Coup-proofing and Desertion

A Thesis Submitted to

The Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for

The Degree of Master of Arts

in International Relations

By

Marijn J. Stöver

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Eelco van der Maat

Word count: 14.850

Leiden, The Netherlands

June 2021

Table of contents

Universiteit
Leiden

Introduction

In the night of September 1, 1969, a group of military officers, known as the Free Unionist Officer Movement, under the leadership of Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi, overthrew King Idris as-Sanussi the First of Libya.[1] Although Idris had implemented some measures to prevent coup d'états coming from the military ranks, Qadhafi and his revolutionary fellows were not faced with substantial resistance and seized control of crucial political and military objectives during the night and following day with "minimal bloodshed" as "most of the regime simply melted away." (Pargeter, 2012, p. 58-9; Vandewalle, 2012). Unaware of the absolutely hopeless situation, King Idris nevertheless attempted to organise a re-takeover with British support, but his imperial allies abandoned him. Inspired by Arab nationalism and anti-imperialism, the successful coup by Colonel Qadhafi and his Movement marked the beginning of a new era for Libya.

This new Libya was to be ruled by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) consisting of twelve Officers, including Qadhafi. In its first years in power, the RCC primarily guided the purging of the elements within the Libyan state that were loyal to the deposed monarch, in the political, social and military spheres. At the same time, the ease with which Qadhafi's coup – after all, it was *his* "brainchild" – was executed, made him deeply aware of the vulnerability of someone in his position, and the constant threat that especially the military ranks could pose to his rulership (Pargeter, 2012). In August 1975, his convictions were proved correct after military officers led by two members of the RCC attempted to seize power. Consequently, Qadhafi centralised political decision making under his own command, becoming Libya's autocratic ruler. He formulated the political ideology of *Third Universal Theory* – based on Arab nationalism, the radical emancipation of the Libyan people and the abolition of the bureaucratic state – to guide the establishment of a revolutionary *state of the masses*, which by the way would remain under his dictatorship (Vandewalle, 2012). At

---

[1] Throughout this thesis, I use the words "military", "armed forces", and "regular security forces" to refer to the regular armed forces of a state, generally consisting of ground, naval, and air forces.

Universiteit Leiden

the same time, in order to domesticate the military organisation, Qadhafi made serious work from *coup-proofing* his regime against potential military challengers (Gaub, 2013).

As the term suggests, coup-proofing entails the implementation of a "set of actions a regime takes to prevent a military coup", which are intended to create "structures that minimize the possibilities of small groups leveraging the system to such ends." (Quinlivan, 1999, p. 133). In multiple studies, scholars have found that coup-proofing in fact decreases the chance that an autocrat's political career is ended by a coup d'état (see for example: Louër, 2013; Böhmelt & Pilster, 2015; Böhmelt, Escribà-Folch & Pilster, 2019). After a recent revitalisation of scholarly interest in coup-proofing as a topic, it is in no way an overstatement to state that the coup-proofing literature currently amounts to a subfield in its own right (Brooks, 2019).

Naturally, Qadhafi wanted to stay in power for as long as possible, so after his ascendence to power, "[he] proceeded to weaken precisely those elements of the military which could jeopardise the regime" by for example creating security services parallel to the regular military, but also by breaking down the "Libyan military's professionalism" and centralising command structures (Gaub, 2013, p. 230). During his rule, Qadhafi faced numerous coups, first from elements of the old monarchy, then from members of his (revolutionary) ruling inner circle. However, Qadhafi's coup-proofing efforts should be considered successful. After 1997 until the end of his rule, he did face no coup attempts, while the attempts that were made before 1997 were all foiled (Nassif, 2020). And so, Qadhafi was spared from the ironic fate of being disposed in the same way as he had come to power. But what eventually led to his downfall, was perhaps even more ironic.

On 15 February 2011, a group of civilians peacefully gathered in front a local police station in Benghazi, in the east of Libya, calling for the release of young lawyer and human rights activist who was being detained. In response, the protesters were met with live ammunition. Inspired by this incident and revolution that was sweeping through the entire Arab world, thousands of Libyan citizens took to the streets to protest corruption, economic stagnation and a lack of political freedoms. Colonel Qadhafi, who had seen himself as a champion of "people power" as the founder of the

Universiteit Leiden

"state of the masses – the *Jamahiriyya*, was toppled by the Libyan people he argued he had liberated during his time in power (Brahimi, 2011, p. 605).

But similar to the other episodes of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Bahrain and Yemen, the popular mobilisation in Libya itself did not automatically mean the overthrow of Qadhafi's regime. Whether the protesters would fail or succeed soon depended on the reaction of the Libyan security forces. Unfortunately for Qadhafi, quickly after the beginning of the popular uprising widespread desertion meant the disintegration of the Libyan Armed Forces (LAF). In the first month, eight thousand defected, primarily in the epicentre of the revolution in Eastern Libya, and by June, only ten to twenty thousand soldiers were left whereas only four months before, the Libyan military consisted of more than fifty thousand men (Gaub, 2013). As in Syria, the fracturing of the armed forces between loyalists and revolutionaries led to a violent civil war, which was eventually lost by Qadhafi. Although this process was initiated by the Libyan people, its success was determined by the security forces.

A DESERTION TRADE-OFF?

The trajectory of Qadhafi's political career, and more specifically his relationship with Libya's security apparatus, is an example of a multitude of cases in which dictators effectively prevented power grabs from the military with the implementation of coup-proofing strategies, but experienced mass desertion among their troops when their general populations took to the streets, culminating to their downfall. Timothy Garton Ash (2009) defines this modern-day civilian threat to authoritarian rule – that he coins the *1989 ideal type* – as "nonviolent, anti-utopian, based not on a single class but on broad social coalitions, and characterised by the application of mass social pressure – "people power"- to bring the current powerholders to negotiate." Historically and statistically, popular uprisings have not been the main reason for the end of an autocrat's political career.[2] Nevertheless, the series of popular uprisings in post-communist Eastern Europe in the 2000s, the Arab Spring in 2010-2011, the currently

---

[2] According to Milan Svolik (2012, p. 5), only twenty-one percent of non-constitutional exits (n = 316) have been the direct result of popular uprisings or public pressure, while sixty-eight percent were the outcome of coup d'états initiated by "regime insiders". Seven percent of autocratic leaders were assassinated, and five percent of dictatorial careers were ended by foreign interventions.

Universiteit Leiden

ongoing protests in Myanmar and Belarus, among many others, prove that civilians can effectively put substantial pressure on autocratic regimes, not rarely leading to regime collapse.

Ultimately, in the words of Michael Makara (2013, p. 334), the empirical problem that we face is that "[d]espite implementing coup-proofing measures designed to maintain military loyalty, Arab regimes proved vulnerable to military defection during the Arab Spring." This statement captures the empirical problem at hand, but at the same time, it represents an assumption that presents a more abstract problem that has prevented previous studies from comprehensively and constructively tackling the empirical one.

Existing analyses of cases like Libya in 2011, have basically embarked on an investigation to uncover the causes behind the varying reactions of the (Arab) militaries to protests like Ash' *1989 ideal type*. This has yielded some useful insights regarding the mechanisms of coup-proofing mechanisms and their impact on some mentalities within the military that lead it support popular protests (for example: Campbell, 2009; Lutterbeck, 2013; Nepstad, 2013). However, often militaries or other security providers are considered as unitary actors which move and make decisions as such (for example: Nassif, 2020). Moreover, in this literature – I argue – different types of military behaviour are conflated and in general, military behaviour is to fall apart in a) loyalty to the regime and repression of civilian protesters, and b) defection from the regime, where the armed forces refused to fire on them. By failing to explicitly disaggregate military behaviour beyond this straightforward dichotomy of loyalty and disloyalty, previous studies have been of limited use. Following recommendations made by several scholars to disaggregate the current conceptualisation of military behaviour, I point out that the logics of coups and desertion (both disloyal military behaviour) are not comparable (for example: Brooks, 2017; Holmes & Koehler, 2020). By treating them as distinct phenomena, I lay the basis for a new theory that helps to explain military desertions in times of popular mass mobilisations despite the fact that dictators seem to have subordinated the armed forces to their authority. In short, this theory explains the trade-off between achieving low coup risk and, at the same time, preventing mass desertions. This trade-off is similar to the trade-off that has already

Universiteit Leiden

been identified in the literature, between low coup risk and achieving military effectiveness in interstate warfare (see, for example Quinlivan, 1999; Talmadge, 2015; Bausch, 2018). In the form of question, this paper is guided by the following question: *under what conditions of coup-proofing do military forces desert when faced by non-violent mass mobilisations?*

The paper proceeds as follows. First, I conceptualise desertion by building on existing theories on soldier-loyalty in civil wars, contrasting it with the logic of coup-plotting. Then, I review the literature on coup-proofing methods to uncover the mechanisms that give them their use, whereafter I theorise the effect of these mechanisms (and thus coup-proofing methods) on desertion and develop a trade-off theory. Finally, in order to demonstrate the value of this new theory, I analyse the case of Libya in 2011 and the relation between coup-proofing and desertion rates in the early days of the Libyan Revolution.

Universiteit
Leiden

Conceptualising Desertion during Popular Uprisings

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MILITARY

The Arab Spring struck not only the region's dictators by surprise, but also Middle Eastern scholars. From the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in 1974, the *third wave of democratisation* had swept across the world, liberating the majority of the states in Latin America, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa from autocratic rulership (Huntington, 1991). However, the Middle Eastern lagged behind and democracy could not establish a foothold in the region. As Eva Bellin (2004) argued, it was not the absence of so-called democratic prerequisites but the "robustness of authoritarianism" that explained the stability of the Middle Eastern regimes. While the oil revenues and international support systems provided the region's autocrats with enough funds to maintain capable, "high-scope" security forces, coup-proofing made those forces obedient to civilian rule, "virtually [eliminating] coup attempts since 1980" (Bellin, 2004; Makara, 2013, p. 335). Therefore, in order to explain the initial success of the civilian challengers in 2010 and 2011, scholars turned to the state's security forces, and more specifically the regular military, because as popular mass mobilisations "usually overwhelm the capacity of the regular police and/or intelligence services, regime survival turns on the military (primarily the army)" (Bellin, 2012, p. 131).

