Democratic military aid to authoritarian regimes

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09/01/2023

Introduction

Thirty years after the third wave of democratization doubled the number of democratic countries (Huntington, 1991) the picture of global democracy looks bleak. Freedom House (2022) reported the 16th annual decline of democracy around the world this year. This decline is happening all around the world, from Tunisia to Myanmar, from Nicaragua to Turkey and from Senegal to Hungary. Before this rise of authoritarianism around 46% of the world population lived in free countries. This has now decreased to around 20%. The decline in democracy has detrimental consequences for the human rights of the people living in these countries and international security, as authoritarian regimes have consistently been shown to be the biggest violators of human rights (UN Watch, 2020; Wright, 2015) and are believed to be more violent in their foreign and domestic politics than democratic countries (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011; Reiter, n.d.; Sudduth, 2016; Van der Maat, 2020).

Powerful authoritarian regimes are often credited for promoting the rise in authoritarianism (Tolstrup, 2015). These governments include Russia, Turkey (Freedom House, 2022) and especially China (Edel & Shullman, 2021; Gao, 2017). However, less attention seems to be paid to the role of democracies in sustaining authoritarian regimes; the United States has supported multiple authoritarian regimes and leaders during the Cold War (Afoaku, 2000), France has been collaborating with dictatorships in Africa since they gained independence (Avoulete, 2021; Powell, 2020) and the United Kingdom provides assistance to dozens of the world's most repressive regimes (Miller, 2021).

One major form of assistance to authoritarian regimes by democracies is military aid. Military aid includes sales of arms, military training and education of army, navy, air force and paramilitary troops, financing (Jacob, 1971; Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Defense Exports and Cooperation, n.d.), police aid (Security Assistance Monitor, n.d.), intelligence sharing (Dilanian, 2022; Jacob, 1971) and sending troops (Miller, 2021). Military aid is given during interstate war (Dilanian, 2022), civil war and counterterrorism operations (Karlin, 2017). However, military aid to authoritarian regimes can also be used to oppress dissent and commit human rights abuses (Gibb, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 1990; Lai & Morey, 2006).

Then why do democracies, which claim to stand for the promotion of human rights and democracy around the world (European Union, 2021; United States Department of State, n.d.-a), provide military aid to authoritarian regimes? Moreover, why do they support some authoritarian regimes, like Saudi Arabia (Fields, 2021; Reuters, 2020) and Chad (Powell, 2020), while others do not get the same treatment, including Myanmar (Martin, 2022; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, n.d.) and Venezuela (Council of the European Union, 2020)?

Multiple possible explanations have been brought forward explain why some but not all authoritarian regimes receive aid. These explanations are developmental aid, economic interests, security concerns, cultural factors, and public activism. That there are a multitude of possible explanations shows how complex the situation is and that the answer might not be clear cut. Previous literature also does not focus on which motivations are most important but focuses mostly on the effects of military aid itself and whether or not democracies achieve their aid. It is therefore important to answer this question to gain insight into why some authoritarian regimes receive aid from democratic countries in order to better understand the situation and possibly put a stop to the increase of authoritarianism in the world. This will be done through analysing military aid to five different authoritarian regimes.

This analysis will open with a literature review on the possible answers that have been identified. The second chapter will explain the methodology which will introduce the countries whose military aid will be examined. The methodology will also explain what observable implications are looked at to determine what motivations are important for democracies when allocating military aid. The third chapter will examine the cases introduced in the methodology and while the fourth chapter will analyse the findings. The analysis will end a conclusion and discussion

Literature review

As already mentioned, previous research has identified five different explanations for the military aid democracies give to authoritarian regimes. These explanations are developmental aid, economic interests, security concerns, cultural factors, and public activism. Some of these explanations are applicable to all military aid, some to categories of countries that happen to also be authoritarian and some specifically to authoritarian regimes.

The first motivation behind military aid is developmental aid. Development aid alone will not be effective in developing a country, especially in a post-conflict situation. Military aid should be provided to the recovering authorities in order for them to have the capacity for institution building (Taylor, 2010; World Bank, 2003). On top of that, troops from the donor country should be employed to protect the development aid, and if applicable, humanitarian aid (Taylor, 2010; World Bank, 2003). Development aid should include the development of stable democratic institutions, as democratic institutions decrease the chance of another civil conflict (Taylor, 2010). The fact that development of democratic institutions falls under development aid makes this argument especially relevant for military aid to authoritarian regimes, since it is authoritarian countries that are most in need of democracy aid. On top of that, most countries that are affected by conflict or are fragile, and thus in need of development aid, are authoritarian regimes (Fund for Peace, 2022; Geneva Academy, n.d.). However, not all authoritarian countries are affected by conflict or fragile states, so this could be a reason for why some but not all authoritarian regimes receive military aid from authoritarian regimes.

Related to development aid and democracy aid is the fact that donor countries sometimes make military aid conditional on the premise that the receiving country needs to make political reforms, including promoting democracy and respecting human rights (Gibb, 2010). The argument of conditional aid was used by both the United States and France. For the United States the fall of the Soviet Union made security concerns less important and increased the importance of promoting human rights and democracy when giving aid (Blanton, 2005). For France a wave of new democratic movements emerging in Africa made human rights and democracy more important. France adopted La Baule doctrine, which stated France would support democratization and liberalization movements in African countries, many of which were authoritarian. Support to these authoritarian African states would include military aid, like peacekeeping missions (Sıradağ, 2014). The concern democracies show for democracy and human rights has led to some countries to be excluded from military aid based on their poor human rights record. This exclusion was especially true in the 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet Union but before the War on Terror. During the 1990s there was a period of relative peace and security concerns were of lesser importance. It should be noted that human rights abuses had no impact on the amount of aid given once a country was deemed eligible for military aid. Countries that were deemed eligible despite a poor record of human rights actually received more aid on average than countries that respected human rights (Blanton, 2005; Poe & Meernik, 1995). Differences in human rights records or (pretension of) intend to improve human rights records could explain why not all dictatorships receive military aid, especially in the period between the Cold War and War on Terror.

However, the reality shows that the democratization of recipient states did often not actually come to fruition, despite countries being excluded from receiving aid. In the case of France, the process of democratization in francophone African posed a threat to its economic, strategic, and political interests. Because of this threat France continued to send aid to authoritarian regimes, undermining democratic developments and strengthening authoritarian leaders. Even when

President Sarkozy made the goals more explicit by focusing on, among others, democratization, the rule of law and good governance (Sıradağ, 2014) the practice of military support for dictators continued (Powell, 2020). Moreover, military aid can further be used by authoritarian regimes to suppress its population while protecting the ruling elite, further undermining the promotion of human rights and democracy (Holden et al., 2016). Meaning that the argument from development aid is severely flawed when used by democratic countries to justify military aid.

