CURE OR DISEASE: THE CIVIL-MILITARY CONSEQUENCES OF AMERICAN FOREIGN MILITARY AID

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Georgetown University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Government

By

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Washington, D.C.
May 29, 2018
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ABSTRACT

U.S. foreign military aid amounts to billions of dollars per year spread across nearly every nation in a variety of programs. However, the actual impact of this aid on the civil-military relations of recipient nations remains largely unexplored. This research explores whether such aid – and the associated U.S. focus on professionalization – enhances democratic civil-military relations as the U.S. military and policy-makers intend or exacerbates existing praetorian relationships and undermines democratic principles of control. I hypothesize that the U.S.-centric formula, in which technical and normative professionalization are inextricably linked, falls flat in nations with differing strategic cultures, histories, and government constructs. Using survey and interview data to focus on professional military education, I find evidence that U.S. professionalization does not effectively teach or transfer democratic norms of civilian control to either foreign officers or U.S. military members. Further case study research in Egypt and The Gambia suggests the U.S. military approach to aid actually empowers militaries and inspires individuals in praetorian states to intervene in government via military coup d’etat.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research and writing of this thesis is dedicated to everyone who helped along the way: my advisors Andrew Bennet, Elizabeth Stanley, and Desha Girod, who kept me on track and on pace. To my colleagues in the Pentagon who enabled and supported my research. To my friends and fellow dissertators – thank you for reminding me this is normal. And most of all to my husband, Kevin Kenney, whose patience with the mess, reassurance in the fog of research, and constant, steadfast support truly made this possible.

Many thanks,

Miriam
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“...these resources will give us flexibility to fulfill different missions, including training security forces in Yemen who have gone on the offensive against al Qaeda; supporting a multinational force to keep the peace in Somalia; working with European allies to train a functioning security force and border patrol in Libya; and facilitating French operations in Mali.”

President Barack Obama
West Point, May 28, 2014

In his 2014 commencement address at the United States Military Academy, President Barack Obama announced the establishment of a new Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF) amounting to $5 billion designed to “allow us to train, build capacity, and facilitate partner countries on the front lines.” Speaking from Camp David a year later, the President pledged “ironclad commitment” to Persian Gulf nations left vulnerable by the pending nuclear deal with Iran. The commitment was diplomatic in nature, but was guaranteed by promises of additional monetary and tangible military assistance projected to be well over $6 billion in the coming year.

At over $14 billion per year, the United States is already the single largest source of foreign military aid and security cooperation assistance in the world. And Presidential commitments to increase these resources to allied and partner nations are neither new nor unique. However, the scale of assistance is only increasing: both domestic economic interests and the dynamics of the international political economy drive an ever-rising tide, as nations with existing

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programs adopt a sense of entitlement which makes scaling back impossible and new quid pro quo arrangements are purchased with arms and training.

The depth and breadth of such assistance programs has long bred a community of interest comprised of humanitarians, academics, and policy makers, each with different and overlapping concerns. Policy makers are universally concerned with the question of return on investment: what, if anything, does this massive outlay of resources purchase? Humanitarians worry over the impact of hyper-militarization, human rights abuses, and the risk of fueling both legal and illegal arms trade. And academics are broadly and objectively interested in both lines of questioning, assessing the potential for arms races, conflict continuation, cementing alliances and partnerships, and the civil-military-industrial consequences of the U.S. role as the world’s largest arms dealer in terms of weapons’ quantity, technological capacity, and cost. This dissertation takes up a question of interest to both policy makers and academics: to what extent, and through what processes or mechanisms, has U.S. military aid promoted civilian control of the military, and democratic civil-military relations more generally, in recipient countries? More specifically, it focuses on the potential that U.S-style military professionalization can have perverse consequences when applied outside the American context.

In that sense, this project is a continuation of decades of research that came before, grappling with the same questions and uncertainties that characterize the body of literature on military aid. However, it diverges from previous work in two important ways, approaching the topic from a different perspective and in a new strategic environment. First, previous studies were limited to foreign aid in the context of the Cold War, where “hard” choices often meant
sacrificing long-term liberal ends. The age of Pax Americana should, at least in theory, have altered the calculus and impact of military and security assistance and permitted changes in policy and execution that dampened deleterious consequences of differentially empowering military forces. Geopolitics being what they are, this is not to say that American hegemony has ushered in a golden age where liberal idealism alone drives foreign policy. But, no longer forced to support friendly (often military) dictatorships under the rationale that it prevents the spread of communism, the post-Cold War era should see U.S. aid at least doing more of what it purports to do: supporting real democracy, depriving human rights violators and coup leaders, and spreading the rule of law.