Reaffirming the relevance of the reaction of the military, a quantitative study on such non-violent struggles points out that "security force defections make nonviolent campaigns forty-six times more likely to succeed than nonviolent campaigns where defections do not occur." (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008, p. 22). Moreover, analyses of the uprisings in the Arab world in 2011 have shown that the success of non-violent popular mobilisations significantly depend on the military refusing to repress on behalf of the regime (for example Nepstad, 2011; Hashim, 2011; Droz-Vincent, 2013). To summarise, the reaction of the military mattered significantly. But how did the military react? And how should these reactions be conceptualised?

Universiteit Leiden

DISAGGREGATING MILITARY BEHAVIOUR

Aurel Croissant, David Kuehn, and Tanja Eschenauer (2018) propose a useful disaggregation of military behaviour that I will employ in this thesis. As they argue, military personnel has three choices when ordered to fire at unarmed civilians in order to ensure the autocrat's survival. Soldiers can either; a) shift their loyalty, by passively deserting or by actively supporting civilian challengers by "[signalling] its support for the regime's opponents." (Croissant, Kuehn & Eschenauer, 2018, p. 144); b) seize power for their own, by ousting the dictator through a coup d'état; or c) remain loyal to the incumbent, using the military's coercive capabilities to supress the civilian challengers.

In existing studies, the two types of disloyal behaviour are often thrown together, and as Risa Brooks (2017) argues, has led to a "tendency to collapse different phenomenon into the concept of defection." In one instance where there has been made a distinction between different types of such behaviour, Holger Albrecht and Dorothy Ohl (2016) argue that the passive act of desertion comprises one category and active acts of joining civilian challengers and staging a coup comprise another. However, as others have pointed out, desertion and defection are "clearly contingent upon one another", although "the question of where deserters turn after fleeing the army and a potential decision to join rebel movements [or civilian protester movements] are influenced by factors unrelated to the triggering cause of desertion." (Albrecht & Koehler, 2017, p. 200). Moreover, in order to answer the central question of this thesis, it is not particularly necessary to understand *where* soldiers leave to, but more *why* they leave and under what conditions (McLauchlin, 2020).

Furthermore, desertion and defection should be kept conceptually separate from the military's seizure of power, as the consequences of these actions strongly oppose one another. When soldiers, individually or in groups, choose to desert, the chances on regime change grow, as the regime's capabilities to repress are undermined (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). But when the military perceives the popular uprisings as a moment of regime weakness and proceeds to seize power, one autocrat regime is exchanged by another and authoritarianism again supresses the democratic aspirations held by the protesting civilians. For example, the Egyptian revolution in

Universiteit Leiden

2011 triggered a military coup that ousted president-for-life Hosni Mubarak. The military took control of the state and even allowed democratic elections. However, when the military saw its position endangered, civilian rule was again overthrown by another military coup in 2013, this time led by General Abdul Fattah as-Sisi (Croissant, Kuehn & Eschenauer, 2018).

THE LOGIC OF COUPS

Other than different consequences, staging a coup d'état against the incumbent and widespread desertion also have different underlying logics. Considering coups, scholars of civil-military relations have commonly accepted the distinction between the *motivations* and *opportunities* for launching a coup (Belkin & Schofer, 2003). Motivations simply motivate military officers to conspire. As Aaron Belkin and Evan Schofer (2003, p. 601-4) argue, motivations originate in long-term structural factors, including the presence of a history of multiple past coups, weak civil society and declining regime legitimacy, but also arise under short-term developments, such as budget cuts leading to organisation-wide grievances, individual demotion resulting in personal grievances, a sudden economic crisis, or a domestic political crisis.

The willingness to conspire, however, does not necessarily mean that officers will put their dispositions into action. As rational actors, officers that are willing to stage a coup, will "carefully evaluate their chances of success and should only attempt a coup when the expected rewards of the manoeuvre and its probability of victory are high enough to offset the dire consequences of a failed putsch." (Powell, 2012, p. 1019). The opportunities that are present to successfully stage a coup decide whether one actually embarks on the path of conspiracy.

Coups can be defined in three broad ways, which all shed light on different opportunities (Singh, 2014). If we consider military coups as battles, in which success depends on whether the coup plotters can achieve military dominance, opportunities are provided by a large degree of professional autonomy on the level of combat-unit officers, adequate military coordination between the different conspiring units and

Universiteit Leiden

their commanders both before and during the coup, and superior military capabilities.[3] The primary tactical objectives would moreover be command centres and the head of state as command-in-chief (Luttwak, 1979). If we consider military coups as elections, the opportunity of success relies exclusively on "how the members of the armed forces feel about the two sides (and the coup attempt itself)" (Singh, 2014, p. 17). Here, the popularity of the challengers, or the unpopularity of the incumbent, either the result of military political considerations or broader public discontent, determine the success of a coup (Ibidem). If we consider military coups as coordination games, the opportunities for coup plotters are based on the soft power of persuasion and manipulation. As such, coups succeed when coup plotters can manipulate the rest of the armed forces to believe that their attempt will succeed, as "military actors are concerned […] with what other actors are likely to do and the consequences of their joint actions for themselves, the military, and the country." (Singh, 2014, p. 22). Under this logic, information control and influence throughout the organisation can shape the ranks' perceptions prior to the coup, making them more likely to perceive it as a success once the coup is initiated. Also, cooperation with both important military and civilian figures can provide coup-plotters with the necessary credibility, legitimacy, and broad coalitions that they need to convince the rest of the military to support the coup attempt (Ibidem).

THE LOGIC OF DESERTION

In order to understand the logic of desertion, it is first of all important to recognise the difference between the top brass of the military, often associated with the regime's inner circle or elite, and junior officers who command combat-units and the army's rank-and-file (Nassif, 2015a). Findings from coup-proof research investigating this difference shows that low-ranking officers in their considerations resemble the general population, as they are less likely to stage a coup when the state's spending on public services is high, they and their subordinates are well-paid, and incumbents improve

---

[3] With *combat-units* or just *units* when not specified, I mean military units resembling squads (consisting of five to fifteen individuals) or platoons (consisting of twenty to fifty individuals) in which interpersonal relationships between all members can exist.

Universiteit Leiden

or introduce political liberties. As Holger Albrecht and Ferdinand Eibl (2018) argue, this is because junior officers see their military service merely as a way of earning a decent salary and getting benefits from social services. Moreover, often hailing from the middle-class, junior officers are not part of the ruling elite and thus generally benefit from political liberalisation policies in their personal lives.

In the context of regime threatening mass popular mobilisation, ultimately, the order to fire at (often unarmed) civilian protests is given to the ordinary rank-and-file. As these soldiers are able to identify themselves with these protesters, as we have established, the moral costs can become too high. Reflecting Sebastian Schutte's "reactive mobilisation", either the order itself, or the experience that one lives through by following the order can result in strong moral grievances against the perpetrator – in this case the regime ordering repression – motivating individuals to desert (Schutte, 2015). An example, although not in an "endgame" kind of scenario, is the failed repression of a popular uprisings in the Tataouine governorate in Tunisia in 2017 due to large-scale defection that showed the relationship between protesters and the lower ranks of the military. The decision to defect allowed protesters to "storm and shut down an oil valve in Tataouine, in contravention of a direct order from President Essebsi to defend the production site" (Grewal, 2016, p. 259). Based on a survey done six months prior to the protests, Sharan Grewal points out that defections were largely the result of the fact that many soldiers were able to identify with the protesters and their demands regarding economic improvement in the region as they found themselves in a similar position in the military. All in all, moral grievances resulting from the ability to identify with protesters – which is most likely under the lower ranks – shape the backdrop in which the disposition to desert can arise.

But not in every instance where soldiers were ordered to repress unarmed civilians expressing their grievances, desertion occurred. The Tiananmen Square Massacre in the People's Republic of China in 1989, the violent repression of the 8888 Uprising in Myanmar in 1988, and the Bahraini crackdown on the Arab Spring protests in 2011, are all prime examples of cases in which repression was ordered and where desertion did not occur. So, desertion does only take place when individuals are both motivated *and* able to desert. There are three levels of analysis that scholars of the fields

civil war and rebel groups have employed to explain desertion. I concisely call them *spheres of desertion-inhibition*.

First, the choice to desert can be regarded as a "rational calculation of incentives" that individual soldiers make when ordered to shoot at unarmed civilians. As Scott Gates (2017) states, rebel groups that rely on forced conscripts rather than volunteers, deter desertion by heightening the costs of desertion and by increasing the benefits of staying. Rebel groups can heighten the costs by threatening (deadly) physical punishment to deserters and creating a climate of fear that will keep soldiers in check. However, the threat of punishment to deter desertion is only effective when the chances of getting caught are high. The establishment of intrusive oversight over soldiers, their comrades and even families, makes the threat of punishment more credible, and thus more effective. Also, pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards make the benefit of staying higher, incentivising soldiers to remain loyal. After all, as Albrecht and Eibl (2018) have pointed out, low-ranking officers and their subordinates remain loyal when they are well-paid and are entitled to certain public social services and other benefits. It is, however, less likely that material benefits outweigh the moral costs of repressing than the high *costs* of desertion (Albrecht & Koehler, 2017). In rebel groups, punishment and reward ensures loyalty on a short-term, because they do not possess the economic infrastructure and capabilities to sustain these methods for long periods of time (Eck, 2014). With authoritarian states, this is often not the case as taxation and/or natural resources like oil provide a relatively stable income to support the coercive apparatus (Bellin, 2004).

Second, the disposition to desert can also be inhibited by fostering habitual *preference falsification* on the level of the individual fighter's peers and direct superiors (Kuran, 1995). As Gates (2017, p. 681) argues, new recruits in rebel groups learn norms and rules from others, and although it is not necessary to internalise them, it results in a situation where "compliance is manifest in [their] behaviour." Moreover, in the context of civil war, Theodore McLauchlin (2015) states that unit cohesion – in squads or platoons – depends on "norms of cooperation" and mutual trust that ensure individual soldiers that they can rely on their peers to continue to fight and remain loyal to each other. In turn, unit cohesion based on cooperation can help to overcome

Universiteit
Leiden

personal costs. These costs are the fear to face physical damage in war and the moral costs associated with firing at protesters. While social and factional ties can help to strengthen norms of cooperation and mutual trust for evident reasons (McLauchlin, 2015), high-level training and drilling "[melds] recruits into a cohesive unit" (Wood, 2008, p. 546) and enhances personal commitment to the group (Haer & Banholzer, 2015). Moreover, as Gates (2017, p. 681) points out, "rituals, uniforms, and (even) mirrored sunglasses can create a sense of separate identity" that has a significant inhibiting effect on the willingness to desert. In cases of complete norm internalisation, it can even prevent the emergence of the disposition to desert altogether.