The second motivation behind military aid is economic interests. Military aid, in general as well as to authoritarian regimes, will bring a host of economic benefits. First, the arms industry is a multi-billion-dollar industry and will therefor generate a lot of income for countries dealing in arms. The argument of generating income was first articulated by President Clinton of the United States and gained prominence after the end of the Cold War. During this period ideology mostly stopped being an obstacle for trade as most communist countries and rebels ceased to exist. On top of that, sales of arms are a relatively cheap way to achieve security aims, which will be discussed later (Gouardères, 2021; Stone, 2018; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

Second, the arms industry provides countless jobs for people in the countries that produce arms. Governments claim the arms industry, as well as military aid, is responsible for hundreds of thousands to millions of jobs. The United States has used the argument that military aid creates jobs to defend its military aid, mostly to the Middle East (Gouardères, 2021; Miller & Sokolsky, 2018; Stone, 2018).

Third, proponents of the arms industry claim the industry fosters innovation, with examples given including duct tape, the internet, and nuclear energy (Caverley, 2021; Holden et al., 2016; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

These three arguments deal mostly with all military aid, not just to authoritarian regimes. Other economic motivations besides the arms industry itself need to be looked at to answer why authoritarian regimes, or specifically some authoritarian regimes, receive military aid. The arms industry answers are still important though, as they do play a role in the decision making of policy makers in democracies (Gouardères, 2021; Stone, 2018).

Democratic countries use military aid in order to gain access to natural resources. Trying to gain natural resources was the reason former Soviet Republics, including authoritarian regimes Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, received aid by the Clinton administration in 1997 when it tried to diversity its sources of energy (Klare & Volman, 2006). France also provided military support to African dictators in the 1960s to 1980s in exchange for exclusive rights to their raw materials (Sıradağ, 2014). This argument, as opposed to the others, can thus give a possible answer to why some but not all authoritarian regimes get military aid, as not all authoritarian regimes have access to natural resources.

Developing countries that are extensive trading partners of a donor country are also more likely to receive aid. In case of the United States research has shown that trade itself has a negative relation with receiving aid, meaning countries that trade a lot with the United States were less likely to receive military aid. This finding was likely caused by the biggest trading partners of the United States being developed countries that do not need military aid. However, once countries, mostly developing ones, were deemed eligible for military aid the amount of trade with the United States was positively related to the amount of military aid they received (Poe & Meernik, 1995).

The arguments of income generation, job creation and innovation have been heavily criticized, however. A meta-analysis on existing literature on the economic effects on military

expenditure came to the conclusion that there is no evidence for a positive effect on the economy of a country that spends a lot on the military. The effect was more likely to be negative or at best not statistically significant. These findings were especially true for studies done after the Cold War (Dunne & Tian, 2013). Different ways in which defence expenditures can harm economic development have been identified through research. First, labour and capital get redirected from more productive civilian industries. These civilian industries would create more income if capital and labour was invested into these industries, as opposed to being invested in the defence industry. Second, the defence industry and its technological advancements mostly get financed through public debt. Governments will go into debt in order to finance their defence industry, hampering economic development. Third, and most important for the research question, military spending to authoritarian regimes may hinder economic growth because of corruption. Instead of stabilizing countries and regions which would lead to economic growth, authoritarian leaders may use the military supplies to strengthen their own regime. This may in turn destabilize countries, leading to economic stagnation (Holden et al., 2016).

While the defence industry does create jobs, the number of jobs is far fewer than other industries, like healthcare, education, and clean energy, would create (Pollin & Garrett-Peltier, 2011). On top of that, the number of jobs is likely to be overestimated as much of the export of arms is in sectors like airplanes that are heavily automated and only require a few high-paying jobs (Caverley, 2021; Holden et al., 2016).

The role of the military in technological development is also overestimated. When proponents of the arms industry highlight the role of the military in technological advancements, they often ignore the role of civilian research from before and after the military research. The technology developed by the military often relies on inventions done earlier and on further development for public use by civilian researchers. Moreover, much money is wasted on military research that fails to bring any results, research that would never be approved for civilian research. An example of this is the failed development of a laser system to shoot down nuclear weapons which lasted ten years and cost sixty billion dollars (Holden et al., 2016). These criticisms show that at least part of the economic justification for military aid to authoritarian regimes is flawed.

The third motivation behind military aid is security concerns. The security dimension has multiple aspects. The clearest argument for excluding countries from aid is countries being adversaries. A country that is an adversary of the donor country will exclude it from receiving military aid. During the Cold War this included all communist countries (Poe & Meernik, 1995), at least before the Sino-Soviet Split and subsequent Sino-American Rapprochement (Meijer, 2016; Pilger, 2000). More recently this has been the case for countries including Russia, China, and Iran (Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

Military aid in general, thus also to authoritarian regimes, will lead to the bolstering of international and national security. Sending military aid to weak states will make them able to defend themselves and thus make themselves secure. This will lead to international peace, and thus also national peace for the country that grants military aid and its citizens. Military assistance can further be used to deter countries from attacking the donor country, further promoting peace and stability (Holden et al., 2016; Karlin, 2017; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018). As already mentioned, many of the weakest states are authoritarian regimes (Fund for Peace, 2022). However, other authoritarian regimes are not, which makes this a possible answer to the question why some but not all authoritarian regimes receive military aid.

Democracies also support authoritarian regimes to pursue their geopolitical goals: undermining political enemies and gaining or maintaining power themselves. Western countries, especially the United States, used this strategy during the Cold War. In order to undermine the Soviet Union, the United States provided support to anti-communist dictatorships around the world, including the military dictatorship of Pinochet in Chile, the absolute monarchy of the Shah in Iran and the regime of Marcos in the Philippines (Afoaku, 2000; Bonnefoy, 2017; Maloney, 2019). Aid to these anti-communist countries was higher if they were located next to a communist country (Poe & Meernik, 1995). The end of the Cold War did not put an end to this strategy but merely shifted it, mostly towards jihadists and states accused of supporting them, like Iran. For this reason, the United States and the United Kingdom support Saudi Arabia while France supports African dictatorships like Chad (Fields, 2021; Powell, 2020; Reuters, 2021). Recently there has been a shift towards deterring China as well, by giving aid to allies in the Pacific including Thailand (Thrall & Dorminey, 2018, United States Department of State, 2021). This motivation is partly driven by the fear that other countries will give military aid if the donor will not. Much of Israel's military aid to African countries, especially Ethiopia, can be explained by its fear that Egypt under Nasser would otherwise give aid (Jacob, 1971).

Related to this is the claim that military aid can be used to make recipient states comply to the donor's expectations. This includes the aforementioned promotion of human rights and democracy but is also used for geopolitical aims, including voting compliance in the United Nations General Assembly, supporting the War on Terrorism or recognizing the State of Israel. It is for this reason Armenia, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan were able to receive military aid again if they would help the United States' War on Terror (Jacob, 1971; Sullivan et al., 2011). Influencing policy can also be done through acquiring good will of and maintaining relations with elites directly (Fracalossi de Moraes, 2021; Miller & Sokolsky, 2018). Maintaining relations with elites was the strategy of Israel in Africa in the 1960s. Israel would train military officers who it believed to be future elites in the country. This included future President of Zaire Mobutu and Kenyan officer Waruhiu Itote, who became one of the first Africans in the Kenyan army and later gained prominence in the Kenyan government through becoming the leader of the Kenya National Youth (Jacob, 1971). France has also employed this in Africa. While the African states were still colonies their leaders were granted positions in French governments and parliament. The relations forged during this period would continue even after independence, as was the case with President of Côte d'Ivoire Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who was one of the dictators signing a military defence pact with France (Sıradağ, 2014).