Second, both previous and current efforts are restricted to either large N statistical analyses that demonstrate impact but leave causation to question, or in-depth case studies in single nations or regions to tease out the threads of causality. Very few efforts attempt a mid-range theory, linking military aid broadly with the internal interactions in the countries in which it is applied. There are good reasons for this gap in the literature: every nation has a unique set of initial conditions into which equally unique recipes of aid flow. Thus, trying to determine a comprehensive theory of military aid has been nearly impossible without holding at least one variable constant. The end of the Cold War and the unprecedented role and power of the United

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States offers an opportunity to keep constant the provider of the bulk of security assistance and craft a theory of the civil-military impact of U.S.-specific military aid that extends across many countries, yet is rooted in a deep understanding of causation.

With that in mind, this project seeks a predictable, replicable answer for academics, humanitarians, and policy makers alike on the impact of American military assistance on the civil-military relations – specifically the framework of civilian control – of recipient nations. I endeavor to accomplish this task through a deep look at the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of the U.S. military aid apparatus and its execution through U.S. training and education programs. I incorporate curriculum analyses, interviews, survey data, and in-case process tracing to complete a robust analysis and craft a theory that can be operationalized for future assistance programs. Though the cases in this iteration are limited to nations with significant divergence from the American cultural, historical, and military norms and values, future work will include assessments of nations that more closely mirror U.S. strategic culture. Ultimately, this project explores the impact of U.S. foreign military aid on recipient nations’ civil-military relations, and in so doing, endeavors to uncover whether such aid represents a cure or disease for democratic control.

It is equally important to note what this project does not attempt to do. Civil-military relations are complex constructs informed by historical, sociocultural, economic, political, and even personal elements of specific states and societies. This project does not seek to fully disentangle these threads, but rather ask if foreign intervention, executed in accordance with the American formula, alters these otherwise organic processes. It also does not intend to argue for the necessity or sufficiency of military aid in either democratization or praetorianism. Indeed,
the null result is as interesting as either confirmation or denial of the hypotheses: if U.S. aid does seek to enhance democratic military values and has no demonstrable effect, it should inspire policy questions as to the efficacy and priority of such aims.

A Word on Definitions

Pursuing this research agenda requires a baseline understanding of the extraordinary complexity of military-to-military cooperation, a task described by one defense official as “a massive mapping exercise, replete with a multiplicity of players, range of authorities, typologies of aid, and variety of objectives.”5 That mapping exercise of over 110 different programs is beyond the scope of this project. However, the following general categories are an important foundation for understanding this research:

- **Foreign Military Sales (FMS)** – Approved by the U.S. Department of State, FMS agreements are contracts for the purchase of U.S. military equipment by foreign governments. Agreements are crafted, written, managed, packaged, evaluated, and executed by military officials.

- **Foreign Military Financing (FMF)** – FMF enables foreign nations to purchase U.S. defense equipment, services, training, or education through either FMS or, for a limited number of countries, through the foreign military financing of direct commercial contracts. This money can be provided either as a direct loan or through non-repayable grant funding.

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5 Matt Cordova, Telephone Interview (March 13, 2018).
• International Military Education and Training (IMET) – Often paid for with FMF or packaged with FMS contracts, IMET provides thousands of foreign officers slots in U.S. education and training programs, ranging from vocational training (e.g., pilot training, military police training) to professional military education (e.g., service academies, Non-Commissioned Officer schools, war colleges).

• Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) – These are contracts for the purchase of U.S. military weaponry conducted exclusively between the commercial entity (for example, Lockheed Martin) and the foreign government, using foreign government funds. Though these sales are approved by the State Department, they are not managed by the U.S. government.