On the macro level, desertion can be inhibited as a result of top-down indoctrination. This practice binds individual soldiers to the regime and its political ideology, and profoundly alters the preferences of individuals. With effective indoctrination, soldiers are convinced that they must serve the regime and its incumbent, as he for example holds some divine power, or because the ideology simply compels the soldier to do so (Gates, 2017). Besides actual political indoctrination, high levels of top-down intrusion in the military also establishes continual oversight over the troops, making punishment more likely.

As we can see, the logic behind desertion plays out differently on three levels. However, the rational cost-benefit analysis on the individual level, the relational approach on the combat-unit level and organisation-wide indoctrination *all* interfere with an original disposition that all soldiers, as individual human-beings, have when they are ordered to fire at unarmed civilians; either by heightening the stakes of deserting, or by enforcing and internalising norms in their direct surroundings and from the top down. Finally, while it is true that both staging a coup and deserting are both form of disloyal military behaviour, they differ in their consequences and underlying logic, making it at least plausible that coup-proof strategies also affect them differently.

Universiteit
Leiden

Constructing the Argument

As said, the revitalised scholarly interest in the stability of authoritarian regimes and the reliance on violence of those regimes, has led to the comprehensive mapping of coup-proof strategies. I identify four categories which cover the coup-proof measures that are available to autocratic leaders, including structural, institutional, ideational and material coup-proofing. First, I elaborate on these in order to explain what they precisely include and how the underlying mechanisms help to proof against coups. Thereafter, I theorise the connection between these mechanisms and the three "spheres of desertion inhibition" that I have identified in the previous chapter.

A REVIEW OF THE COUP-PROOFING LITERATURE

Structural Coup-proofing

The first category interferes with and alters the structure of the armed forces in order to prevent coups from occurring, by limiting *possibilities*. Whether we consider coups as battles, elections or coordination games, successfully staging a coup d'état always relies on cooperation and coordination.

In the plotting phase, cooperation is necessary to plan the coup attempt, in secrecy and without attracting unwanted attention from regime loyalists. In the execution phase, good coordination among troops and high degrees of military autonomy allow coup plotters of "battle coups" to take advantage of their surprise element to quickly secure their key objectives, such as military command centres or the autocrat's residence. "Electoral coups" also rely on military autonomy, as they will be successful if the majority of the armed forces supports the coup plotters. This is the case when high-ranking officer can act relatively independently from civilian superiors and they have well-established command over their subordinates. These high degrees of autonomy allow coup plotters to distance themselves from the incumbent autocrat and break away vertically – and in election terms – reliably secure their own troops as faithful constituents. Moreover, unobstructed cooperation, unrestricted access to information, and autonomy from civilian rulership, make it

Universiteit Leiden

easier for "coordination game" coup plotters to estimate and manipulate preferences among the ranks (Singh, 2014).

All these factors that enable successful coups are grounded in the organisational structure of the military. Eminently, militaries as organisations are highly hierarchical, and as a result, members of such organisations value the maintenance of that hierarchy, but also of discipline, organisational cohesiveness and autonomy from civilian rule (Geddes, 1999; Pion-Berlin & Trinkunas, 2010). Consequently, structural coup-proofing alters the organisational structure of the military in such a way that coup plotting becomes more difficult, and plays into the natural adherence to such structures by military personnel.

First, autocrats can either centralise or fracture chains of command. By centralising them, autonomy is taken away from commanders at all levels of the military command structure. In Iraq, for example, military decision making during the Iran-Iraq War lay in the hands of Saddam Hussain and his inner circle in Baghdad, leading to a situation in which "[e]very level of command tended to refer all decisions upwards." (Talmadge, 2015, p. 161). Similarly, the Indonesian autocrat Suharto specifically targeted high-ranking officers by demoting service commanders and assuming their combined position at the top of the military hierarchy, and by "eliminating the power of the chiefs of staff to command troops" (Lee, 2005, p. 94). Moreover, in South Vietnam, autocratic leaders established personal chains of command with high-ranking officers to make sure the large units they commanded would not turn against the incumbents (Talmadge, 2015). As officers are continually obliged to report to their superiors in order to make all kinds of military decisions, such as the deployment of logistical units or to pursue fleeing enemies, centralising command chains prevents them to use their military capabilities or commanding authority against the incumbent.

By intentionally fracturing chains of command, autocratic leaders divide the regular military into different command structures that separately answer to the incumbent. This prevents the cooperation between different parts of the armed forces, as has for example been the case in Iran, both under Shah and Ayatollah, as "[t]he government prevented horizontal communication and monitored the emergence of

Universiteit Leiden

any potential leader within the military who could be capable of planning a coup." (Cann & Danopoulos, 1998, p. 274). Also, fractured command chains take away power to supervise and coordinate from central decision-making bodies such as a general staff or ministry of defence. By circumventing these well-established elements that are not necessarily trustworthy, high-ranking individuals within these bodies are limited in their access to information flows within the organisation. Thus, relating to coups as coordination games, restricting the access to and gathering of information limits the ability of coup plotters to estimate and manipulate preferences.

Institutional Coup-proofing

Other than the structural type of coup-proofing – which targets the regular military itself – institutional coup-proofing intends to inhibit willing conspirators by counterbalancing the armed forces with other security institutions. In a traditional sense, counterbalancing aims at physically deterring the regular military, by establishing parallel security forces, for example the paramilitary Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Republican Guard in Hussain's Iraq, Hugo Chavez' Bolivarian National Militia and militarised police forces, like those in Russia (De Bruin, 2018). The creation of parallel militaries makes it possible for autocratic leaders to design completely new institutions that he can more or less shape as he wants, as these do not yet have strongly developed corporate interests like the regular military. In that regard, parallel militaries themselves should be seen as heavily coup-proofed institutions and thus institutional coup-proofing is often combined with strategies from other categories, such as a high degree of politicisation, altered command structures that circumvent the regular military's decision makers, and/or excessive funding (Powell, 2012; Quinlivan, 1999). But how exactly does counterbalancing prevent coups in practice?

First, by creating parallel security forces, institutional coup-proofing fosters rivalry within a fractured security apparatus. In the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos, for example, the intentionally cultivated rivalry between the regular army and the Philippine police forces lead to the political neutralisation of both (Lee, 2008). Moreover, in Mubarak's Egypt, the rivalry between the police and the military was

further exacerbated as the Ministry of the Interior – which controlled the police forces – was budgetarily prioritised. This led to the financial marginalisation of the regular military (Makara, 2016). This form of counterbalancing allows, autocrats to retain the coercive capabilities needed to stay in power but at the same time counterbalancing prevents the security apparatus from cooperating against the incumbent (Quinlivan, 1999; Powell, 2012; Böhmelt & Pilster, 2015).

As Tobias Böhmelt and Ulrich Pilster (2015) point out, institutional coup-proofing also prevents coups by confronting the different institutions with a *collective action problem*. However, that is only the case in a polarised security apparatus – that is, a security apparatus consisting of two security forces with similar strength and size – where the prospect of facing a capable force discourages coup plotters from carrying out their plans. A case in point here is the Iranian security apparatus, consisting of the regular army (Artesh) and the IRGC that have kept each other in balance during the past four decades (Alfoneh, 2020). On the contrary, when the security apparatus consists of one *or* more than two forces, the likelihood of another force intervening and countering a coup attempt is much lower, increasing coup risk.

Moreover, institutional coup-proofing lowers the chances of a successful coup when it *is* implemented since parallel security services owe their existence to the autocrats that established them and the aversion of the regular military to such forces will likely lead to their disbandment if military coup plotters seize power. In this way, the fate of parallel forces is tied to that of the incumbent, forcing these services to protect him in their own interest (De Bruin, 2018).

Besides scaring military coup plotters by ensuring them they will be faced by another, capable military force, autocratic leaders create multiple intelligence services. These are tasked with spying on all kinds of domestic threats, primarily the regular armed forces, but also other intelligence agencies. Moreover, dictators intentionally provide agencies with overlapping and vague mandates to foster competition among them, in order to maintain oversight over the armed forces, and at the same time keep intelligence services in check (Brown, Farris & McMahon, 2016). As James Quinlivan (1999, p. 149) points out in the cases of Saudi-Arabia, Iraq and Syria, such fracturing "ensures that [they] are both loyal and active". Also, in the North Korean Kim regime,

Universiteit Leiden

"multiple and overlapping conduits of information are structured so that Kim will be apprised of any stirring of anti-regime thought or activity within the [Korean Worker's Party], government, and military" (Byman & Lind, 2010, p. 68).

Ideational Coup-proofing

Whereas structural and institutional coup-proofing primarily target possibilities to successfully staging a coup, ideational coup-proofing intends to inhibit the willingness to stage a coup.

Autocratic leaders can professionalise their regular militaries by imposing Samuel Huntington's doctrine of *objective civilian control* in which civilians "dictate military security policy" but "leave the military free to determine what military operations are required to secure to policy objectives" (Burk, 2002, p. 10; Huntington, 1957). The idea behind this doctrine is that as long as the military's corporate identity and professional autonomy are preserved, it will not overthrow the incumbent's regime. However, as Mehran Kamrava (2000, p. 69) warned in the context of the Middle East, "professionalisation enhances the autonomy of the military and, if politically unchecked, can increase its tendency to intervene in the affairs of the state". In fact, during the Arab Spring, the Egyptian military that had been subjective to enthusiastic professionalisation by the country's dictators was able to distance itself from Hosni Mubarak and stage a coup in order to install a military dictatorship under General Abdul as-Sisi (Gause, 2011; Holmes & Koehler, 2020). Less radically, fostering the military's corporate identity through professionalisation can result in *praetorian militaries*, which – covertly and overtly – infiltrate the political sphere by occupying posts in the government and influence political policy decisions (Perlmutter, 1969). A prime example here is Israel, where such *political socialisation* of the armed forces has led to a high degree of military presence in politics, but simultaneously a military that refrains from insubordinate behaviour (Etzioni-Halevy, 1996; Peri, 2006).

As unbridled professionalisation, thus, comes with several dangers, it is often accompanied by active indoctrination to really keep the military in check. For example, in Turkey after the failed coup attempt in 2016, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan appointed an active-duty military commander as his minister of defence in 2018, signalling political

Universiteit Leiden

socialisation (Bekdil, 2018; Ülgül & Demir, 2020). At the same time, Erdoğan made serious effort of actively indoctrinating the armed forces by restructuring military academies and universities to make them fall under civilian authority with the aim of "[fostering] civilian supremacy and respect for democracy and the rule of law." (Ülgül & Demir, 2020, p. 148; Böhmelt, Escribà-Folch & Pilster, 2019). Such ideological indoctrination of the armed forces can go even further. For example, autocratic regimes like Communist China and North Vietnam assigned political commissioners to their militaries' smaller units in order to maintain ideological oversight over both officers and the troops (Shambaugh, 1991; Talmadge, 2015).