Aid is further used to gain access to military bases in donor countries. The United States has done so in, among others, Oman, Somalia and Turkey, while France has done so in multiple Francophone African countries (Sıradağ, 2014; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

Military aid is sometimes given to protect a donor country's citizens living in the recipient country (Sıradağ, 2014; Thrall & Dominey, 2018). Protecting citizens is a factor in France's military aid to African dictatorships. About 240,000 French citizens live in Africa which France wants to protect, which is why France has often conducted military interventions to protect regimes when they were threatened (Sıradağ, 2014).

It should be noted that access to natural resources is also applicable to security concerns, as these resources are partly invested into the military, for example France's use of uranium from Africa that is used in its nuclear arsenal (International Panel on Fissile Materials, 2022; Sıradağ, 2014; Tertrais, 2014). All of these motivations could be used to explain why not all dictatorships receive

military aid, as not all countries want foreign military bases, have significant foreign populations or have natural resources.

Certain aspects of the security argument have also been heavily criticized. Scholars have argued that military aid does not create international security, it may even cause conflict. One way conflict might be created is through the security dilemma. The security dilemma happens when a state is increasing its security. This increase in security may be seen as hostile by surrounding states, which in turn increase their own security. In turn the first state may doubt the intentions of the other states and further increases its security, leading to an arms race. The arms race may cause or play a part in the eruption of a conflict. Military aid is argued by scholars to contribute to the security dilemma as states are able to increase their security through this aid (Holden et at., 2016; Tang, 2009; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018). Sometimes states may also feel empowered by the aid they receive causing them to invade their neighbouring countries (Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

Moreover, military aid can destabilize recipient countries themselves (Thrall & Dorminey, 2018). Countries have been destabilized during the Cold War, especially when both the United States and the Soviet Union were giving military aid, as was the case in India (Jaishankar & Godbole, 2018; Sanjin, 1998), and during the War on Terror, which often resulted in an increase in terrorism and instability in the affected countries (Holden et al., 2016; Qureshi, 2019). Destabilization works through multiple mechanisms. First, as already mentioned, military aid can be used by countries to oppress their citizens. Oppression also includes fostering corruption in the police force, as happened during the War on Drugs in Mexico, Colombia, and the Philippines. Second, military training to soldiers can increase the probability of a coup. Soldiers that received training by the United States were responsible for several coups, including in Honduras in 2009, Mali in 2012 and Egypt in 2013. Third, arms can fall into the hands of groups that were never intended to receive them. Those groups may then use these arms to fight states. This happened in Iraq when Islamic State got a hold of American weapons that were provided to the Iraqi army (Amnesty International, 2015; Holden et at., 2016; Savage and Caverley, 2017; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

The effectiveness of military aid in influencing state behaviour is disputed. As already mentioned, military aid can be used to oppress citizens. Blanton (1999) found that this does indeed happen and that donor countries are thus largely unable to improve human rights practices through military aid. Blanton further found that democratization is also hindered by military aid, thus making donor countries also unable to influence states in that aspect. Evidence for the amount of influence military aid has on foreign policy of recipient states, for example voting behaviour in the United Nations General Assembly, is mixed (Sullivan et at., 2011). Some studies show that military aid does induce foreign policy compliance (Moon, 1983; Wang, 1999), while others could find no such link (Derouen & Heo, 2004; Kegley & Hook, 1991). Lai & Morey (2006) explain this discrepancy by accounting for regime type. They argue that democratic nations have no incentive to change their foreign policy behaviour, while authoritarian regimes do. These criticisms show again that multiple aspects of the security motivation are flawed.

The fourth motivation behind military aid is the promotion of culture. Donor countries want to both spread their culture and maintain their culture in other countries. The spread of culture gives donor countries influence and prestige. Influence and prestige make other countries more likely to comply to the donor's wishes, which ties the cultural motivation to the security motivation. However, the cultural motivation also stands on its own, especially when it comes to maintaining influence. Countries tend to see other countries to which their culture has spread as their backyard. The countries will therefore militarily support these countries in order to defend their backyards (Martinez Machain, 2021; Powell, 2020).

The cultural motivation is especially relevant in the case of France, which sees itself as the protector of the francophone sphere. In order to promote French language and culture France supports different African authoritarian regimes that are part of the francophone sphere, most of which it signed exclusive military defence pacts with. France has helped Zaire against rebels believed to be backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, Rwanda against the invasion from rebels from Uganda believed to be an anglophone plot and the Sahel from jihadists. All of these rebels were believed to undermine French culture and France therefore helped the dictators in the battle against them (Powell, 2020; Sıradağ, 2014). However, other countries also use military aid for cultural influence, like the United States. The United States uses military training to foreign soldiers to familiarize them with American culture and values (Martinez Machain, 2021).

The fifth motivation behind military aid is public activism. Activism serves more as a limiting factor for governments than a reason to grant military aid. This means public activism is mostly a way in which military aid to authoritarian regimes is reduced or halted, instead of increased or granted. An illustration of this is the British arms embargo on Chile under Pinochet while Argentina under the military dictatorship started by Videla was still able to get British arms despite similar human rights abuses. This was due to activism against the military dictatorship of Chile being more prevalent than activism against the military dictatorship of Argentina. The campaign against Pinochet was transnational, there was evidence of British arms being used in suppression of the Chilean population and British activists identified with the previous government of Allende, all of which the activism against the military dictatorship of Argentina lacked. These factors were important in the British arms embargo on Chile (Fracalossi de Moraes, 2021). The same happened when the United States stopped military support to President Marcos of the Philippines after the public became aware of the atrocities committed by Marcos' regime (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008).

Methodology

In order to answer the research question the analysis will examine military aid to different authoritarian regimes, meaning this will be a cross-case analysis. The analysis will focus on the motivation behind the military aid, keeping in mind the five different motivations brought forward in the literature review, these being development aid, security concerns, economic interests, public activism, and cultural factors. A variety of authoritarian countries has been selected for this case study analysis. These countries being Saudi Arabia, Iran, Chad, China, and Portugal. Saudi Arabia and Iran were selected based on the contrast they provide. Both countries were key allies to the West during the Cold War and thus received a lot of military support. However, while Saudi Arabia continued to receive this aid, the West cut all ties with Iran. Chad has been selected as it is the best example of France's military interest in its former colonies in Africa. China has been selected as it shows as example of a communist country that for most of the Cold War did not receive military aid but for a brief period was able to receive aid, losing it shortly after again. Portugal has been selected because it was the only authoritarian founding member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and experienced a revolution which led to democratization.