• Other DoD programs – There are a plethora of U.S. military programs that provide money, equipment, education, or training to foreign militaries. Just a few of the umbrellas for this aid provision include Building Partner Capacity (BPC), Security Cooperation Assistance (SCA), Security Force Assistance (SFA), Excess Defense Articles (EDA), and Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF). These programs have little oversight beyond annual Congressional reporting, and monies can be used for the entire spectrum of purposes from arms purchase to school attendance. In 2017, the monetary (non-material) component of this funding alone exceeded $10 billion.6

The variety and overlapping nature of the brief description above requires a word on terminology. Because the language of U.S. foreign military aid is complex and overlapping, for

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the duration of this project, I will refer to Foreign Military Aid and Training (FMAT) as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of programs that provide, with varying levels of oversight: money, weapons, education, and training to foreign militaries. As an example, FMAT would include foreign officer attendance at a U.S. war college whether it was funded by FMF, included within an FMS sales package, billed under IMET funds, or facilitated through BPC or CTFP funding. It would also include the provision of U.S. money under FMF for the purchase of weapons, no matter how those dollars were applied. Notably excluded from this FMAT umbrella are other means and methods of delivering the tools and skills of war: specifically, Direct Commercial Sales which, while facilitated by the military, are largely commercial transactions between U.S. defense companies and foreign governments and are funded only by foreign governments.\(^7\) Also, though combined operations with partner or allied nations also offer a form of military-to-military relationship building and potential norms transfer, they fall outside the direct scope of FMAT and are not addressed in this research.

**The Roadmap**

The rest of the dissertation proceeds as follows. First, an introductory chapter will summarize the argument and cover much of the foreign military assistance literature in order to situate my research within the broader field. In chapter two, I review the theoretical foundation for my research, exploring the natures of both democratic and praetorian civil-military relations, 

\(^7\) An immediate issue that arises with this parsing is the fungibility effect, wherein other forms of U.S. monetary assistance, while perhaps not directly earmarked for weapons, feed the coffers of foreign governments and thereby free up funding for military purchases. The complexity of foreign aid requires some boundaries be set, and because the focus of the research is on the intentional (vice unintentional) provision of U.S. military FMAT, the fungibility effect is considered only as applicable within the case research.
the current state of knowledge on foreign military aid, and advance my own theory: that the United States’ unique form of aid and its philosophy of professionalization has the unintended consequence of directly and indirectly increasing the praetorian leanings of recipient states. Chapter three then unpacks the history and characteristics of the U.S. military’s obsession with professionalization and its parallel development of military aid programs. It argues that professionalization and democratization became a core focus of military assistance programs post-Vietnam, setting the stage for an analysis of the impact of those programs.

Chapters four and five offer an empirical analysis of the most normative element of U.S. military aid: International Military Education and Training. Jesse Savage and Jonathan Caverley have carried out a large-N statistical analysis that shows a positive correlation between IMET and coup propensity – i.e., the greater the level of IMET aid, the more likely there will be undemocratic civil-military relations in the recipient country. These authors have not proposed an in-depth explanation for this correlation, however, which is what this dissertation seeks. To do so, I explore three questions of U.S. education for foreign military members: what U.S. PME programs teach, what foreign attendees of those programs learn, and what impact those factors may have on coup propensity. Both chapters use research from interviews and surveys conducted at the National Defense University. In chapter six, I explore the impact U.S. FMAT has on coup propensity via careful process tracing in two case studies – Egypt (both before and after the 1979 advent of U.S. FMAT) and the Gambia. This chapter traces the impact of U.S. FMAT broadly, and IMET specifically, on the evolution of these nations’ civil-military relations. Finally, because I believe academic research is obliged to be relevant to practitioners, chapter

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seven offers a conclusion, extension, and policy prescriptions based upon the lessons learned throughout the project.
Chapter 1: Introduction

The Egyptian Armed Forces first declared, is still declaring and will always declare that it stands distant from political forces. The Armed Forces, based on its insightfulness, has been called by the Egyptian people for help, not to hold the reins of power, yet to discharge its civil responsibility and answer demands of responsibility.