Also relating to the ideational sphere is the homogenisation of military ranks to make their beliefs and interests align with those of the dictator. In *normal* circumstances, recruitment and promotion decisions are made on the basis of merit and military competence, but as such characteristics threaten the position of the autocrat, he might want to take matters into his own hands. As Suharto did during his rule over Indonesia, autocrats can handpick proven loyalists that they can trust (Lee, 2005). Also, they can choose to recruit and promote on the basis of political party membership, or particular tribal, religious or ethnic backgrounds to *stack* units or entire security forces with a certain social group. Oftentimes, such groups are also tied to the autocrat as part of his ruling circle, making their favourable positions in power depend on the longevity of the current regime. There are numerous examples of such "exploitation of special loyalties", like the regimes of the Middle East, like Saudi-Arabia, Iraq under Hussain but also after the invasion in 2003, Syria under the al-Asad regime and Bahrain ruled by the al-Khalifa family, which have stacked their militaries with religious and tribal minorities (Quinlivan, 1999, p. 133; Bausch, 2018; Louër, 2013). In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, Nigerien dictator Hamani Diori hand-picked his praetorian guard from the Tuareg tribe and in Equatorial Guinea, Macias Nguema had many key positions in the army occupied by his direct family (Decalo, 1989). Similarly, in North Korea, familial ties are used to staff key positions within the security apparatus (Byman & Lind, 2010).

Besides promoting and recruiting specifically loyal segments of society, autocrats can appropriate the power to rotate, fire and purge the officer corps,

Universiteit Leiden

contributing to further politicisation of the armed forces (Sudduth, 2017). For example, in Iraq, the military's elite units underwent a process of "Shiafication" under the Shi'ite rulership of Nouri al-Maliki, as Sunni officers were intimated, arbitrarily arrested, and fired, reflecting the alienation of the Sunni population in the Iraqi political sphere and its broader society under al-Maliki (Bausch, 2018). Also, the threat of possible removal (both from their position or this earth altogether) constantly reminds officers to act loyally (Rittinger & Cleary, 2013). Finally, by regularly rotating officers, autocrats can prevent them from bonding with their subordinates and stage a coup (Albrecht, 2015).

Material Coup-proofing

The final category of coup-proofing is a rather straightforward one, and relates to bribery. As I have already touched upon briefly, material coup-proofing can be implemented in two ways (Albrecht & Eibl, 2018). First, autocrats can provide material incentives by increasing military spending, which relates to the cultivation of the military's corporate interest (Pion-Berlin & Trinkunas, 2010). Budgetary decisions that benefit the military as an organisation often result in the improvement of training and equipment, and contribute to higher salaries. For example, in the first years after Mobutu's ascendence to power, he dramatically increased the military's budget, and as it was materially satisfied, the military was not inclined to interfere with Congolese politics (Emizet, 2000). Moreover, leftist dictators in Bolivia, Venezuela and Ecuador, have supplied their militaries with top-tier equipment and raised salaries in order to generate "military compliance" (Rittinger & Cleary, 2013).

But pecuniary incentives are also used to tie individual (high-ranking) officers to the fate of the regime. By providing individuals with "opportunities for self-enrichment", the willingness to rise up against the regime decreases, as generous pay checks and other benefits depend on the continuation of the autocratic status quo under the current incumbent (Albrecht, 2015). A prime example of the provision of such opportunities can be found in Mubarak's Egypt, where the top brass of the military was allowed to create and run lucrative businesses, to such an extent that considerable parts of various economic sectors were in fact controlled by the military (Hashim, 2011). Also in Syria, Algeria, Yemen, Sudan, Iraq and Iran, autocrats allowed

their high-ranking officers to cultivate personal, and often illegal economic activities to fill their own pockets (Albrecht, 2015; Kamrava, 2000; Forozan & Shahi, 2017).

THE TRADE-OFF IN THEORY

In their own ways, all the different coup-proof strategies that have been discussed inhibit the disposition to stage a coup or make it increasingly difficult to make a coup attempt successful. Combined, they shape the relationship between the autocratic-civilian regime and the armed forces. But, as coup-proofing has proven to have an unintentional effect on military effectiveness, it is conceivable that these coup-proof strategies and their working mechanisms also cause unintentional effects on desertion rates during popular uprisings. But if that is the case, when and how does this trade-off come into effect?

Punishment and Reward

The first sphere of desertion-inhibition is shaped by a rational cost-benefit analysis with credible, costly punishment on one hand, and potential rewards gained through behaving loyally on the other. There are multiple coup-proof measures that can have an impact on these mechanisms of punishment, oversight, and reward.

By threatening punishment, autocrats can compel to refrain from desertion, similar to coup plotting. The threat of losing a preferable position within the military organisation through demotion or rotation, or of facing physical punishment for acting not loyal enough, keeps potential deserters in check. Punishment can be even extended to families or soldier-colleagues (Hashim, 2003). Moreover, counterbalancing efforts can lead to the creation of units specifically tasked with the execution of disloyal soldiers (Talmadge, 2015).

In turn, by centralising the military's command structure, autocratic leaders enlarge their oversight over the armed forces and make aforementioned threats more credible. As junior officers – who command squads and platoons – are continually obliged to communicate upwards in the military hierarchy, their superiors can tightly monitor and control their behaviour and that of their troops. Simultaneously, by fracturing command chains, autocrats establish direct lines of communication with

high-ranking officers, providing them personal insight into the military's business, not filtered or obstructed by general staffs or ministries. Such oversight is furthermore reinforced by the presence of active and loyal intelligence services or ideological commissar systems, that monitor the armed forces from within and without. The extensive infiltration of an all-powerful dictator, who has the authority to order punishment, is likely to inhibit desertion as it inhibits coup plotting.

Finally, autocrats can *seduce* individuals to not desert by offering them pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards. With strictly material incentives, Albrecht and Eibl (2018) point out the difference between personalised bribing of high-ranking officers and organisation-wide economic incentives, which also lead to lower coup risk among low-ranking officers and soldier. Moreover, in terms of desertion rates, others have found minimal effect of economic incentives on the cost-benefit analysis of soldiers faced with physical and moral costs (Albrecht & Koehler, 2017). All in all, while economic incentives might keep soldiers and their direct superiors loyal in circumstances with higher structural coup risk, when *morally threatened*, these incentives will not compel their loyalty. As high-ranking officers are not ordered to fire at protesters, they might consider the matter more rationally and as a result be compelled by their "opportunities for self-enrichment" (Albrecht, 2015).

Unit Cohesion

The second sphere of desertion-inhibition is shaped by the direct social surroundings of the soldiers who are ordered to fire at protesters. Both preference falsification and actual internalisation of the unit's norms of cooperation lead cohesion, that inhibits desertion, as individuals feel obliged to help their brothers-in-arms.

First, coup-proofed command chains direct emphasis towards vertical and upwards contact, as subordinates are continually forced to report to their superiors. Concurrently, decentralised and horizontal cooperation is restricted in order to curtail autonomy and coordination. While such mechanisms impede (successful) coup plotting – as plotters are more likely to be detected or coup execution is more difficult – they break down or completely prevent unit cohesion from emerging. As they impede social exchanges between soldiers within units, these mechanisms cultivate

Universiteit
Leiden

distrust and suspicion (Lawler, 2001; Gaub, 2013). In a similar manner but implementing it conversely, units that are stacked with a particular social group are likely to behave more cohesively, as their existing social relations bond them together (McLauchlin, 2015). Heterogenous units, on the other hand, do not benefit from such pre-existing relations and fall more easily apart. Cohesion patterns might play out more horizontally when commanding positions are stacked by members of a particular social group and the military's rank-and-file is filled by another (Nassif, 2015b). The regular rotation of officers also affects the soldier-officer relation, as this practice is designed to hinder bonding between officers and their subordinates. As a result, this leads to lower levels of unit cohesion (McLauchlin, 2015).

Moreover, as autocrats try to limit information flows between units within the military organisation or forbid them form training together to impede conspiracies, inter-unit cohesion cannot develop. As a result, soldiers inclined to desert do not feel obligated to fight for their colleagues in other units, as they are unable to perceive their behaviours as willing to support them. Furthermore, information-sharing can prevent *desertion cascades* that extend beyond units as soldiers make their decisions based on the knowledge about preferences (here, disposition to desert) of soldiers in other parts of the military forces (McLauchlin, 2010; Singh, 2014).

On the level of the security apparatus as a whole, actively cultivating rivalries between different security providers increases intra-service distrust and suspicion. At the same time, rivalries lead to higher levels of ingroup cohesion as the armed forces must unite to face a common threat (Degaut, 2017). But, the extent to which this succeeds, again depends on conditions of cohesion *within* the security organisation.

On a final note, the intentional development of a military's corporate identity to keep it out of politics is often accompanied by high quality training and things like rituals, uniforms, and (even) mirrored sunglasses that set apart units, or military personnel in general, from other groups in either the military or society. Such experiences and environments forge cohesive units from which its members are less likely to desert individually (Gates, 2017).

Politicisation

The third sphere of desertion-inhibition relates to the politicisation of the armed forces in order to subordinate it to civilian rulership. Politicisation can come in two forms, as explicit ideological indoctrination and the stacking of the military with one social group as part of the broader political structure upon which authoritarian survival is founded. Other than on unit cohesion, the effect of politicisation on the disposition to desert is not very different from its effect on the disposition to stage a coup. In both instances it subordinates the military on an ideational level to the civilian regime in order to compel loyal behaviour.

Ideological indoctrination aims to homogenise the ideational framework of the soldiers in the armed forces on military academies and schools. Its results are twofold. First, individuals are convinced of the importance of this particular regime, as they have internalised its ideology. Second, individuals are bound to each other as they share an ideational framework which lets them build on pre-existing social relations to cultivate cohesion.

Other forms of politicisation, primarily those that exploit special loyalties, use rotations, purges, recruitment and promotion to stack the military with certain social groups. When such policies are implemented on certain units, ranks, or other *parts* of the military, stacking can lead to tribal or sectarian rivalry and lower cohesion, but organisation-wide stacking forgoes these trade-offs. That is the case because as ideological dissidents or members of other ethnic groups are removed, they are replaced with individuals with similar ideological or social backgrounds. As such, it increases unit homogeneity which enables the cultivation of social bonds (Shambaugh, 1991; Lee, 2005).