The analysis of the cases will look at the reason why these countries received aid, lost access to aid or were denied aid. It will look at why Saudi Arabia has been able to receive aid since its inception. It will look at why Iran was able to receive aid from the 1930s to the middle of the Cold War and why it lost access after the Iranian Revolution. It will look why Chad, and other African dictatorships, receive aid from France. It will look why China was denied aid for most of the Cold War, why it was able to receive aid after the Sino-Soviet Split and why it lost access again after the Tiananmen Square protests. It will look at why Portugal was allowed to be part of NATO despite being an authoritarian regime and why its military supporters changed over the course of the Cold War.

The countries differ in some key respects. The countries are located in different regions. Saudi Arabia and Iran are located in the Middle East (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-a), China in East Asia, Portugal in Southern Europe and Chad in Sub-Sahara Africa (United Nations Statistics Division, n.d.). China is a communist country, while the others all received aid for their anti-communist stance. Portugal was very close ally of the democracies it received aid from, being a key member of NATO, which is not the case in the other cases. Portugal is also the only of the five countries that successfully transitioned to a democracy. Chad is the only country that was a former colony of one of the democracies it received aid from. Portugal on the other hand was a colonial power. Saudi Arabia is seen as an outlier in the amount of military aid it receives compared to all other countries, including the other cases (Blanton, 2005). Three of the countries, China, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, are/were regional powers with China even being a global power (Dollar, 2015; Felsch, 2020; Gaffar, 2015; Yilmaz, n.d.), while Chad and Portugal were less powerful. This means that the cases are very diverse which could strengthen the validity of this analysis.

To test which of the five explanations brought forward in the literature review are applicable all five will be tested. For developmental aid the analysis will look if countries received military aid alongside developmental aid and if human rights abuses had an impact on the delivery of military aid. For economic interested the analysis will look if the military aid is defended on grounds of income, employment, and innovation, if military aid is given in exchange for natural resources and trade has an impact on the delivery of military aid. For security concerns the analysis will look if military aid is given in order to stabilize a region, if military aid is given in times of war, if military aid is given to undermine an enemy, if military aid is made conditional on compliance towards the

foreign policy of the donor country and if military aid is given in exchange for military bases. For the cultural factors the analysis will look at the similarities between the culture of the donor country and recipient country and if cultural factors are mentioned as a defence for military aid. For the public activism the analysis will look if public activism in the donor country had an impact on limiting military aid to the recipient country.

It is important to use sources to determine if a country is democratic or authoritarian. To determine a country's status the reports Freedom in the World by Freedom House (n.d.), report Democracy Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit (n.d.), and dataset Autocracies of the World Dataset by Magaloni et al. (2013) will be used. These sources go back to 1950. In the cases that date back before 1950 other sources will be used. These sources include the Encyclopedia Britannica page of King Ibn Saud by Glubb (n.d.) for Saudi Arabia, the article "Human Rights in Iran under the Shah" by Cottam (1980) for Iran, the article "Postcolonial remembering in Taiwan: 228 and transitional justice as "The end of fear"" by Hartnett et al. (2020) for China, and the article "Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal" by Gallagher (1979) will be used for Portugal.

For two of the democracies that get featured predominantly in multiple cases sources that go further back than 1950 are also necessary. These being the United Kingdom and the United States. The United Kingdom granted voting rights to all men and to women above 30 in 1918 and to all women in 1928 (United Kingdom Parliament, n.d.). The United States granted voting rights to women in 1920, which means it legally granted voting rights to all citizens (National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.). This means the analysis will not go further back than 1920, as none of the featured democracies were fully democratic before then.

Cases

Saudi Arabia

Security concerns seem to have been the most important factor for military aid from democracies to Saudi Arabia. The military relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States started to develop during the Cold War when both countries saw the increasing Soviet influence in the Middle East as a threat. Because of this shared threat both countries signed the Mutual Defense Assistance agreement in 1951, which facilitated American arms sales and military training to Saudi Arabia. The United States thus tried to undermine the Soviet Union with its aid towards Saudi Arabia. Despite conflicts, including disagreements over Israel, this relationship lasted for the duration of the Cold War and reached its peak during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Both countries worked together to fund Islamic fundamentalists fighting off the Soviets. While this aid to Afghan rebel fighters itself did not constitute military aid to Saudi Arabia, there was tight intelligence sharing between the United States and Saudi Arabia, which does fall under military aid. The military aid during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan shows the United States increased aid to Saudi Arabia during regional instability. The increased aid was thus used for both undermining the Soviet Union and bolstering regional stability (Beauchamp, 2016; Chapin Metz, 1992).

Security concerns continued to play a role after the Cold War, as the United States and Saudi Arabia gained a new shared enemy, namely Iraq under Saddam Hussein. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 in order to get access to Kuwait's oil industry, Saudi Arabia feared the same would happen to the country as it also shared a border with Iraq and possessed large oil reserves. For this reason, the United States sent over 400,000 troops to defend the Saudi border with Iraq and Saudi oil reserves. Just as was the case during the Cold War, the military aid Saudi Arabia received during the first Gulf War was used to undermine an enemy, in this case Iraq, and bolster stability. The bolstering of stability continued to play a role even after Iraq was driven out of Kuwait, as a portion of the American troops sent to Saudi Arabia stayed, in order to defend the status quo in the Middle East. The status quo was favourable to the United States and was thought to guarantee regional stability (Beauchamp, 2016; Blanton, 2005; Chapin Metz, 1992).

The security motivation continued to play a role during the 21st century. Military cooperation between the United States and Saudi Arabia continued even after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and Saudi funding of Islamic fundamentalist organizations. Another new shared common enemy caused both countries to continue military cooperation. This enemy being Al-Qaeda under Osama bin Laden, which not only opposed the West but also believed the Middle Eastern monarchies were not Islamic enough. This new shared enemy intensified the intelligence cooperation between the United States and Saudi Arabia again, mostly as a means to undermine an enemy (Beauchamp, 2016).

Security concerns also play a role in Saudi Arabia's long-lasting conflict with Iran. Saudi Arabia and Iran already had a rivalry over oil, their role in OPEC and their sphere of influence in the Middle East but the Iranian Revolution in 1979 changed the two countries from rivals to enemies. For this change there were multiple reasons, including the schism in religion, with Saudi Arabia being Sunni and Iran being Shia, the attempts of Iran to export its revolutionary Shia government to other countries and rivalry over which country was the leader of the Muslim world. As for the United States, the new Iranian government overthrew the pro-American monarchy and was staunchly anti-American and anti-Western. The conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia intensified after the Arab

Spring when both countries tried to increase their sphere of influence in conflicts in countries like Bahrain, Syria, and Yemen. The United States has military supported Saudi Arabia in these proxy conflicts. American aid to Saudi Arabia is again used to both undermine an enemy and bolster regional stability (Alterman, 2020; Blanton, 2005; Castiglioni, 2016; Fields, 2021; Marcus, 2019; Sheline & Riedel, 2021).