General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, head of the Egyptian Armed Forces
Announcing the overthrow of President Morsi, July 3, 2013

On July 3rd 2013, the head of the Egyptian armed forces, General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, announced the dissolution of the democratically elected Morsi government and the suspension of the recently approved constitution. Prominent members of Morsi’s party, the Muslim Brotherhood, were rounded up and imprisoned, martial law was instituted in urban areas, and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) became the head governing body of the Egyptian state. This definitive military coup in Egypt stimulated controversy over the effect of $73 billion total (approximately $1.3 billion dollars annually) U.S. foreign military aid invested in the Egyptian armed forces since 1979 and the seeming expectation that this aid, and the long-term relationship with the U.S. that it represents, would have forestalled such un-democratic action. Academics, policy analysts, and pundits alike suggested that realism-based leverage founded on sticks and carrots or at least a constructivist norms transfer (via training and education) should have prevented the coup and follow-on assaults on liberal values. And while previous scholarly and policy work has focused on whether such aid benefits the United States – whether it offers

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geopolitical leverage, secures peace with Israel, or enhances allied cooperation in fighting terrorism – it never addressed why it did not constrain the American-educated officer corps supposedly steeped in democratic norms. No one questioned whether the aid itself might have facilitated this coup by exacerbating pre-existing praetorian civil-military relations.

U.S. foreign military aid amounts to billions of dollars per year spread across a variety of nations in a vast quantity of heterogeneous programs. For example, in 2010, total US foreign military aid topped $14.5 billion. Comprised of a wide variety of programs differing in type, format, and desired outcome, this aid has been distributed to a total of 181 countries from 1946 to 2012, ranging from North Korea ($7,071 in total aid) to Israel (over $123 billion in total aid). As previously described, the variety of foreign military aid programs is immense, and each has its own network of rules and governing regulations, approval authorities, objectives, and constraints. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) are military-to-military (or government-to-government) arms deals; Foreign Military Financing are funds provided as grants or loans to foreign governments to pay for weapons or training; and a myriad of programs, such as Partnership for Peace, Building Partner Capacity, Security Cooperation Assistance, and Counterterrorism Partnership Fund operate under the auspices of the Department of Defense to train, educate, and equip foreign militaries. However, all of these programs differ from the military assistance supplied by other nations because they are laced together in comprehensive agreements that seek to increase professionalization and interoperability, and weave in partnership requirements like joint exercises, training programs, logistics commitments, or even

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11 Ibid. The small amount of aid delivered to North Korea is anecdotally thought to have paid for the establishment and wiring of the hotline phone between North and South DMZ command posts.
U.S. instructor cadre. No other country has a similarly comprehensive approach, making U.S. foreign military aid and training FMAT programs unique in the international system.12

The reasons for providing (and accepting) aid are well-explored in the literature, and include leverage, interoperability, and regime support and alliance management, among other goals. However, and importantly, the U.S. also explicitly aims to enhance the democratic values of subordination to civilian control and human rights adherence through its aid packages. The actual impact of FMAT on the civil-military relations of recipient nations remains largely unexplored. Does it, in fact, enhance democratic civil-military relations as the U.S. military and diplomatic community believe? Does it disproportionately empower the military element of society, exacerbating existing praetorian relationships and undermining democratic principles of control? Or is the impact mixed, complex, or dependent on the particular histories, institutions, and cultures of the recipients of military aid? Or perhaps all conclusions, good or ill, are an over-estimation of the impact of U.S. money and arms.

This chapter offers a brief literature review of scholarly work on foreign military assistance to situate the research question within the literature and frame my theoretical approach. It then addresses my singular focus on the United States system, laying the groundwork for the following discussion of the uniquely American perspective (and impact) on civil-military relations and military aid.

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12 The closest parallel is the British system of military assistance, which often packages maintenance and parts with their proverbial shiny objects, and separately engages small numbers of foreign military members in education and training programs; however, the two arms of assistance are not philosophically aligned as in the U.S. model. Additionally, at only 515M pounds in 2016/17, British foreign military aid is an order of magnitude less than U.S. expenditures. See Statista, “Public sector expenditure on foreign military aid in the United Kingdom (UK) from 2011/2012 to 2016/17”, https://www.statista.com/statistics/298882/united-kingdom-uk-public-sector-expenditure-foreign-military-aid/
Foreign Military Aid – An Overview

As mentioned, many of the reasons for providing (and accepting) military aid are well-explored in the literature, and include leverage, interoperability, regime support and alliance management, among other goals. Realists argue that aid – particularly military assistance – is offered to countries with strategic importance to U.S. national interests as a means of cementing relationships or leveraging concessions. This “dollar diplomacy” uses economic leverage in the form of arms, financing, and training to influence foreign decision-makers and reward good behavior. Operationally, military aid may be used to increase capability and capacity in allied or partner militaries in order to facilitate higher levels of interoperability or strengthen alliances. It has been used as “speech” to demonstrate political intent, such as aid to Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It can also be used to bolster friendly regimes or reassure allies: in the summer of 2015, the Obama administration conducted a “traveling salesman” routine throughout the Persian Gulf to reassure Arab allies that the nuclear agreement with Iran would not leave them vulnerable. This reassurance primarily took the form of additional money and arms for Gulf militaries. Of course, normative aims like democratization or economic advancement may also heavily drive aid, though these aims are usually more directly associated