Important to note is also the effect stacking has on the relationship between the military and the people that it is ordered to repress. As I have already pointed out, the easier it is for military personnel to identify themselves with protesters, who furthermore behave peacefully, the larger the possibility is that soldiers are inclined to desert (Grewal, 2016). As a result, in highly politicised societies, where militaries are partially stacked with one specific social group, members who are not part of that privileged group are more easily persuaded by members of their own social group

Universiteit Leiden

when those take to the streets, leading to the military's fracturing along such lines (Nassif, 2015b).

To summarise, coup-proofing strategies that interfere with the desertion-inhibition in the spheres of *punishment and reward* and *ideological indoctrination* do not necessarily lead to a trade-off between coup and desertion risk. Here, coup-proofing scares, persuades or indoctrinates individuals into refraining from desertion similar as it does to make them stay away from coup plotting. However, in the sphere of *unit cohesion*, a wide range of coup-proofing strategies can be expected to increase desertion rates on practically all organisational levels of the security apparatus.

Case Study: the Libyan Armed Forces

The previous chapter has laid down a range of hypothetical coup-proof mechanisms that increase both the motivations *and* possibilities to desert. Based on this theory, this chapter analyses the Libyan Revolution of 2011 to illustrate the explanatory capabilities of this theory.

COUP-PROOFING UNDER COLONEL QADHAFI

As mentioned in the introduction, Qadhafi had reason enough to distrust the Libyan Armed Forces from the beginning of his political career as Libya's dictator. He did not trust the military, and the officer corps in particular, since he knew how officers could cooperate and overthrow autocratic, civilian rulership, as he had been leader of the Free Unionist Officer Movement that had overthrown the Libyan monarchy of Idris I in 1969.

Considering distrusting the military, Qadhafi did not differ much from his predecessor. King Idris ruled in a period in which the region's monarchs and strongmen were regularly disposed by military coups. Moreover, Idris' powerbase was primarily centred in the eastern part of the country, and he had only a limited grip on the tribes living in the west and south of Libya. Consequently, the Libyan king was eager to coup-proof his military, and he did so by recruiting military personnel disproportionally from the eastern region of Cyrenaica and by establishing two paramilitary forces to counter the regular military. The king's coup-proofing efforts of course proved ineffective when he was overthrown in 1969. Nevertheless, directly after Qadhafi came to power, he took action against the old regime's elements within the military and first purged "every officer above the rank of colonel, as well as every Sanussi officer regardless of rank" (Gaub, 2013, p. 226).

After his first years in power, his distrust and suspicion towards the armed forces remained but other than fearing old regime elements within the military, Qadhafi started to view the military as a potential threat to the fulfilment of the Libyan revolution. Qadhafi publicised the *Green Book* – published in three parts between 1975

and 1981 – in which he developed the *Third Universal Theory*, based on Arab nationalism, the radical emancipation of the Libyan people and the abolition of the bureaucratic state. In that ideological world view, Qadhafi viewed the military as a bastion of the state as such – not the monarchist state under Idris I per se – and feared that it would obstruct the envisioned direct democracy which was ought to rule Libya (Gaub, 2013). To guide the realisation of the revolution, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) under Qadhafi's leadership established Revolutionary Committees, which would function as the "true cadres of the revolution" (St. John, 2014, p. 290). As of 1975, Qadhafi had practically assumed the sole rulership within the RCC and thus, the Committees – that were established in 1976-7 – directly answered to the Colonel. Initially, they were tasked with overseeing the implementation of the revolution within the military and society at large, but after several years of *doing business* unrestrictedly, Qadhafi acknowledged that the RCs contributed to the growing tensions within Libyan society as the *modus operandi* of the Committees was characterised by arbitrariness and violent repression. As a result, the RCs were accommodated under the Ministry of Mass Mobilization and Revolutionary Leadership, led by a regime loyalist. The Ministry was tasked with the institutionalisation of and establishment of control over the Committees and prevent them from predating on society as they had done in the years before (Vandewalle, 1991). One of its key objectives, nevertheless, remained to infiltrate the regular armed forces to ensure its personnel's obedience to the revolution (Gaub, 2013).

The presence of the Revolutionary Committees, however, should not be conflated with the total ideological domination of the LAF by Qadhafi's *Third Universal Theory*. Rather, this form of ideologically motivated oversight was primarily installed to punish dissent and to halt disloyal officers from conspiring against the Colonel. Ideology, at least with regard to the military, was thus employed to reach certain ends, instead of being an end in itself. Whereas one would expect egalitarianism and unity within the armed forces to reflect Qadhafi's plans for the wider Libyan society, all other strategies of coup-proofing that he employed suggest that he intentionally neglected his own ideology (Nassif, 2020). But instead of professionalising the armed forces, cultivating its corporate identity and subordinating it to his rulership along the

Universiteit Leiden

lines of Huntington's *objective civilian control*, Qadhafi nevertheless heavily politicised the military, especially after it had lost the war against Libya's southern neighbour Chad, in 1987 (Ciment, 2015).

On an ideational level, Qadhafi started to make use of the tribal networks and allegiances that had determined Libyan politics for centuries (Vandewalle, 2012). As a member of the al-Qadhadhifa tribe, the Colonel stacked the Libyan officer corps along tribal ties to ensure its loyalty. As a result, "in 1995, all commanders of Libya's military sectors hailed from the al-Qadhadhifa" (Nassif, 2020, p. 238-9) Moreover, he used familial ties to fill in key positions. For example, two of Qadhafi's sons commanded the most important elite brigades within the Libyan Armed Forces, which were informally named after them: the *Khamis* and *al-Sa'adi Brigades*. Furthermore, members of Qadhafi's tribe dominated the Libyan Air Force as a whole, and held key positions in security organisations that were tasked with keeping the military in check. Qadhafi furthermore prioritised the funding and training of the elite brigades that his sons commanded and stacked them exclusively with Qadhadhifa members to bolster rivalry between those units and the rest of the military. On the contrary the rank-and-file of the *regular* part of the military hailed primarily from the eastern part of Libya, a region where Qadhafi enjoyed little support – something that was exacerbated by the cultivation of this rivalry (Nassif, 2020).

Building on the tribal network of the Qadhadhifa tribe, Qadhafi also co-opted the Warfalla and Magraha tribe into the officer corps. As Hicham Bou Nassif (2020) argues, the co-optation of other tribes was partly used to downplay suspicions of "policies of tribal preferential treatment", something that did not align with Qadhafi's message of Libyan unity and his suppression of other divisionary tendencies in Libya. However, while members of these tribes held important positions in the military and were preferred over other tribes as they were considered more loyal to Qadhafi and his regime, one scholar points out that their position within the regime should nevertheless be considered *second-class* (Gaub, 2013). Also, applying to the LAF as a whole, Qadhafi unpredictably rotated unit commanders at all levels in order to compel loyalty and cultivate suspicion among officers and troops (Parsons & Taylor, 2011; Gaub, 2013).

Universiteit Leiden

Similarly, with regards to the Libyan security apparatus in its entirety, Qadhafi did not shy away from cultivating division as long as it prevented conspiracies and compelled loyalty. Other than the counterbalancing *within* the military, Qadhafi established four paramilitary organisations to contain the power the military. First, the Revolutionary Committees did not only field a wide network of spies but also commanded a militarised wing, the *Revolutionary Guard*. Together, the intelligence branch and the Guard regularly formed death squads and hunted down enemies of the revolution. Second, as Qadhafi's ideology of Libyan unity was also founded on pan-Africanism, another paramilitary security provider was the *Islamist Pan-African Legion* consisting of mercenaries from countries across the Sahel region. Third, tasked with the protection of the Qadhafi family, Qadhafi established the *Presidential Guard*, and fourth, he created the *People's Militia* that was responsible for controlling the countryside and protection of vital infrastructure (Nassif, 2020). All of these security organisations were established with the Qadhafi's ideological tendencies in mind. However, ultimately, his actions should be seen as a way to break the power of the regular military and prevent it from taking over control. Especially the initiatives undertaken to replace the regular military with some sort of popular militia force led to significant rivalries between these forces (Cordesman, 2016). In theory, then, Qadhafi was an idealist – and one might argue that in fact he was – but in practice, his actions revealed that he wanted to stay in power, and that ideology was only a tool used selectively to divide the security apparatus to his ultimate end (Pargeter, 2012).

With regards to the intelligence sector, Qadhafi fractured mandates and centralised chains of command in order to assert personal command over these services. As mentioned, the RCs were tasked with monitoring the civilian and military obedience to Qadhafi's revolutionary principles, but besides the Committees, Qadhafi created the *Jamahiriyya Security Organisation*, the *Intelligence Bureau of the Leader* and *Purification Committees*. The first was a militarised intelligence service that was tasked with monitoring the Libyan Armed Forces and heavily stacked with the Qadhadhifa tribe, the second coordinated cooperation among different paramilitary and intelligence organisations and allowed Qadhafi to intrusively monitor these forces,

Universiteit Leiden

and the third kept an eye on all organisations within the security apparatus (St. John, 2014).

As the military was counterbalanced by numerous parallel security forces and intelligence services, the Libyan security apparatus was becoming increasingly multipolar. While the major rivalry existed between the regular military and the paramilitary organisations, especially the intelligence services were structurally encouraged to compete with each other, as they were ordered to spy on one another and their mandates heavily overlapped.

Most of the coup-proofing measures that have been discussed hitherto were implemented in the latter half of the 1970s and the throughout the 1980s, as Qadhafi's political ideology provided him with the incentives and means to do so. Also, from a perspective of material coup-proofing, the latter half of the 1980s proved to be pivotal. With the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 and the Oil Crisis of 1979, the world's demand for Libyan oil grew exponentially. As a result, Libya's per capita income soared from $2.216 in 1969 to nearly $10.000 by the end of the 1970s (Vanderwalle, 2012). However, during that same period, Qadhafi embarked on his bold, revolutionary effort to transform Libyan society into a true *Jamahiriyah*, which meant that the lion-share of oil revenues would benefit the treasury of the Qadhafi regime. Interesting for this analysis, is moreover the share that was invested in the Libyan security apparatus – something that Qadhafi deemed vital to properly represent the glory of the Jamahiriyah. Thus, during the 1970s and 80s, the security apparatus (including the LAF) was provided with an abundance of high-end military equipment, including missiles, anti-tank weaponry, armoured cars, Soviet tanks and fighter jets – even so much that there was not enough personnel to man these vehicles.

