violence specialists surrounding it.

Funding

This work was supported by the Virginia Tech Institute for Society, Culture, and Environment [grant number 119401].

Notes

1. Samuel Totten, *An Oral and Documentary History of the Darfur Genocide*. Vol. 1. (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011), p. 252; Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General, Geneva, 25 January 2005. Available at http://www.un.org/News/dh/sudan/com_inq_darfur.pdf (accessed 19 March 2007). On Kabkaya, see p. 68; See also Usman A.Tar, " The Perverse Manifestations of Civil Militias in Africa: Evidence from Western Sudan," *Peace, Conflict, and Development* 7 (2005), pp. 135–173
2. Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organizing Violence in a Global Era*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); John Mueller, *The Remnants of War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); Martin Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
3. U.N. Report on Protection of Civilians, S/1999/957; See also, Michael Ignatieff, "Intervention and State Failure," in N. Mills and K. Brunner, eds., *The New Killing Fields: Massacre and the Politics of Intervention* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), p. 236.
4. Neil A. Englehart, "State Capacity, State Failure, and Human Rights", *Journal of Peace Research* 46(2) (2009), pp. 163–180; Ian Loader and Neil Walker, *Civilizing Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
5. Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' and 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics* 54(1) (2001), pp. 99–118; Edward Newman, "The 'New Wars' Debate: A Historical Perspective is Needed." *Security Dialogue* 35(2) (2004), pp. 173–189; Patrick Mello, "In Search of New Wars: The Debate about a Transformation of War," *European Journal of International Relations* 16(2) (2010), pp. 297–309.
6. Vittorio Bufacchi, "Two Concepts of Violence," *Political Studies Review* 3(2) (2005), pp. 193–204; Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984), pp. 54–60.
7. Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume 1: A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 11.
8. A.D. Smith, "State-Making and Nation-Building," in John A. Hall, ed., *States in History* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Andreas Mehler, "Oligopolies of Violence in Africa South of the Sahara," *Nord-Süd aktuell* 18(3) (2004), pp. 539–548; Željko Branović and Sven Chojnacki, "The Logic of Security Markets: Security Governance in Failed States," *Security Dialogue* 42(6) (2011), pp. 553–569.
9. Morris Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations: The Military in the Political Development of New Nations* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, [1964]1988).
10. Keith Krause, "Hybrid Violence: Locating the Use of Force in Postconflict Settings," *Global Governance* 18(1) (2012), pp. 39–56.
11. William Chambliss, "State-Organized Crime," *Criminology* 27(2) (1989), pp. 183–208.
12. Sabine Carey, Neil Mitchell, and Will Lowe, "States, the Security Sector, and the Monopoly of Violence: A New Database on Pro-Government Militias," *Journal of Peace Research* 50(2) (2013), pp. 249–258.
13. David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Seth Jones, The Strategic Logic of Militias, RAND Working Paper WR-913-SOCOM, January 2012. Available at http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2012/RAND_WR913.pdf (accessed 16 August 2013); David H. Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era: Transforming the US Military for Modern Wars* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009).
14. Jason Lyall, "Are Coethnics More Effective Counterinsurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War," *American Political Science Review* 104(1) (2010), pp. 1–20; Stephen Biddle, Jeffrey A.

Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007?," *International Security* 37(1) (2012), pp. 7–40.