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with economic and financial assistance packages rather than military funds, equipment, or training.\textsuperscript{15}

My research does not dispute the variety of foundational reasons for the delivery of military assistance. Indeed, every dyadic relationship has its own recipe of reasons and priorities, both individual to the nations involved and ever-changing based on adjustments in the strategic environment. For example, American foreign military assistance to Egypt began in 1979 following negotiations for an Israeli – Egyptian peace treaty to end the sundry wars from 1948 to 1973. Justification for the massive and consistent injection of aid within the U.S. – Egypt dyad began with perceived alignment of U.S. interests and regional stability: according to the United States, “interests include maintaining U.S. naval access to the Suez Canal, maintaining the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty, and promoting democracy and growth within Egypt, the region’s largest Arab country.”\textsuperscript{16} Additional interests such as supporting the floundering Egyptian economy to forestall further chaos, retaining uninhibited access to Egyptian air and sea lanes,\textsuperscript{17} and keeping American arms manufacturers in business have arisen over time.\textsuperscript{18} In turn, evidence indicates that Egypt accepted (and continues to accept) this deal

\textsuperscript{15} This is not to say that military aid has not, and is not, used to advance democracy and economic stability. The Partnership for Peace program, for example, was a NATO aid program founded on the philosophical notion that military aid to former Soviet states could create trust, increase stability, enhance democratic norms, and boost economic output. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Partnership for Peace Programme” last updated June 7, 2017, \url{https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/topics_50349.htm}.


\textsuperscript{17} In 2012, the United States flew more than 2000 armed air sorties through Egyptian airspace and moved warships to the head of the line in transiting the Suez Canal over 40 times.

\textsuperscript{18} When suggestions that aid be suspended after human rights crackdowns in 2011, Secretary of State Clinton waived the provisions of aid disbursement. Evidence indicates that she did so because “a delay or cut in the$1.3 billion in military aid to Egypt risked breaking existing contracts with American arms manufacturers that could have shut down productions lines in the middle of President Obama’s re-election campaign and involved significant financial penalties.” Myers, Steven Lee (2012). “Once Imperiled, US Aid to Egypt is Restored.” \textit{New York Times},
directly in exchange for continued peace with Israel. A 2009 embassy cable released by Wikileaks states:

President Mubarak and military leaders view our military assistance program as the cornerstone of our mil-mil relationship and consider the USD 1.3 billion in annual FMF as “untouchable compensation” for making and maintaining peace with Israel.19

Regardless of the initial, continuing, and often conflicting perceptions of the priorities for beginning and maintaining military aid programs, there are clear reasons to avoid a deleterious impact on internal civil-military relations architecture. First, differentially empowering the military *vis a vis* the civilian authority structures leads to internal instability, which if allowed to gain momentum, may spill over into regional conflicts, create entitlement within the military apparatus in its dealings with the United States, or trigger vulnerabilities in neighboring states that place additional demands on U.S. aid programs. Second, fostering democracy over military or authoritarian rule is good for peace and stability in the international community: political science research generally concludes that democracies are good for both their people and the international system because they are more stable and economically productive, less likely to go to war with one another or harbor terrorists, experience less famine, and produce fewer refugees.20

As the system leader, to the degree to which American policymakers shoulder

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responsibility for such stability – whether for norm-based reasons like human health and prosperity or realist motivations such as a stable oil supply, non-proliferation of dangerous weapons, or to forestall conflict that demands intervention – propagating democracy is a worthy aim.

Realist reasoning aside, if nothing else, it is worthwhile to consider that U.S. FMAT supports democracy and civilian control because it says it does: liberal norm transference and enhanced democratic governance rank among the prime stated and implicit policy aims of U.S. military assistance programs. Within these bundles of arms and training, the U.S. claims to enhance democratic values of subordination to civilian control and boost adherence to human rights. While official government messages should always be treated with academic distance, Alex Kingsbury notes that cases like the Wikileaks scandal actually demonstrate that there is a high degree of consistency between the public and private statements of the State Department and other government bodies.21 Christopher Bright, Director of the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, agrees that broadly speaking institutional documents mean what they say and align with the desired ends of the organization.22 So, while it’s always important to question whether claims about democracy and good governance are truly the highest institutional priority, assuming that they are not important at all despite all statements to the contrary is a limited research methodology.