But the heydays of Libya's oil exports were soon to come to an end, and after confrontations with Chad, which was supported by France, and the United States throughout the second half of the 1980s that led to international sanctions, meant the economic downfall for Qadhafi's regime. Moreover, the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that Libya had lost its primary arms supplier (Vandewalle, 2012). While the security apparatus had been a priority before this economic recession, Qadhafi could no longer hand-out the enormous amounts of money to the military, and its equipment

Universiteit Leiden

deteriorated. When trade and arms embargoes were lifted in 1999, Libya's economy somewhat revitalised and Qadhafi revised the manner in which he distributed high-end equipment among his security forces. The weaponry that Libya imported since then, and training budgets that were made available, almost exclusively benefitted the Khamis and as-Sa'adi Brigades, "while the rest of the troops lagged behind." (Nassif, 2020, p. 244). In cases where budget did benefit the regular forces, this was only to upgrade equipment, but soldiers were not trained to work with new weaponry or vehicles (Parsons & Taylor, 2011). Furthermore, materiel that on paper belonged to the regular military was oftentimes stored instead of distributed to the troops to prevent them from turning these weapons against them (Bassiouni, 2013).

Furthermore, Qadhafi provided officers of these units with opportunities for self-enrichment by for example allowing them to buy real estate with state subsidies, rewarding them with ambiguous bonusses paid for by oil revenues and tolerating it when senior officer profited off corruption. On the other hand, the regime neglected junior officers and soldiers in the regular forces. The regular military's junior officers and soldiers primarily hailed from the deprived eastern part of the country and their time in the military did not improve their economic situation as they were underpaid and struggled to make ends meet (Nassif, 2020). As the regular forces were manned by low-status Libyans, these units did not command any form of respect or love from Libyan society. As one report points out, they did not even receive more than one uniform, and often walked around in "civilian attire" (Parsons & Taylor, 2011, p. 24).

With regards to structural coup-proofing, Qadhafi decentralised the command structure within the Libyan Armed Forces, while at the same time he strongly asserted his oversight through the previously mentioned intelligence services, most notably the Intelligence Bureau of the Leader. Moreover, Qadhafi personally "exercised wide informal control over the activities and deployments of military units" after he had abolished the position of minister of defence already in 1969 (Parsons & Taylor, 2011, p. 23; Vandewalle, 2012). In terms of information-sharing and cooperation across units, it is useful to consider training policies of the regular forces.

Universiteit
Leiden

Although combat units were organised primarily at the level of the battalion,[4] the spare training that these regular soldiers *did* experience was never to exceed the level of the company. The idea behind this was that if military commanders were stripped from high levels of decision-making autonomy and were only allowed to oversee the command of a limited number of troops, it would prevent them from staging a successful coup. Additionally, Libya's military never trained combined arms operations, between artillery, armour and infantry units to limit them in the ability to quickly and effectively overthrow the regime. Combat-unit officers moreover never acquired strong leadership skills. Everything combined limited them in creating cohesive units. This proved deadly in the war against Chad in 1987 as Qadhafi's troops simply melted away when they encountered the Chadian army that was inferior in terms of equipment and size (Gaub, 2013).

Altogether, Colonel Qadhafi designed a complex network of coup-proofing strategies, which he implemented primarily throughout the first three decades of his rule. And his efforts proved successful. After 1997, Qadhafi did no longer face any significant threats to his rule that originated from the military ranks.

EXPLAINING DESERTION IN THE LIBYAN REVOLUTION

Moreover, the extensive network had far-reaching, unintentional consequences in terms of desertion rates during the Libyan Revolution. Eventually, the disintegration of the LAF led to the downfall of Colonel Qadhafi after a short civil war which erupted after the security apparatus fractured. One side supported Muammar al-Qadhafi, while the other supported the revolution. It falls not in the scope of this thesis to analyse desertions once violence between these two groups erupted, as these were no longer the result of popular mass mobilisation, but possibly also of increased insecurity and widespread violence. This inevitably brought factors into the equation that I have not covered in my analysis of the logic of desertion. Nevertheless, it was under the pressure of being ordered to fire at peaceful protesters that the first Libyan

---

[4] Generally, a battalion consist of between four hundred to two thousand troops and is build-up out of two to five companies, that are in turn build-up out of two to four platoons. However, as Anthony H. Cordesman (2016) points out, due to a lack of personnel that plagued the regular Libyan Armed Forces, many of the units were not fully manned.

Universiteit Leiden

troops decided to desert the LAF, and these circumstances neatly connect to the conceptualisation of desertion put forward in this paper.

Punishment and Reward

After the events of 15 February, on which the Benghazi police fired at peaceful protesters, Libyan anti-government protests broke out throughout the country on the following days. Colonel Qadhafi sent his son as-Sa'adi, commander of one of the military's two elite brigades, and 'Abdullah as-Sanussi, commander of the Jamahiriya Security Organization, to repress the protesters in Benghazi, which was soon to be the centre of nation-wide demonstrations and protests. The loyalist forces under command of these two men violently repressed the peaceful protesters in Benghazi. However, their actions backfired and inspired more Libyan to take to the streets (Bassiouni, 2013). When protests grew, the assistance of the regular military was called in.

As mentioned previously, the majority of the military's rank-and-file hailed from the east and soldiers were now ordered to repress protests of their own people. Moreover, soldiers were able to identify with these protesters, as they similarly were economically deprived and politically powerless (Suhbi, 2012; also see Grewal, 2016). Consequently, this led to a larger *disposition* to desert within these segments of the military force. Evidently, "[l]oyalty to one's local identity prevailed over loyalty to the regime." (Gaub, 2013, p. 235).

However, the geographical distribution of the protests also shaped the *possibilities* that military personnel had. With regard to punishment system, Qadhafi had set up a wide variety of organisations that were tasked with monitoring officers and soldiers, and to punish them if divergent behaviour was detected. But as these organisations were primarily tasked with preventing the staging of a coup, they focussed their attention primarily on the centres of power, meaning the capital Tripoli and other major cities in the western part of the country (Gaub, 2013; Nassif, 2020). Here, coup threat was the highest. Due to this geographical focus the punishment system that was put in place was not able to effectively remain oversight over the large

Universiteit Leiden

amounts of deserters in the east, which led to high desertion rates in that area as the calculated costs of desertion were lower.

At the same time, this explains the fact that desertion was not non-existent among Warfalla and Magraha members in the west but at the same time did not result in desertion cascades among units. Here, primarily high-ranking officers deserted, but they were unable to inspire their subordinates in following their lead; here, large desertion cascades stayed out, in opposition to the east. Although it is likely that some of the soldiers that were stationed in the west as part of seemingly loyal units were willing to desert, the presence of the extensive monitor and punishment system which remained largely intact prevented them from following their officer's lead, who often paid for their desertions with death (Nassif, 2020).

However, in line with the theoretical assessment, this sphere of desertion-inhibition does not necessarily face a trade-off in relation to successful coup-proofing. Desertion could *flourish* in the eastern Libya because the mechanisms of oversight and punishment failed; not because its success in terms of coup-proofing (intentional) led to more desertions in the face of the uprisings (unintentional). In terms of material bribery of the lower ranks, the Libyan case does not tell us much, because Qadhafi had neglected these in the decades prior to the Libyan Revolution. As a result, the hypothesis that this form of coup-proofing does not inhibit desertion, cannot be verified.

Unit Cohesion

The trade-off between successful coup-proofing and high desertion rates is more visible when we consider the effect of unit-cohesion on the disintegration of the Libyan Armed Forces in 2011.

First, through extensive counterbalancing and favouring the position of parallel security forces in virtually every way, Qadhafi had tried to cultivate deep rivalries between the regular military and Libya's paramilitary forces. However, other than the rivalry between the Philippine military and police under Marcos, for example, Qadhafi did not do that because he wanted to politically neutralise both organisations. Rather, the Colonel's goal was to completely break down the corporate identity of the military

Universiteit Leiden

while he strengthened those of the paramilitary organisations with tribal stacking and ideological underpinnings, respectively in the cases of Khamis and as-Sa'adi Brigades, and the Islamist Pan-African Legion and Popular Militia. This was not about fostering competition, but about ensuring the absolute domination of one side of the security apparatus over the other.

At the same time, Qadhafi restricted training programmes of regular military units in order to prevent them from developing warfighting skills that could be used against him. However, the lack of training, and the subsequent lack of unit cohesion led of the disintegration of these units when they were ordered to fire at protesters. The fact that officers did not receive enough uniforms and were not respected within the larger Libyan society also resulted in a lack of binding factors that usually strengthen unit cohesion. Moreover, frequent rotations of commanding positions in order to prevent officers from developing leadership qualities and gaining a power base in their units (Cordesman, 2016). Under pressure of the order to fire at unarmed protesters, soldiers were in no way (mentally) restricted to enact on their dispositions.

Again, such mechanisms explain the diverging responses of different segments of the security apparatus. Focussing on the military, the elite units received extensive training programmes, were heavily funded and well-equipped (Nassif, 2020). All this led to the cultivation of strong unit cohesion which compelled soldiers to keep fighting for their unit, even if they might have wanted to desert under different circumstances. As a result, we saw little to no desertions in the elite brigades, while regular military units, subjected to Qadhafi's coup-proofing, fell apart in the blink of an eye (Al-Jazeera, 2011).

In accordance with the trade-off theory, coup-proofing measures aimed at breaking down corporate interest and unit cohesion should be considered trustworthy predictors for high desertion rates. Clearly in the case of Libya, the less factors of unit cohesion were preserved under coup-proofing, the less soldiers were bound to their unit and the fate of their fellow soldiers. Consequently, more soldiers were inclined to desert.

Universiteit Leiden

Politicisation

It is true that Qadhafi did not actively indoctrinated his troops with his Third Universal Theory. On the contrary, his practices often went against own his ideology of Libyan unity. Nevertheless, his coup-proofing strategies were aimed at making sure that everyone in the military understood that he was the ultimate leader of the armed forces. For example, he had abolished the position of minister of defence already in 1969, asserting strong personal control over the LAF. Moreover, the RCs and other intelligences services monitored officers and soldier alike, to the extent that it was possible to rotate or purge the ones that seemed to act against Qadhafi's regime. In that regard, it was in fact Qadhafi's goal to achieve some level of shared ideational framework within the military. However, as we have already seen, that did not quite succeed. Forces deserted when they had the chance and units disintegrated when ordered to desert. The soldiers definitely did not see Qadhafi as the supreme leader of the armed forces, and as someone they wanted to die for.