It is important to note that while the United States may be the largest donor of military aid to Saudi Arabia, other democracies like the United Kingdom and Israel, also support the country, largely for the same reasons as the United States, mainly undermining Iran (Alterman, 2020; Castiglioni, 2016; Reuters, 2021).

Economic interests have also played a role in the military aid to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia started to become a client for American military aid since the 1930s, when oil fields were discovered in the country. President Roosevelt decided that the security of these oil fields was of vital importance for the United States and sent the first American military mission to Saudi Arabia (Beauchamp, 2016; Chapin Metz, 1992). Access to oil also played a role during and after the Gulf War, as the United States defended Saudi Arabi's oil fields and kept it troops in Saudi Arabia in order to guarantee oil trade (Beauchamp, 2016; Blanton, 2005; Chapin Metz, 1992).

Other economic interests seem to not play as much of a role. Military support to Saudi Arabia, especially arms deals, have in recent years been justified to the American public as a way to create jobs. However, the number of jobs is often largely exaggerated. Of the 500,000 promised jobs of the 2017 arms deal, only a third would actually be created according to the most generous estimates (Gouardères, 2021; Stone, 2018).

The cultural, developmental aid, and public activism arguments do not apply to the case of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia lacks shared culture and values with the West (Beacuchamp, 2016) and has been and remains one of the most oppressive regimes in the world (Fields, 2021) with the United States under President Bush only having funded limited democracy development programs (Beauchamp, 2016). Despite multiple protests, including after the 9/11 terror attacks and the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the military support has continued (Beauchamp, 2016; Stone, 2018).

Iran

Security concerns have been the most important reason behind Iran receiving and losing its military aid from democracies. Military aid for security concerns started after World War I. The United Kingdom and the Soviet Union competed over dominance in the region and in order to prevent the spread of communism the United Kingdom supported the 1921 coup of Reza Khan, who would become the Shah of Iran and start the House of Pahlavi. The precise role of the United Kingdom is uncertain but British General Edmund Ironside is known to have shared intelligence and helped plan the coup. The reason military aid started was thus to undermine an enemy, the Soviet Union (Katouzian, 1979; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, n.d.).

The United States followed suit during World War II when its allies, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, occupied parts of Iran to secure supply routes in their war against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan and dispose Reza Khan as he was an ally to Nazi Germany. The United States, at the invite of Iran, sent multiple missions to assist Iran, including training of troops. American military support continued after the end of World War II as consequence of the Soviet Union refusing to withdraw its troops from northern Iran. The United States supported Iran in its battle to have the Soviet troops withdraw. While this support was mostly diplomatic, a military agreement in the form

of arms provision was also part of this support. Again, military aid was used to undermine enemies, first the Axis powers and later the Soviet Union, but also to create stability during World War II (Cottam, 1980; Hess, 1974).

Security concerns also played a role in the United Kingdom and the United States supporting a coup in 1953. The coup came to be as the newly elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh started a power struggle with Shah Mohammad Reza. Mossadegh eventually won the power struggle and removed the Shah from power in 1953. The United Kingdom opposed Mossadegh because it feared his party would be controlled by the Soviet Union. For this reason, the United Kingdom requested the support of the United States to covertly provide military support for the Shah to return power (Borger, 2020; Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-b; Wu & Lanz, 2019). After the Shah was restored to power both the United Kingdom and United States would continue to military support Iran, in order to undermine the Soviet Union (Reed & Stillman, 2008; United States Department of State, 1967).

In the 1970s Iran would become one of the two pillars in the Middle East to undermine the Soviet Union, which was a common enemy between Iran and the United States, and pursue American interests, the other pillar being Saudi Arabia. In exchange Iran got military aid, consisting of strengthening its military and military assistance in case Iran was threatened. During this period Iran and the United States worked together to undermine Iraq, which they believed was under Soviet influence, by funding Kurdish rebels, and fight communist rebels in Oman (Brannon, 1994; Castiglioni, 2016; Khan, 2001).

However, Iran would lose American military support in 1979 because of security concerns as well. A combination of factors, including corruption, increasing oppression, inflation, and resentment towards the United States for its role the 1953 coup, led to the Iranian Revolution which overthrew the Shah and installed an Islamic theocracy. The Iranian Revolution changed the relation between Iran and the United States as the new Iranian government was staunchly anti-American. A hostage situation of the American embassy starting the same year caused the two countries to cut all ties, including military ties. The United States, with the help of Saudi Arabia, even supported Iraq in its war against Iran that started in 1980 (Maloney, 2019; Sanders, 2017). An arms embargo was also imposed on Iran by the Carter administration immediately following the takeover of the American embassy. This embargo has been expanded by multiple administrations since, most recently by the Obama administration (United States Institute of Peace, 2020). This situation is likely to continue as Iran and the United States are still bitter enemies to this day (Powell, 2011; Thrall & Dorminey, 2018).

Economic interests also played a role in military aid to Iran. The United Kingdom would continue to support Iran after World War II because it controlled the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Getting access to oil was thus an important incentive for military aid. Getting access to oil also played a role in the 1953 coup. Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which took away British control of Iran's oil industry (Borger, 2020; Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-b; Wu & Lanz, 2019). American aid was also influenced by gaining access to natural resources, as the aforementioned policy of the two pillars was also meant to ensure oil would be traded with the United States (Brannon, 1994; Castiglioni, 2016; Khan, 2001).

Economic interests were also the reason the United Kingdom would cease military aid to Iran in 1971. The United Kingdom could no longer economically afford supporting countries in the Middle East, including Iran, and therefore stopped its military support (Reed & Stillman, 2008).

It is possible the cultural argument had a marginal role in military support to Iran. The Shah tried to modernize Iran according to Western values with the help from the United States. Changes implemented under the Shah included women being allowed to vote and run for parliament, women being allowed to wear skirts and having schools with both men and women. The Shah even encouraged Saudi Arabia to do the same. This completely changed after the Iranian Revolution, which turned the country into a conservative Islamic theocracy (Maloney, 2019; Sanders, 2017).

The developmental aid and public activism arguments do not seem to apply to the case of Iran as human rights abuses were high under both the Shah and the Islamic Republic (Baraheni, 1976; Amnesty International, 2009) meaning the human rights situation was not the reason behind the United States ceasing aid. No mentions of developmental aid or protests against Iran were found.

Chad

Security concerns were at the forefront in the case of Cad. Since independence of most of France's colonies in 1960 France has maintained much influence over them. France favoured stability in order to pursue its interests in Africa. It perceived one-party states and authoritarian regimes as a way to create stability and believed multiparty democracy would lead to civil war as it would increase ethnic divisions. For this reason, France has military intervened more than fifty times to protect and strengthen authoritarian regimes (Powell, 2020). Chad has been the most consistent target for these military interventions (Muvunyi, 2020; Powell, 2020). One of the reason Chad was of importance for France was that Chad was the strategic centre for France's military and communication network in Africa (The Harvard Crimson, 1970). Meaning that bolstering regional stability played an important role in France's military aid to Chad.