It is worth noting at this point that there are valid arguments that disagree with this theory that the U.S. is, for lack of a better term, anti-praetorian. One such argument states that the

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United States may well support military control in nations where democracy is unstable or alien to Western values. Cases like Egypt’s President Morsi, a democratically elected Islamist leader, or Turkey’s President Recep Erdogan who is even now rapidly eroding the democratic institutions of a NATO ally, are usually cited as evidence. And there is some truth to this statement at the moment of a coup attempt – after the 2016 Turkish coup attempt, the National Security Council spent several weighty and uncomfortable moments in silence before Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work finally suggested the U.S. must condemn the coup attempt. The Obama Administration’s hesitance to formally label al Sisi’s actions in 2012 as a coup also seems to support this theory that the United States may be more comfortable with (or may even welcome) a coup that leads to stable democracy – or just stability – over more threatening regimes like Islamism.

A corollary to this argument claims the null: that the United States has no preference as to its impact on the democratic leanings of security cooperation partners. Though more plausible than the suggestion the U.S. is pro-coup d’état, both arguments founder on philosophical underpinnings and logics of habit of the military assistance program. The squeamishness of national decision makers at a moment of crisis is a poor metric for the everyday processes, procedures, curriculum, and goals of the vast security cooperation bureaucracy that spans both the Department of Defense and Department of State. Those bureaucracies and the individuals that comprise them at the trainer, educator, and bureaucrat level are fundamentally and philosophically geared toward supporting democracy through U.S. programs. They read their own literature, evaluate themselves to the published objectives, and perhaps most critically, approach FMAT fully imbued with the liberal norms and belief in U.S. superiority that
characterize U.S. foreign policy. The specifics of this leaning will be more fully described in the chapter on the U.S. case, but at its core, the security cooperation system is philosophically pro-democracy.

Another counter-argument states that military coups are often viable vehicles for transitioning from authoritarianism to democracy – the proverbial “good coup.” Portugal in 1974, Mali in 1991, Niger in 1999 and 2010, and Guinea Bissau in 2003 are all examples of a trend in military coups that convert dictatorships to democracy since the Cold War. If true, this would mean U.S. support for democracy and tolerance of praetorianism would not be antithetical. The evidence for this theory suffers from the coincidence of the broader worldwide trend toward democracy over the past 50 years, and has been recently reviewed in a study that finds that “though democracies are occasionally established in the wake of coups, more often new authoritarian regimes emerge, along with higher levels of state-sanctioned violence.” Regardless and more importantly, this theory has found little purchase in the circles of those who execute security cooperation assistance, who cite the risk of praetorian instability due to failed coups (Turkey, the Gambia) or domino coups, where the usurpers are in turn usurped, as mitigating the potential benefit derived from a military coup d’etat eventually converting to stable democracy. Moreover, the Foreign Assistance Act, one of two primary governing documents for U.S. FMAT, says that no aid other than that earmarked for promoting democracy can go to “any country whose duly elected head of government is deposed by military coup

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d’etat,” or in cases where military forces “play a decisive role” in a coup.\textsuperscript{25} There is no Presidential waiver to this law, and the text stipulates that aid cannot be restored “until a democratically elected government has taken office.”\textsuperscript{26} The security cooperation assistance and foreign military sale programs would be hardest hit by this legal provision, making pro-praetorian behavior inherently self-defeating, not just for the recipient of aid, but for the United States military aid apparatus attempting to sell weapons or build partner capacity.\textsuperscript{27}

So, while it’s fanciful to think that the United States extends billions of dollars per year to other nations out of well-meaning compassion, in truth there are both realist and normative reasons for America and the world to want aid that, \textit{at a minimum}, does no harm to existing democratic institutions of civil-military control.