15. Goran Peic, "Civilian Defense Forces, State Capacity, and Government Victory in Counterinsurgency Wars." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37(2) (2014), pp. 162–184; Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Böhmelt, "Do Democracies Engage Less in Coup−Proofing? On the Relationship between Regime Type and Civil–Military Relations," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8(4) (2012), pp. 355–372; Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer. "Coup Risk, Counterbalancing, and International Conflict," *Security Studies* 14(1) (2005), pp. 140–177; Erica de Bruin, War and Coup Prevention in Developing States, Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2014.
16. Kimberly Marten, *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012); Michael Klare, "The Deadly Connection: Paramilitary Bands, Small Arms Diffusion, and State Failure," in Robert I. Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
17. Neil Mitchell, Sabine Carey, and Christopher Butler, "The Impact of Pro-Government Militias on Human Rights Violations," *International Interactions* 40(5) (2014), pp. 812–836; Dara Kay Cohen and Raginald Nordås, "Why Do Militias Attack Civilians? Violence by Militias in Recent Armed Conflicts," Paper presented at International Studies Association convention, San Francisco, 2013; Govinda Clayton and Andrew Thomson. "The Enemy of My Enemy is My Friend… The Dynamics of Self-Defense Forces in Irregular War: The Case of the Sons of Iraq," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37(11) (2014), pp. 920–935.
18. Neil Mitchell, *Agents of Atrocity: Leaders, Followers and Human Rights Violations in Civil Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 108–109.
19. Mitchell, Carey, and Butler, "The Impact of Pro-Government Militias."
20. Peter Thompson, *Armed Groups: The 21st Century Threat* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), pp. 156–66; for broader discussion, see Jean-Jacques Laffont and David Martimort, *The Theory of Incentives: The Principal-Agent Model* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
21. Paul Pierson, "The Limits of Design: Explaining Institutional Origins and Change," *Governance* 13(4) (2000), pp. 475–499.
22. Mauricio Romero, "Reform and Reaction: The Paramilitary Groups in Colombia," in Diane Davis and Anthony W. Pereira, eds., *Irregular Armed Forces and Their Role in Politics and State Formation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, "Telling the Difference: Guerrillas and Paramilitaries in the Colombian War," *Politics & Society* 36(1) (2008), pp. 3–34.
23. Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Elisabeth Jean Wood, "The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008), pp. 539–561; Jutta Bakonyi and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, "The Mosaic of Violence - An Introduction," *Civil Wars* 11(4) (2009), pp. 397–413.
24. Vadim Volkov, *Violent Entrepreneurs: The Use of Force in the Making of Russian Capitalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).
25. Bertrand M. Roehner and Tony Syme, *Pattern and Repertoire in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 22–40; Ariel Ahram, *Proxy Warriors: The Rise and Fall of State-Sponsored Militias* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 20, 541; Risa A. Brooks, "The Impact of Culture, Society, Institutions, and International Forces on Military Effectiveness," in Risa A. Brooks and Elizabeth Stanley, eds., *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 22.
26. David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency," *Marine Corps Gazette* 90 (2006), p. 33.
27. Matthew Balin, Why So Conventional?, America's Propensity to Wage Traditional Large-Scale Warfare, M.S. Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 2013; Gian Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York: New Press, 2013); Mitchell Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?," in Markus D. Dubber and Mariana Valverde, eds.,

The New Police Science: The Police Power in Domestic and International Governance (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

28. James Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29(4) (2000), p. 517.
29. John McCary, "The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives," *The Washington Quarterly* 32 (1) (2009), pp. 43–59; Bing West, *The Strongest Tribe: War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq* (New York: Random House, 2008), p. 24; Eric Herring and Glen Rangwala, *Iraq in Fragments: The Occupation and its Legacy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 88–91, 112.
30. Fred Wehrey and Ariel Ahram, "The National Guard in Iraq: A Risky Strategy to Combat the Islamic State," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 23 September 2014. Available at http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/09/23/national-guard-in-iraq-risky-strategy-to-combat-islamic-state/hppn?reloadFlag=1 (accessed 14 October 2014).
31. Bruce Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner, eds., *Death Squads in Global Perspective: Murder with Deniability* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
32. George Stein, *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War, 1939–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Herbert S. Levine, "Local Authority and the SS State: The Conflict over Population Policy in Danzig-West Prussia, 1939–1945." *Central European History* 2(4) (1969), pp. 331–355.
33. Paul Staniland, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Insurgent Fratricide, Ethnic Defection and the Rise of Pro-State Paramilitaries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(1) (2012), pp. 16–40. See also, Fotini Christia, *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 32–35; Håvard Mokleiv Nygård and Michael Weintraub. "Bargaining Between Rebel Groups and the Outside Option of Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27(3) (2015), pp. 557–580.
34. Shane Barter, "State Proxy or Security Dilemma? Understanding Anti-Rebel Militias in Civil War," *Asian Security* 9(2) (2013), pp. 75–92; Geraint Hughes and Christian Tripodi. "Anatomy of a Surrogate: Historical Precedents and Implications for Contemporary Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 20(1) (2009), pp. 1–35.
35. Peter Keller, "Ghosts of Syria: Diehard Militias Who Kill in the Name of Asad," *The Guardian*, 31 May 2012. Available at http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/31/ghosts-syria-regime-shabiha-militias (accessed October 2015); Yassin al-Haj Salih, The Syrian Shabiha and their State, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, April 2012. Available at http://www.lb.boell.org/downloads/Yassin_al-Haj_Saleh-The_Syrian_Shabiha_and_Their_State.pdf (accessed 19 November 2013).
36. Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," *American Political Science Review* 94(2) (2000), pp. 251–267; Jörg Sydow, Georg Schreyögg, and Jochen Koch, "Organizational Path Dependence: Opening the Black Box," *Academy of Management Review* 34 (4) (2009), pp. 689–709.
37. Geoffrey Robinson, "People's War: Militias in East Timor and Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 9(3) (2001), pp. 271–318; Robert Cribb "From Total People's Defence to Massacre," in Freek Colombij and Thomas Lindblad, eds., *Roots of Violence in Indonesia: Contemporary Violence in Historical Perspective* (Leiden, The Netherlands: KITLV Press, 2002).
38. Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1988), pp. 71–75; J. A. C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi: The Indonesian-Malaysia Dispute, 1964–1966* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 210–215, 259–260.
39. Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume 2* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 60; Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence: Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), p. 15; James Ron, "Savage Restraint: Israel, Palestine and the Dialectics of Legal Repression," *Social Problems* 47(4), p. 450.
40. Rudolph J. Rummel, *Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), chapter 5; Christian Davenport, "State Repression and Political Order," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007), pp. 1–23.
41. Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Arms in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 31; Christian

Davenport, *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 26.