The strategic importance of Chad was also partly responsible for France and Chad signing a defence agreement. The defence agreement was first invoked in 1968 when President François Tombalbaye faced an insurgency from Muslims from northern Chad, after which France sent 2,000 troops. The same happened in 1978, this time requested by President Félix Malloum. This time France sent 1,700 troops, again to subdue a rebellion from Muslims from the north. France would later intervene in both 1983 and 1986 to protect the government of President Habré from rebels led by former President Oueddei, which were backed by Libya. The military aid consisted of supplies, arms, and air raids during these two interventions (Bernstein, 1986; Darnton, 1978a; Darnton, 1978b; Echikson, 1983; Sıradağ, 2014). President Déby's rule has been the longest in Chadian history, from 1990 till his death in 2021, and he has been able to stay in power only thanks to France's military aid. France intervened in 2006, 2008 and 2019 to help the government defeat rebels. In 2006 and 2008 military aid consisted of sharing intelligence and transporting supplies, while in 2019 French troops engaged rebels directly (Chafer, 2019; Hansen, 2011; Sıradağ, 2014). Again, showing that fostering stability was a reason behind the military aid, as France has tried to stabilize the country during multiple regimes over several decades.

Déby's presidency saw the start of the War on Terror. This is when the United States started to back Chad in order to make Chadian troops equipped to fight Islamic terrorism (Hansen, 2011). During the same period Islamic militants started marching towards the Malian capital and France decided to intervene. For this it needed backing from other African states, backing that Chad was ready to provide. After this Chad and France have been partners in fighting terrorism around Africa (Chafer, 2019). Most recently in 2014, the counterterrorism organization G5 Sahel Joint Force was established. It consists of five francophone African countries, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mauritania, of which Chad is the most important. The organization receives military backing from

both France and the United States (Tublana, 2021). Undermining enemies was thus another motive for military aid to Chad.

However, France would not support every Chadian dictator, for example Libyan backed President Goukouni Ouedde. The United States would support France in this decision as well. France saw Libya as infringing on its sphere of influence and the United States saw Libya as a Soviet puppet. Both countries military supported Oueddei's biggest political rival Hissène Habré (Echikson, 1983; Farah, 2000; Sıradağ, 2014). President Habré himself would also lose support. After the Cold War ended and former chief of staff Idriss Déby rebelled, the United States saw little reason to keep supporting President Habré. France also dropped support for Habré and instead supported Déby, alongside Libya and Sudan, because it saw the United States, which at first supported Habré, as a rival that encroached on its sphere of influence (Farah, 2000; Tublana, 2021). This means that ceasing of support was done in order to undermine enemies or after it was no longer deemed necessary to undermine enemies in the region, while France's support for Déby was done to undermine a rival, the United States in this case.

France also has military bases in Chad and tries to make Chad compliant towards French foreign police, both of which it can achieve through military support (Powell, 2020; Sıradağ, 2014).

Cultural factors played a role in military aid to Chad as well. In Africa in general, and thus Chad as well, France wants to protect French culture and language and defeat other ideologies, including communism, the anglosphere, and jihadism, that form a threat to it. Moreover, France wants to increase its international standing. France perceives that having power and influence on another continent gives prestige (Powell, 2020; Sıradağ, 2014).

Economic interests play a role as well. The aforementioned defence agreement was also signed in order to get access to Chad's oil and uranium and in order to get trade privileges (Darnton, 1978a; Darnton, 1978b; Sıradağ, 2014; The Harvard Crimson, 1970). France also has large investment interests in francophone Africa in general, and thus also Chad (Powell, 2020). On top of that, the United States had an interest in Chad's oil fields as well, most of which are currently controlled by American companies (Hansen, 2011).

Public activism played a small role in limiting military aid to France. When François Hollande became president of France, he pledged to stop supporting authoritarian regimes in Africa, including Chad, after pressure from the French left-wing. However, this promised lasted for less than a year as France needed Chad's help in fighting Islamic terrorism (Chafer, 2019).

The developmental aid argument is not applicable to the case of Chad, as human rights abuses have been high under the numerous administration that have governed Chad since independence (BBC, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2021; TIME, 1975). France even saw authoritarian leadership as desirable, at least when its former colonies first gained independence (Powell, 2020). Developmental aid itself was not mentioned.

China

Security concerns played an important role in China being granted and denied military aid from democracies. China became an ally of the United States and the United Kingdom during World War II, as China was seen as an ally in the global fight against fascism. Early into the war military aid to China from both countries was relatively limited. The United States provided funds so China could buy arms while the United Kingdom trained Chinese soldiers in India. The situation changed in 1941, after both the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Japanese invasion of British Burma. These events

made the United States official part of the war and made the United Kingdom see the importance to the Japanese threat to its colonies in Asia. Because of these developments both countries became official allies of China, alongside the Soviet Union. This meant that Chinese, American, British, and Soviet troops all fought together against the Axis powers (Ma, 2000; Tiezzi, 2015; United States Department of State, n.d.-b; Yin, 2021). After the end of World War II American support for the Nationalist government would continue as it was fighting a civil war against the Communists, which the United States wanted to contain. This support was mostly economic in nature, but also included military aid (Cain, 2020; Feaver, 1981). Military aid was thus provided in order to undermine enemies, the Axis powers and communists, and to bolster stability, both during World War II and the Chinese Civil War.

Security concerns were also the reason why China lost military aid after the Communists defeated the Nationalists in 1949 after which they established the People's Republic of China. The United States would sever all ties, including military ties, with the new Chinese government and continue to support the Republic of China, that went into exile in Taiwan, as the sole legitimate government of China. On top of that, the United States would extent its embargo of any product that could be used in the production of weaponry on the Soviet Union to the People's Republic of China. A year later China and many Western states, including the United States, would come face to face in battle during the Korean War, signifying that the government of mainland China was now an enemy of the West (Cain, 2020; Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Wolf, 1983).

This situation continued till a conflict erupted between the Soviet Union and China in 1961 over ideology, security, and development models. The conflict would eventually lead to the Sino-Soviet Split in which two most powerful communist countries would become enemies, even fighting a border war (Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Radchenko, 2010). The conflict between China and the Soviet Union would serve as a reason China and the United States would seek rapprochement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was again for security concerns. The United States wanted to undermine the Soviet Union and improve relations with communist countries in order to prevent wars like the Vietnam War. Several American administrations would take steps to develop American relations with China. The Nixon administration lifted the embargo on military equipment to China. The Carter administration granted the People's Republic of China full diplomatic recognition in 1979, after which military relations were slowly being established as well. The Reagan administration would allow the sales of weapons to China in 1984, with the aim to increase China's defence against the Soviet Union. These sales were from government to government as opposed to earlier sales which came from businesses (Cain, 2020; Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Office of the Historian, n.d.; Ottaway, 1985). Several members of the European Union would also establish military relations with China, including sales of arms (Deklerck, 2003).