\textbf{Why the United States?}

This project focuses exclusively on American military aid provision for both theoretical and methodological reasons. First, the U.S. is an intrinsically interesting case: as the previous discussion illustrated, American military aid formulation is informed by unique perspectives on the nature of professionalism in democratic civil-military relations. The packaging of such assistance to include training, education, bureaucratic restructuring, and ideological indoctrination is unique in the international community. Coupled with the sheer amount of aid

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} The Foreign Assistance Act leaves open a rather large loophole in which military organizations in recipient nations may carry out de facto coups that leave figurehead civilians nominally in charge while the military still calls the shots (what Finer terms an infiltrator army). This is why careful process tracing is required to understand the actual effect of military assistance. It is also a potential reason that the U.S. is less responsive to praetorian increases that fall short of actual military coups.
\end{flushleft}
distributed on an annual basis and the proportional amount of U.S. aid in any given recipient case, the U.S. case has inherently interesting characteristics and out-sized impact.\footnote{This is not to say that in individual cases, the U.S. provides the most aid \emph{vis a vis} other nations, though in terms of military aid this is commonly the case. For example, in 2015, China received $750 million in development aid from Germany and only $11.4 million from the United States (with an additional $4.3 million in security aid, 100% of which was earmarked for counter-narcotics and law enforcement). “Foreign Aid: who gives the most and where does it go?” \textit{The Economist}, Dec 8, 2017.}

Methodologically, by limiting the scope to the United States, I am able to hold my intervening variable more or less constant. This permits variation of the initial conditions into which U.S. aid is inserted by case, providing a more robust test of the hypotheses. Finally, more comprehensive data are available on U.S. military aid than any other nation in the world, facilitating the ease and completeness of my research.

There are potential consequences for such singular focus. First, it raises the potential of selection bias: there may be hidden structural facets that make certain countries more or less likely to receive American military assistance, that also make them more or less likely to exhibit certain trajectories in civil-military relations. For example, the U.S. might provide more military aid to states that are already less democratic in an effort to incentivize them to become more democratic. Such a selection process would create a positive correlation – the more the U.S. aid, the less democratic the target state – but here the recipient state’s low level of democracy would be causing the high level of aid, rather than vice-versa. This potential endogeneity makes careful process tracing a necessary component of any research design. Second, it makes articulation of the “unique” impact of U.S. aid more difficult. Qualitatively, the distinction of U.S. aid is unambiguous, and by disaggregating the component programs in the quantitative analysis, I
expect to find that those unique to the U.S. (such as IMET) have a differentiated impact on civil-military relations.

**Why This Question?**

Why is it important to better understand the effect of U.S. military aid on recipient civil-military relations? After all, even statistical analyses of coup propensity due to military aid show little substantive significance: in Savage and Caverley’s analysis, coup propensity doubled only to 0.08% overall as a result of IMET funding, leaving it still an extraordinarily unlikely probability.\(^{29}\) The simplest answer is that it is useful to either debunk or confirm the pervading beliefs of military members and policy-makers on the impact of their investments. Because the U.S. is unique in its goals and patterns of military aid, it is important to validate the national thesis of cause-and-effect and to assess whether it is effective in achieving national objectives. Academically, the study is of import because a gap exists in scholarly literature assessing the mechanisms for how military aid works: large-n studies indicate broad trends and comparative studies suggest every state is different, but no work offers a mid-range theory linking aid inputs to civil-military outputs. Finally, from a moral and strategic vantage, research generally concludes that democracies are good for their people and the international system. To the degree that military coups convert autocracies to democracies, perhaps they should be applauded.\(^{30}\) But

\(^{29}\) Savage and Caverley, p. 555.

\(^{30}\) Thyne and Powell conclude this is may be true: their empirical analysis indicates that “coup promote democratization, particularly among states that are least likely to democratize.” Clayton Thyne and Jonathon Powell (2014), “Coup d’etat or Coup d’Autocracy? How Coups Impact Democratization, 1950-2008,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, International Studies Association
as this is an uncommon occurrence, the U.S. and international community might care whether actions taken to fuel the boon of democracy may inadvertently subvert it.

This project does not (necessarily) seek to make a recommendation regarding the cessation of U.S. foreign military aid on the grounds of civil-military relations. As articulated earlier, the reasons for the immense investment in foreign militaries are largely geopolitical and economic, and directly benefit the United States. Thus, it may be in U.S. national interests to continue such aid regardless of the ultimate outcome on recipient civil-military relations. Though many in the American government (and academic community) genuinely believe that fostering appropriate democratic civil-military relations in foreign nations is a worthy and peace-engendering goal, this project does not purport to override the cost-benefit analysis undergone by policy-makers in determining the appropriateness of military aid. Rather, it simply attempts to complete the picture of all possible impacts of such aid in order to facilitate a more informed decision-making process.