42. John Gledhill, "Competing for Change: Regime Transition, Intrastate Competition, and Violence," *Security Studies*, 21(2) (2012), pp. 43–82; Sunil Dasgupta, Internal Security and Military Reorganization: The Rise of Paramilitaries in Developing Societies, Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2003, pp. 477–480; this argument is especially prominent in discussions of democratization in Africa in the 1990s. See Linda Kirschke, "Informal Repression, Zero-Sum Politics and Late Third Wave Transitions," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 38(3), pp. 383–405; Philip Roessler, "Donor-Induced Democratization and the Privatization of State Violence in Kenya and Rwanda," *Comparative Politics* 37(2) (2005), pp. 207–227.
43. Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, p. 42.
44. Beatriz Magaloni, "Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule," *Comparative Political Studies* 41(4/5) (2008), pp. 715–741; Carles Boix and Milan W. Svolik, "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government: Institutions, Commitment, and Power-Sharing in Dictatorships." *Journal of Politics* 75(2) (2013), pp. 300–316; Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1) (1999), pp. 115–144.
45. Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 12, 176–192.
46. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 58–59; Diane E. Davis, "Contemporary Challenges and Historical Reflections on the Study of Militaries, States, and Politics," in Diane E. Davis and Anthony W. Pereira, eds., *Irregular Armed Forces and Their Role in Politics and State Formation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 10–11; Christian Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," *Journal of Peace Research* 44(4) (2007), pp. 485–504.
47. Jennifer Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 76.
48. James Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security* 24(2) (1999), pp. 131–165.
49. H. E. Chehabi and Juan J. Linz. "A Theory of Sultanism 1: A Type of Nondemocratic Rule," in H. E. Chehabi and Juan Linz, eds., *Sultanistic Regimes* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Richard Snyder, "Paths Out of Sultanistic Regimes: Combining Structural and Voluntarist Perspectives," in *Sultanistic Regimes*.
50. Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 224–228.
51. Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations*, pp. 45–47; Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, [1962]2002), p. 8; Eric Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp. 48, 54; Claude Emerson Welch and Arthur K. Smith. *Military Role and Rule: Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations*. (North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press, 1974), pp. 16, 41.
52. Whether or not these semi-official militias actually fulfilled this function is another matter. On the Soviet Union, see Louise Shelley, *Policing Soviet Society: The Evolution of State Control* (New York: Routledge, 2005), chapter 6; On China, see Jane Teufel Dreyer, "The Chinese Militia Citizen-Soldiers and Civil-Military Relations in the People's Republic of China," *Armed Forces & Society* 9(1) (1982), pp. 63–82.
53. Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*, p. 67; Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes," *Journal of Democracy* 24(3) (2013), pp. 5–17; Ahram, *Proxy Warriors*, pp. 4–6, 21–22; Benjamin Smith, "Life of the Party: The Origins of Regime Breakdown and Persistence under Single-Party Rule," *World Politics* 57(3) (2005), pp. 421–451.
54. Kamrava, Mehran. "Military Professionalization and Civil–Military Relations in the Middle East," *Political Science Quarterly* 115(1) (2000), p. 90.
55. Alakhbar English, "Pro-Regime Militia Attacks Bahraini Civilians," 11 April 2012. Available at http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/6096 (accessed 11 August 2014).