While security concerns were not the reason China would lose military aid again, it is the reason China is still denied military aid to this day. Despite relations between China and the West slowly improving during the 1990s and 2000s, the ban on all military aid, including military cooperation and military trade, remains. The reason for this is that China has become a great power and is considered the greatest threat to the United States' position (Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.; Glass, 2011).

Developmental aid also applies to the case of China, as it lost access to military aid over it. China violently supressed the student protest on Tiananmen Square which caused both the United States and European Union to sanction China over human rights concerns. These sanctions included the discontinuation of their military cooperation with China and an arms embargo (Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Deklerck, 2003; European Council, 1989). The human rights concern fits into the

massacre of protesters happening at the end of the Cold War when security concerns were of lesser importance.

It is possible that public activism played a role in China losing access to its military aid. After the Tiananmen Square massacre Chinese students, alongside other protestors, protested in front of Chinese embassies around the world. Cities in countries that took action against China were included among these cities, including The Hague in the Netherlands, Madrid in Spain, Stockholm in Sweden and Athens in Greece (Associated Press, 1989). It is not clear if these protests had an effect on the countries' response.

Economic interests only played a role in the United Kingdom ceasing aid to the Nationalist government after World War II. The United Kingdom was namely too weak, both economically and militarily, to continue support (Wolf, 1983).

Economic interests likely did not play a further role. While the normalization of relations between the United States and China involved trading the use of military support was not related to this trade, as the trade of military items only happened after trade relations were already established (Cain, 2020). Even after the 1989 sanctions started to be lifted and China was incorporated into the World Trade Organization the ban on any military aid persisted (Council on Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Glass, 2011).

The cultural argument did not apply. China was still a communist country when the United States sent military aid during the Cold War, meaning an overlap in culture could not have been present.

Portugal

Security concerns have been the main, and for many countries only, reason behind military support to Portugal. Military aid to Portugal from the United Kingdom dates back to 1386 when England and Portugal signed the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of Windsor, which ensured that both countries would defend each other (Trowbridge, 2016). This alliance was invoked in World War II despite Portugal's neutrality. In fact, Portugal's neutrality was seen as necessary by the United Kingdom, as it believed Portugal's neutrality prevented Spain from joining the Axis powers. On top of that, British ships were permitted to refuel in Portugal, Portuguese planes were deployed over the Atlantic Ocean and the British air force was allowed to be stationed in the Azores. The American air force was also allowed to be stationed at the Azores, partly because of the Anglo-Portuguese treaty and partly because the United States promised to help Portugal liberate Timor from Japan (Da Costa Leite, 1998; Trowbridge, 2016; Weiss, 1980). This was the start of Western support for Portugal and mainly done to undermine the Axis powers and to get access to a military base. These two motivations would continue to play a role in American and British military support to Portugal in the following years.

While during World War II it was mostly Portugal giving military support to the United Kingdom and the United States, this would change after the end of the war. The United States was permitted to continue to use the military base it had set up in the Azores, however, Portugal would have to be compensated, mostly in military aid. On top of that, the United States wanted European countries to achieve defence independence through the Military Assistance Program (Minter, 1970; United States Department of State, 1950). During the emerging Cold War Western nations would establish the defence organization NATO in the late 1940s. Portugal was invited to join NATO as the only authoritarian regime, despite the treaty stating it was committed to democracy and civil liberties. The main reason for Portugal's inclusion was that other NATO members wanted to keep

control of their military bases in the Azores which were seen as vital in the conflict against the Soviet Union. Despite some initial objections, Portugal agreed to join the organization. This meant it would be closely working together with and receive military support from the other NATO members, including the United States, the United Kingdom and France. Aid included funds, arms sales, training of troops and maintenance of material (Minter, 1970; NATO, n.d.-a; NATO, n.d.-b; NATO, 1949). Showing that undermining enemies, now the Soviet Union, and getting access to a military base were still the main objectives for military aid to Portugal.

Security concerns would play a role in Portugal's shifting relations after its Colonial Wars broke out in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau in 1961. The United States and the United Kingdom supported the colonies' demand for independence as part of their Cold War strategy, as they wanted more potential anti-communist allies. This worsened their relationship with Portugal. However, this did not mean that they would stop support towards Portugal. Both countries still gave material support and trained Portuguese soldiers under the NATO alliance. They claimed, however, that none of support would be used in the Colonial Wars, as the colonies fell outside the scope of NATO. This claim turned out to be false as both soldiers trained by the American and British military and the material supplied were used in the Colonial Wars, likely with knowledge of both countries, with the United States claiming there was Chinese involvement in Angola (Fonseca & Marcos, 2013; Minter, 1970). Meaning, that while aid may not have ceased it was limited over attempts to undermine the Soviet Union, by trying to create more anti-communist allies.

France and West Germany, the latter of which had joined NATO in 1955, on the other hand openly supported Portugal. Both countries did so for different reasons. France wanted to protect its influence in Africa, tried to strengthen its position in the Western world by trying to undermine the United States and wanted to gain a military base in the Azores. West Germany feared the Portuguese regime might fall apart entirely after it lost its colonies which would allow communists to seize power, which in turn would allow the same to happen in Spain. The military support both countries gave consisted of equipment, funding, and training, all of which was used in Portugal's Colonial Wars (Fonseca & Marcos, 2013). Military aid by France and West Germany was thus fuelled by the motivations to undermine enemies, or rivals, maintaining influence and getting access to military bases.

West Germany would cease its support in 1973 after both it and East Germany were admitted into the United Nations. Just as the United States, West Germany saw decolonisation as a way to gain more anti-communist allies. On top of that, it feared East Germany saw decolonisation as a way to gain allies as well, so it decided to signal support to countries fighting for independence as a way to counter East Germany, parting ways with Portugal (Fonseca & Marcos, 2013). Again, showing that undermining enemies was a key feature in military aid to Portugal.

A year later a group of soldiers would seize power from the Estado Novo regime, while being supported by large parts of the population. The junta that came to power arose suspicion among NATO members, especially the United States, as they feared a communist takeover considering parts of the army were left-wing. The United States was therefore considering ceasing aid to Portugal all together. However, American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was convinced by the American embassy in Portugal, which had close ties to the military junta, that there was no danger of a communist takeover, and thus military aid and NATO cooperation continued (Cason & Post, 2015). In 1975 the military junta would dissolve, and elections were held, while the African colonies gained independence, marking the start of democracy in Portugal (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.-c). This shows that undermining enemies was part of the reason the United States was considering to stop aid to Portugal.

The cultural argument could play a part when it comes to France. Both Portugal and France were Christian, traditional and had colonial heritage, which they respected in each other (Fonseca & Marcos, 2013).