Regarding the elite units of the military, which were stacked with the al-Qadhadhifa tribe, some of the considerations that they made resulted from the ideational sphere. First, due to the tribal connections, they harboured emotional devotion to the Qadhafi ruling family. And second, decades of stimulating rivalries among loyalist and non-loyalist tribes had put the Qadhadhifa tribe in a situation where it "had collected many blood feuds along the way" making soldiers willing to crackdown on the opposition (Nassif, 2020, p. 245). Moreover, the mercenary Islamist Pan-African Legion proved to be extremely violent against the Libyan protesters which whom they could not identify. As hired fighters, the mercenaries from Sudan, Egypt and some Sahel countries were devoid of any ideological connection to the Qadhafi regime, but their mentality was that as long as they were getting paid, they would keep fighting (Nassif, 2020).

Conversely, the soldiers of the regular military would make their calculation to desert on the basis of their "opinion of the conflict and/or the regime."(Gaub, 2013, p. 235) In practice, in no way bound ideationally to the regime but able to identify with the part of (eastern) Libyan society that was alienated from the regime – in opposition

Universiteit Leiden

to the elite Brigades or the mercenary Legion – these soldiers felt no need to keep fighting for the Colonel.

However, similar to the sphere of punishment and reward, the Qadhafi's ideological indoctrination did not necessarily mean a trade-off between coup-proofing and desertion rates. Although ideational homogenisation of one part of the security apparatus might have created a rivalry with the Libyan military, soldiers of regular military units did not defect because of unintentional consequences of ideational coup-proofing itself. Only with regards to military cohesion, decisions made by Qadhafi had unintentional effects. Moreover, units that were ideologically indoctrinated, remained loyal to the regime when protests broke out, signalling that this form of coup-proofing in fact achieved obedient military behaviour.

Universiteit Leiden

Conclusion

Originally, this thesis set out to provide an explain to the paradoxical situation in which autocratic rulers have successfully subordinated their militaries for decades, but see their forces abandon them when they are ordered to repress popular mass mobilisations, à la the *1989 ideal type* as Ash defined them. In order to solve this problem, I set out to disaggregate disloyal military behaviour between staging a coup and deserting. Thereafter, I conceptualised desertion by evaluating its implications, origins and underlying logic. This formed the foundation for the rest of my theoretical analysis and constitutes the first contribution to the academic literature as it has long overlooked and failed to define this concept, if it was considered at all. Subsequently, I provided an overview of the literature on coup-proofing in order to dissect and uncover the mechanisms of these strategies. In order to construct a new theory that provides a potential answer to the empirical problem at hand, I hypothesised the effect of these mechanisms on the three spheres of desertion-inhibition. The result was a new theory which exposed a trade-off between (primarily) coup-proofing measures that aim to break down unit cohesion to prevent coups and their unintentional, negative effect on the inhibiting effect on desertion rates. Moreover, with regards to punishment and reward, and organisation-wide politicisation, I pointed out the relation between coup-proofing measures, and their diverging effects on coup risk and desertion rates.

Finally, the analysis of the case of the disintegration of the Libyan Armed Forces in 2011, following the revolution that started in February of that year, showed the explanatory capabilities of this theory. In accordance with it, coup-proofing measures that Colonel Qadhafi had installed to break down unit cohesion proved to be the primary explanatory factors for the widespread desertion in Eastern Libya. Moreover, while not necessarily constituting a trade-off, the spheres of punishment and reward and politicisation also *worked* in line with theoretical assessment. In terms of the limits of this particular analysis, the unrest in Libya has not yet come to an end, and it is therefore still difficult to analyse the events of 2011 with a proper, retrospective view. Consequently, this research never had the intention nor the capability to be complete,

Universiteit
Leiden

and to establish direct connections between the circumstances in which individuals found themselves as a result of coup-proofing, their personal consideration of the disposition and possibilities to desert, and their eventual decisions, with high degrees of certainty. Nevertheless, the analysis presented in the final chapter provides a very plausible answer to problem of the disintegration of the LAF in the face of the popular revolution of 2011, especially with regards to the very beginning of that disintegrative process.

The analysis moreover gives me some ground upon which I can make more generalisable statements, that relate more to the central question of this thesis; *under what conditions of coup-proofing do military forces desert when faced by non-violent mass mobilisations*? Ultimately, what this paper shows, is that in various ways, coup-proofing negatively (in varying degree of impact) affects punishment and reward systems, unit cohesion and politicisation policies that together influence desertion rates during popular mass mobilisations. As mentioned previously, this research finds the most support for this trade-off with regards to unit cohesion. More specifically, it draws notable attention towards coup-proofing strategies that break down that cohesion, including low levels of combat officer autonomy, high levels of centralised command chains, little information-sharing possibilities, weak training programmes, the absence of symbolic and unifying customs, divisionary recruitment patterns, unpredictable rotations of leadership positions, counterbalancing that exacerbate rivalries and simultaneously are aimed to break down the corporate identity of the regular military, and finally, the (non-)pecuniary negligence of (a part of) the military *at the expense of another part of the security apparatus*, that ultimately can backfire when the former can more easily identify with politically disenfranchised and economically deprived protesters. This must be considered the core answer to the research question and is the main contribution to the existing literature. It is safe to say that not only face a trade-off with regards to military effectiveness when they try to subordinate and domesticate their militaries. In addition, autocratic rulers face a trade-off between coup-proofing their militaries and preserving them as reliant tools for repression. After all, these things are absolutely not the same.

Universiteit Leiden

On a side note, this thesis also contributed to the academic literature in the sense that it paid not only attention to the incentives to desert, but also to the possibilities, something which has been overlooked when this phenomenon has been analysed. In earlier studies, the willingness to desert – which is deduced from the direct impact of coup-proofing on the military's position within the security apparatus, without accounting for the different logics of coup plotting and deserting – was taken as only explanatory factor. By taking a more individual approach, focussing on combat-units, I argue that willingness alone is not enough to result in desertion and that individuals must also get the opportunities to do so (relatively) safely.

Moreover, by problematising the dependent factor, i.e., desertion, and by developing a theory that takes that outcome as the central starting point, I have developed a refreshing approach to the problems that autocratic, civilian rulership face every day as they are constantly confronted by a military that poses a threat to their position. But as primarily a theoretical exercise, only supported by the analysis of one empirical case study, it is obvious that the newly developed trade-off theory needs testing, above all. After all, theories like these only prove their worth if they are applied to a diverse, but comparable, variety of cases.

To finalise, I would like to recall the quote from the introduction by Michael Makara, who made us aware of the problem: "[d]espite implementing coup-proofing measures designed to maintain military loyalty, Arab regimes proved vulnerable to military defection during the Arab Spring." It turns out, Makara was rather close to formulating the central argument of *this* thesis, which I argue is as follows: because of the implementation of (certain) coup-proofing measures that were designed to maintain military loyalty, autocratic regimes in the Arab world and elsewhere, proved vulnerable to military defection during popular mass mobilisations.

Universiteit
Leiden

Bibliography

Albrecht, Holger. (2015). Does Coup-Proofing Work? Political–Military Relations in Authoritarian Regimes amid the Arab Uprisings. *Mediterranean Politics*, 20 (1), 36-54. DOI: 10.1080/13629395.2014.932537

Albrecht, Holger & Kevin Koehler. (2017). Going on the Run: What Drives Military Desertion in Civil War? *Security Studies 27* (2), 179-203. DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2017.1386931

Albrecht, Holger & Ferdinand Eibl. (2018). How to Keep Officers in the Barracks: Causes, Agents, and Types of Military Coups. *International Studies Quarterly 62* (2), 315-328. DOI: 10.1093/isq/sqx085

Alfoneh, Ali. (June 3, 2020). Rare Criticism of IRGC Rooted in Iran's Military Rivalry. *The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington*. https://agsiw.org/rare-criticism-of-irgc-rooted-in-irans-military-rivalry/ (accessed on June 16, 2021).

Al-Jazeera. (February 24, 2011). Gaddafi loses more Libyan cities. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2011/2/24/gaddafi-loses-more-libyan-cities (accessed on June 22, 2021).

Ash, Timothy Garton. (2009). Velvet Revolution: The Prospects. *The New York Review*, December 3, 2009. Retrieved from https://www-nybooks-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl/articles/2009/12/03/velvet-revolution-the-prospects/

Bassiouni, M. Cherif. (2013). *Libya: from repression to revolution : a record of armed conflict and international law*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Bausch, Andrew W. (2018). Coup-Proofing and Military Inefficiencies: An Experiment, *International Interactions, 44* (1), 1-32. DOI: 10.1080/03050629.2017.1289938

Universiteit
Leiden

Bekdil, Burak Ege. (July 9, 2018). Erdogan appoints active-duty military commander as Turkey's defense minister. *Defense News*. https://www.defensenews.com/global/ europe/2018/07/09/erdogan-appoints-active-duty-military-commander-as-turkeys-defense-minister/ (accessed on June 13, 2021).

Belkin, Aaron & Evan Schofer. (2003). Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 47* (5), 594-620. DOI: 10.1177/0022002703258197

Bellin, Eva. (2004). The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective. *Comparative Politics 36* (2), 139-157. DOI: 10.2307/4150140

Bellin, Eva. (2012). Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring. Comparative Politics 44 (2), 127-149. DOI: 10.5129/001041512798838021

Böhmelt, Tobias & Ulrich Pilster. (2015). The Impact of Institutional Coup-Proofing on Coup Attempts and Coup Outcomes. *International Interactions 41* (1), 158-182, DOI: 10.1080/03050629.2014.906411

Böhmelt, Tobias, Abel Escribà-Folch & Ulrich Pilster. (2019). Pitfalls of Professionalism? Military Academies and Coup Risk. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 63* (5), 1111-1139. DOI: 10.1177/0022002718789744

Brahimi, Alia. (2011). Libya's Revolution. *The Journal of North African Studies 16* (4), 605-624. DOI: 10.1080/13629387.2011.630880

Brooks, Risa A. (2017). Military Defection and the Arab Spring. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia Politics*. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.26

Brooks, Risa. (2019). Integrating the Civil-Military Relations Subfield. *Annual Review of Political Science 22* (1), 379-398. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-060518-025407

Universiteit Leiden

Brown, Cameron S., Christopher J. Fariss & R. Blake McMahon. (2016). Recouping after Coup-Proofing: Compromised Military Effectiveness and Strategic Substitution. *International Interactions*, 42 (1), 1-30. DOI: 10.1080/03050629.2015.1046598

Burk, James. (2002). Theories of Democratic Civil-Military Relations. *Armed Forces & Society 29* (1), 7-29. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X0202900102

Byman, Daniel & Jennifer Lind. (2010). Pyongyang's Survival Strategy: Tools of Authoritarian Control in North Korea. *International Security 35* (1), 44–74. DOI: 10.1162/ISEC_a_00002

Campbell, Kirk S. (2009). *Civil-military relations and political liberalization: A comparative study of the military's corporateness and political values in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Pakistan*. The George Washington University (dissertation).