56. Marc Morjé Howard and Philip G. Roessler, "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2) (2006), pp. 365–381; Valerie Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes," *World Politics* 62(1) (2009), pp. 43–86; Dan Slater, "Can Leviathan be Democratic? Competitive Elections, Robust Mass Politics, and State Infrastructural Power," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43(3/4) (2008), pp. 252–272.
57. Nathaniel Beck, Jonathan N. Katz, and Richard Tucker, "Taking Time Seriously: Time-Series-Cross-Section Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable," *American Journal of Political Science* 42(4) (1998), pp. 1260–1288; David B. Carter, and Curtis S. Signorino, "Back to the Future: Modeling Time Dependence in Binary Data," *Political Analysis* 18(3) (2010), pp. 271–292.
58. James Fearon, and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97(1) (2003), pp. 75–90; Hillel Soifer, "State Infrastructural Power: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43(3/4) (2008), pp. 231–251; Cullen Hendrix, "Measuring State Capacity: Theoretical and Empirical Implications for the Study of Civil Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 47(3) (2010), pp. 273–285.
59. Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2010," *Journal of Peace Research* 48(4) (2011), pp. 525–536.
60. Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell, "Pathways from Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 18(1) (2007), pp. 143–156; Michael Wahman, Jan Teorell, and Axel Hadenius, "Authoritarian Regime Types Revisited: Updated Data in Comparative Perspective," *Contemporary Politics*, 19(1) (2013), pp. 19–34.
61. Barbara Geddes, J. Wright, and E. Franz. 2012. New Data on Autocratic Regimes. Manuscript.
62. Thomas Bruneau and Harold Trinkunas, "Democratization as a Global Phenomenon and its Impact on Civil-Military Relations," *Democratization* 13(5) (2006), pp. 776–790; Aurel Croissant, David Kuehn, Paul Chambers, and Siegfried Wolf, "Beyond the Fallacy of Coup-Ism: Conceptualizing Civilian Control of the Military in Emerging Democracies," *Democratization* 17(5) (2010), pp. 950–975.
63. Michael Miklaucic, ed., *Monopoly of Force: The Nexus of DDR and SSR* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2011); Barnett Rubin, "Constructing Sovereignty for Security," *Survival* 47(4) (2005), pp. 93–106.
64. Andreas Mehler, "Why Security Forces Do Not Deliver Security Evidence from Liberia and the Central African Republic," *Armed Forces & Society* 38(1) (2012), pp. 49–69; Alpaslan Özerdem, "Insurgency, Militias and DDR as Part of Security Sector Reconstruction in Iraq: How Not to Do It." *Disasters* 34(1) (2010), pp. S40–S59.
65. Eric Shibuya, *Demobilizing Irregular Forces* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2012), p. 98.
66. Eric Scheye and Gordon Peake, "To Arrest Insecurity: Time for a Revised Security Sector Reform Agenda," *Conflict, Security, and Development* 5(3) (2005), pp. 295–327; Chris Smith, "Security-Sector Reform: Development Breakthrough or Institutional Engineering," *Conflict, Security, and Development* 1(1) (2001), pp. 5–20.
67. David Edelstein, "Foreign Militaries, Sustainable Institutions, and Postwar Statebuilding," in Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, eds., *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 81–103.
68. Dipali Mukhopadhyay, *Warlords, Strongman Governors, and the State in Afghanistan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
69. See Amnesty International, "Police Reform in Kenya: 'A Drop in the Ocean,'" 2013. Available at http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR32/001/2013/en/9c3fb77e-16e2-49e0-94ec-d3c9f0e9f9e2/afr320012013en.pdf (accessed 2 May 2014).
70. Roberto Belloni, "Hybrid Peace Governance: Its Emergence and Significance," *Global Governance* 18(1) (2012), pp. 21–38; Annika Björkdahl and Kristine Höglund. "Precarious Peacebuilding: Friction in Global–Local Encounters," *Peacebuilding* 1(3) (2013), pp. 289–299.
71. Fredrick Wehrey, and Peter Cole, Building Libya's Security Sector, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Policy Outlook, August 2013. Available at http://carnegieendowment.org/files/building_libya_security.pdf (accessed 26 December 2013); Brian McQuinn, "Assessing (In)

Security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Libya," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 46(4) (2013), pp. 716–720.

72. Merilee S. Grindle, "Good Enough Governance Revisited," *Development Policy Review* 29, Supplement 1 (2011), pp. S199–S221; Alice Hills, "Policing, Good-Enough Governance and Development: The Evidence from Mogadishu," *Conflict, Security & Development* 13(3) (2013), pp. 317–337.

Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive statistics of variables.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
activity_all	4351	0.2128	0.4094	0	1
activity_informal	4351	0.1078	0.3102	0	1
activity_semiofficial	4351	0.1503	0.3574	0	1
GDP_PC	4368	5982.6640	10151.1000	34.1984	107863.2708
democracy_level	4004	5.4165	3.4193	0	10
internal_conflict	4405	0.1757	0.3806	0	1
monrobust	4333	0.0706	0.2562	0	1
milrobust	4333	0.1285	0.3347	0	1
mulrobust	4333	0.2894	0.4535	0	1
oneprobust	4333	0.1401	0.3471	0	1
nop	4333	0.0358	0.1857	0	1
totdurny2robust	4333	25.1897	16.1015	1	51
tenureny2robust	4333	10.0563	8.7520	0.3333	39