The developmental aid argument is not applicable. Aid to Portugal continued despite its poor human rights record and when countries did limit their support it had to do with political considerations during the Cold War instead of the atrocities committed during the Colonial Wars (Gallagher, 1979; Fonseca & Marcos, 2013; Minter, 1970).

Economic considerations likely only played a limited role with NATO members, including Belgium and Italy, selling arms to Portugal (Minter, 1970).

Public activism was not mentioned.

Findings

From the five cases it becomes clear security concerns play the most important role in the decision to give authoritarian regimes aid. The most important aspect of the security concerns seems to be the undermining of enemies. Undermining enemies played a role in all five cases, whether it was countries gaining aid, which was the case with all countries, or losing aid, which was the case with Iran and China. The cases showed the same pattern as described in the literature review, with democracies undermining communist countries, especially the Soviet Union, during the Cold War, a period of relative peace after the Cold War, democracies undermining jihadism during the War on Terror and a shift towards undermining China in the current day. The enemies that were not mentioned in the literature were the Axis powers during World War II which played a role in military aid to China, Iran, and Portugal, and the Soviet Union right after World War I, which played a role in aid to Iran. Also neglected was the rivalry between France and the United States when it comes to influence over Africa, which played a role in France's support for Chadian president Déby and France's support for Portugal's Colonial Wars. That undermining enemies was already a motivation since World War I shows how important of a motivation it is in allocating military aid.

Bolstering stability was another aspect of the security motivation that played a role in all cases. However, as opposed to what the literature indicated this mostly happened when war was already happening as opposed to being a constant motivation. The only exception was France's aid to Chad, and other former colonies, which was explicitly stated to be meant for stabilizing the country after independence.

Other aspects of the security motivation that played a role in at least one case were military bases and compliance to foreign policy. However, the compliance to foreign policy was solely mentioned in the case of France's aid to Chad and was never specified so not much can be said about this aspect.

It is interesting to note that the two aspects of the security motivation that have been criticized by researchers, bolstering stability and compliance to foreign policy, seem to be mostly absent. The bolstering of stability seems to be mostly criticized in times of peace in which it is claimed to lead to war, as opposed to what happened in most of the cases. The two aspects seem to only apply to France's aid to Chad.

Economic interests also played a role in the majority of cases. The most important being access to natural resources, mostly oil, if available. The role of the arms industry played a role in two cases, Portugal, and Saudi Arabia. However, even the arms industry itself seemed aware that this argument is mostly used to justify aid to authoritarian regimes to the public, as it was the arms industry itself that admitted the number of promised jobs would not come to fruition in the case of Saudi Arabia. It is further unclear how much the arms industry played a role in delivery of weapons to Portugal by NATO members. This ties into researchers heavily criticizing the arms industry motivation. Trade played a role only in the case of Chad.

Not mentioned in the literature review was countries ceasing their military aid after they could no longer afford it, despite this happening in the cases of Iran and China after the United Kingdom lacked the resources to continue its support for both countries.

Economic interests seem to be less important as a motivation than security concerns. This is evidenced by Iran losing military aid over the new Islamic republic's anti-American stance despite having oil reserves. The case of China also shows that trade relations can develop without any

military aid, as China's trade relations with Europe and the United States developed throughout the 1990s and 2000s despite an arms embargo staying in place as China is seen as a major threat to the West.

Cultural factors played a role as well, but mostly in the case of France, as already mentioned in the literature review. While it is possible Iran gained some favours over its adaptation of Western, or specifically American, values, as opposed to Saudi Arabia, it did not seem to play a major role. France's aid to Chad and Portugal was influenced by cultural factors. In case of Chad because it was a former colony in francophone Africa and in the case of Portugal because of both countries' past as colonial powers. This means that while cultural factors are not unimportant it should be noted that it is not applicable to all democratic countries giving military aid.

The development aid argument seems to have only played a role in the case of China and only because its major human rights violation of the Tiananmen Square massacre happened after the end of the Cold War. The end of the Cold War is mentioned in the literature to mark a short period in which human rights became more important in allocating military aid. The case of China aligns with this argument. The case of China also gives credence to the argument that military aid, or leverage of military aid, is unable to improve human rights situations. Even when China lost its military aid over human rights concerns the human rights situation did not improve, even if doing so could ensure military aid would be resumed.

The same applies to public activism. The only case in which public activism seems to have played a successful role in limiting military aid to country was in the case of China. The public activism focused on the Tiananmen Square massacre as well and the same argument of it playing a role because it happened after the end of the Cold War seems to apply. To contrast this, public activism against Saudi Arabia and Chad has failed to limit aid. In both cases this is likely because it happened after the War on Terror had started, meaning security concerns became more important again while human rights ceased to be as important.

Conclusion and discussion

From the cases it becomes clear that there is a clear answer to the question why democracies give military aid to some but not all authoritarian regimes. Security concerns are the most important reason for this difference. In all cases undermining enemies was the main reasons why the countries received military aid. In the case of Iran and China, both lost access to aid after becoming an enemy of the donor countries. Bolstering stability comes into play mostly once a conflict has erupted but do not seem to be the main motivation behind military aid.

Economic interests also play a significant role in giving countries military aid. Economic interests seem to mostly play a role if natural resources, especially oil, are available. The case of Iran, however, shows that security concerns take precedence over economic interests, as the United States ceased military aid over Iran becoming an enemy, losing access to Iranian oil in the process.

Cultural factors seem to only play a role in the case of France, which still wants to keep its influence and prestige in Francophone Africa after it lost all its colonies. Other countries do not seem as concerned with the role of culture in their decision to allocate military aid to authoritarian regimes.

Developmental aid and public activism seem to have only played a role in the case of China and only at the end of the Cold War when there was a period of relative peace.

In conclusion, military aid to authoritarian regimes is mostly motivated by democracies pursuing their realpolitikal objectives, both military and economic. Meaning that economic, but especially security, motivations are the most important when allocating military aid.

However, while all five cases point in the direction that security and economic interests are the main motivation behind military aid, meaning it is a strong indication that this is actually the case, it should be taken into account that this analysis only looked at military aid to five of the dozens of authoritarian regimes that exist and have existed. To get a more accurate view on why some authoritarian regimes receive aid research into more regimes is necessary.

This analysis also did not take into account different kinds of authoritarian regimes, these being personalist, single-party, military, and monarchist (Geddes, 1999; Geddes et al., 2014). While all forms were present in this analysis, the relation between aid and regime type was not examined. Further research could look into this to determine if regime type has an effect on a regime receiving military aid.

It is also of note that this analysis mostly included democracies that are relatively powerful. It is possible this selection of democracies skews the answer to the research question towards security and economic motivations. Less powerful democracies may not be as concerned with these particular motivations when providing military aid, if they give military aid in the first place. Research into less powerful democracies could determine if this is indeed the case.

Despite these limitations this analysis provides an insight into the most important considerations for democracies in allocating military aid to some authoritarian regimes and can give insight into how and why democracies are fostering authoritarian regimes during this period of increasing worldwide authoritarianism.

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