Cann, Rebecca & Constantine Danopoulos. (1998). The Military and Politics in a Theocratic State: Iran as Case Study. *Armed Forces & Society 24* (2), 269-288.

Ciment, James. (2015). *Encyclopedia of Conflicts Since World War II*. Taylor and Francis.

Cordesman, Anthony. (2016). *After The Storm : The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East*. London : Bloomsbury Publishing.

Croissant, Aurel, David Kuehn & Tanja Eschenauer. (2018). Mass Protests and the Military. *Journal of Democracy 29* (3), 141-155. DOI: 10.1353/jod.2018.0051

De Bruin, Erica. (2018). Preventing Coups d'état: How Counterbalancing Works. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 62* (7), 1433-1458. DOI: 10.1177/0022002717692652

Decalo, Samuel. (1989). Modalities of Civil-Military Stability in Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies 27* (4), 547-578. DOI: 10.1017/S0022278X00020449

Degaut, Marcos. (2017). Out of the Barracks: The Role of the Military in Democratic Revolutions. *Armed Forces & Society 45* (1), 78-100. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X17708194

Droz-Vincent, Phillippe. (2013). The Military amidst Uprisings and Transitions in the Arab World. In Fawaz A. Gerges (Ed.), *The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World* (pp. 180-208). Cambridge University Press.

Universiteit Leiden

Eck, Kristine. (2014). Coercion in rebel recruitment. *Security Studies, 23* (2), 364–398. DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2014.905368

Emizet, Kisangani N. F. (2000). Explaining the Rise and Fall of Military Regimes: Civil-Military Relations in the Congo. *Armed Forces & Society 26* (2), 203-227. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X0002600203

Etzioni-Halevy, Eva. (1996). Civil-Military Relations and Democracy: The Case of the Military-Political Elites' Connection in Israel. *Armed Forces & Society 22* (3), 401-417. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X9602200304

Forozan, Hesam & Afshin Shahi. (2017). The Military and the State in Iran: The Economic Rise of the Revolutionary Guards. *The Middle East Journal 71* (1), 67-86. DOI: 10.3751/71.1.14

Gates, Scott. (2017). Membership matters: Coerced recruits and rebel allegiance. *Journal of Peace Research 54* (5), 674–686. DOI: 10.1177/0022343317722700.

Gaub, Florence. (2013). The Libyan Armed Forces between Coup-proofing and Repression. *Journal of Strategic Studies 36* (2), 221-244. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2012.742010

Gause, Gregory F. III. (2011). Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability. *Foreign Affairs 90* (4), 81-90.

Geddes, Barbara. (1999). What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years? *Annual Review of Political Science 2* (1), 115-144. 10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.115

Grewal, Sharan. (2016). Military Defection During Localized Protests: The Case of Tataouine. *International Studies Quarterly 63* (2), 259-269. DOI: 10.1093/isq/sqz003

Haer, Roos & Lilli Banholzer. (2015). The Creation of Committed Combatants. *Small Wars & Insurgencies 26* (1), 25-48. DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2014.959767

Hashim, Ahmed S. (2003). Military Power and State Formation in Modern Iraq. *Middle East Policy 10* (4), 29-47. DOI: 10.1111/j.1061-1924.2003.00128.x

Universiteit Leiden

Hashim, Ahmed S. (2011). The Egyptian Military, Part Two: From Mubarak Onward. *Middle East Policy 28* (4), 108-128. DOI: 10.1111/j.1475-4967.2011.00514.x

Holmes, Amy Austin & Kevin Koehler. (2020). Myths of military defection in Egypt and Tunisia. *Mediterranean Politics 25* (1), 45-70. DOI: 10.1080/13629395.2018.1499216

Huntington, Samuel. (1957). *The Soldier and the State*. Cambridge: Belknap.

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

Kamrava, Mehran. (2000). Military Professionalization and Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East. *Political Science Quarterly 115* (1), 67-92. DOI: 10.2307/2658034

Kuran, Timur. (1995). *Private truths, public lies: the social consequences of preference falsification*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lawler, Edward J. (2001). An Affect Theory of Social Exchange. *American Journal of Sociology 107* (2), 321-352. DOI: 10.1086/324071

Lee, Terence. (2005). Military Cohesion and Regime Maintenance: Explaining the Role of the Military in 1989 China and 1998 Indonesia. *Armed Forces & Society 32* (1), 80-104. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X05277906

Lee, Terence. (2008). The Military's Corporate Interests: The Main Reason for Intervention in Indonesia and the Philippines? *Armed Forces & Society 34* (3), 491-502. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X07307199

Louër, Laurence. (2013). Sectarianism and Coup-Proofing Strategies in Bahrain. *Journal of Strategic Studies 36* (2), 245-260. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2013.790314

Lutterbeck, Derek. (2013). Arab Uprisings, Armed Forces, and Civil–Military Relations. *Armed Forces & Society 39* (1), 28-52. DOI: 10.1177/0095327X12442768

Luttwak, Edward N. (1979). *Coup d'Etat: A Practical Handbook*. London: WildwoodHouse.

Makara, Michael. (2013). Coup-Proofing, Military Defection, and the Arab Spring. *Democracy and Security 9* (4), 334-359. DOI: 10.1080/17419166.2013.802983

Makara, Michael. (2016). Rethinking military behavior during the Arab Spring. *Defense & Security Analysis 32* (3), 209-223. DOI: 10.1080/14751798.2016.1199121

Martin, Heather. (2017). Coup-Proofing and Beyond: The Regime-Survival Strategies of Hugo Chávez: Coup-Proofing and Beyond. *Latin American Policy 8* (2), 249-262. DOI: 10.1111/lamp.12130

McLauchlin, Theodore. (2015). Desertion and Collective Action in Civil Wars. *International Studies Quarterly 59* (4), 669-679. DOI: 10.1111/isqu.12205

McLauchlin, Theodore. (2015). Loyalty Strategies and Military Defection in Rebellion. *Comparative Politics 42* (3), 333-350. DOI: 10.5129/001041510X12911363509792

McLauchlin, Theodore. (2020). *Desertion: Trust and Mistrust in Civil Wars*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Nassif, Hicham Bou. (2015a). Generals and Autocrats: How Coup-Proofing Predetermined the Military Elite's Behavior in the Arab Spring. *Political Science Quarterly 130* (2), 245-275. DOI: 10.1002/polq.12324

Nassif, Hicham Bou. (2015b). 'Second-Class': The Grievances of Sunni Officers in the Syrian Armed Forces. *Journal of Strategic Studies 38* (5), 626-649. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2015.1053604

Nassif, Hicham Bou. (2020). *Endgames: Military Response to Protest in Arab Autocracies*. Cambridge University Press.

Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. (2011). Nonviolence in the Arab Spring: The critical role of military–opposition alliances. *Swiss Political Science Review 17* (4), 485–491. DOI: 10.1177/0022343313476529

Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. (2013). Mutiny and nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring military defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria. *Journal of Peace Research 50* (3), 337-349. DOI: 10.1177/0022343313476529

Pargeter, Alison. (2012). *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*. London: Yale University Press.

Parsons, William & William Taylor. (2011). Arbiters of Social Unrest: Military Responses to The Arab Spring. *United States Military Academy, West Point*. https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a562816.pdf

Peri, Yoram. (2006). *Generals in the Cabinet Room: How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Perlmutter, Amos. (1969). The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities. *Comparative Politics 1* (3), 382-404. DOI: 10.2307/421446

Pion-Berlin, David & Harold Trinkunas. (2010). Civilian Praetorianism and Military Shirking During Constitutional Crises in Latin America. *Comparative Politics 42* (4), 395-411. DOI: 10.5129/001041510X12911363509990

Powell, Jonathan. (2012). Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'état. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 56* (6), 1017-1040. DOI: 10.1177/0022002712445732

Quinlivan, James T. (1999). Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East. *International Security 24* (2), 131-165.

Rittinger, Eric R. & Matthew R. Cleary. (2013). Confronting Coup Risk in the Latin American Left. *Studies in Comparative International Development 48* (4), 403-431. DOI: 10.1007/s12116-013-9128-9

Schutte, Sebastian. (2015). Geography, Outcome, and Casualties: A Unified Model of Insurgency. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 59* (6), 1101-1128. DOI: 10.1177/0022002713520534

Shambaugh, David. (1991). The Soldier and the State in China: The Political Work System in the People's Liberation Army. *The China Quarterly 127* (Special Issue: The Individual and State in China), 527-568. DOI:

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

St. John, Ronald Bruce. (2014). *Historical Dictionary of Libya*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Stephan, Maria J. & Erica Chenoweth. (2008). Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict. *International security 33* (1), 7-44. DOI: 10.1162/isec.2008.33.1.7

Sudduth, Jun Koga. (2017). Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships. *Comparative Political Studies 50* (13), 1768-1801. DOI: 10.1177/0010414016688004

Suhbi, Salah. (2012). Breaking our invisible chains. The 17th of February revolution: Libya's rise to freedom. *Libyan Studies 43* (2), 111-114. DOI: 10.1017/S0263718900000078

Svolik, Milan. (2012). *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Talmadge, Caitlin. (2015). *The Dictator's Army Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Ülgül, Murat & Sertif Demir. (2020). Keeping the Soldiers at Bay: Coup-Proofing Strategies in Turkey. *Middle East Policy 27* (3), 138-151. DOI: 10.1111/mepo.12518

Vandewalle, Dirk. (March 25, 2011). An excerpt of *Libya since 1969*: *Libya's Revolution in Perspective 1969–2000*. *The History Reader*. https://www.thehistoryreader.com/world-history/libya-since-1969/ (accessed on June 22, 2021).

Vandewalle, Dirk. (2012). *A History of Modern Libya*. Cambridge University Press.

Wood, Elisabeth J. (2008). The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks. *Annual Review of Political Science 11* (1) 539-561. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.8.082103.104832