**The Argument: An Overview**

In its entirety, this research project seeks to advance and prove a narrow argument about the effect of U.S. military aid on recipient nations’ civil-military relations. It begins with the notion that U.S. provision of military aid is different from the formulations of other governments in that it bundles traditional military aid (military equipment and funding) with education, training, doctrine, organizational adjustments, maintenance and logistical commitments, and other elements of long-term comprehensive contracting in what is termed the “total package approach.” This total package approach means that foreign militaries have greater exposure to
U.S. military members, schools, and training programs almost regardless of the type of FMAT program they are engaged in.

This exposure, in turn, becomes important when we consider the U.S. view on professionalism. Wholesale adoptees of Huntington’s narrow definition that professionalism is inherently apolitical and subordinate, the U.S. military both believes and teaches that its support for liberal values, adherence to laws of war, apolitical norms, and subordination to civilian control are inextricably linked to its military effectiveness by the definition of being a professional military officer. In keeping with this philosophy, the U.S. military believes that professionalization of foreign militaries in its own image – a one-size-fits-all model – will automatically enhance democratic norms and support for civilian control as it increases the skills, capabilities, and technical capacities of foreign forces. Indeed, doing so is one of the explicit intents of the U.S. FMAT programming.

But this philosophical assumption runs aground on the execution of this ideal. The U.S. military does not teach civil-military relations or civilian control in any frequency or depth to its own officers, much less foreign officers in its training and education courses. U.S. officers often confuse the theoretical elements and implications of objective control with the constructed version of professionalism that has become the U.S. military identity. This confusion is masked by the deep norms and values of American citizenship – a cultural and historical background founded on liberal ideals and rule of law subconsciously informs (generally) correct behavior without the need to forefront why and how civilian control works in the U.S. system. The lack of knowledge and corresponding lack of clarity on the relationship between professionalism, military effectiveness, and civilian control makes it impossible to teach foreign officers how to
operationalize civilian control in their own nations. Indeed, the totality of the FMAT-packaged professionalization program neglects vast differences in history, culture, and military ethics of recipient nations.

This U.S.-centric view (and execution) of professionalization of foreign militaries may “do no harm” to nations with similar strategic cultures, empowering their technical abilities without undermining civilian control. However, particularly in nations with autocratic governments and histories of praetorianism, U.S. professionalization via FMAT enhances military autonomy, corporateness, and elitism, all without corresponding and country-appropriate efforts to instill, in parallel, the education and training to counter this empowerment and support democratic civilian control. The result, particularly in these nations without histories of liberal democracy and rule of law, is that U.S. professionalization empowers the military, inadvertently exacerbates praetorian instincts, and increases the propensity of military coup d’état. At the institutional level, dedicated funding and equipping increases military autonomy from domestic government oversight; non-fungible education and training empowers and corporatizes the officer corps such that it defends its own corporate interests and ethics; and enhanced military effectiveness increases elitism and public support, and by extension, political power. At the individual level, education and training in U.S. professional military schools spends little time on democratic civil-military relations or civilian control, and instead prepares officers for both political and strategic decision-making positions. In at least one case, the same education inspired a would-be leader to re-establish democracy and redress grievances by deposing his elected official. In sum, the comprehensive and U.S.-centric program of professionalization of foreign militaries undermines the very results it seeks to achieve: instead of creating strong,
subordinate militaries respectful of liberal democratic norms, it empowers existing praetorian pathologies and increases the propensity for military intervention.
Chapter 2: Theory

*The new republics had an army even when they did not have a state.*

*Alain Rouquie*31

*However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.*

*Winston Churchill*

Thus far, you have read a brief review of scholarly work on foreign military assistance and the unique role of the United States in that market. Chapter four will expand on the U.S case by discussing the origins of American universalism and its manifestation in both the military as an institution and foreign military assistance, as well as addressing the specifics of the American version of professionalism. Based upon this jumping off point, this chapter will offer the theory and methodology of my research, exploring existing literature on civil-military relations and the mechanisms by which foreign military assistance interacts with existing national constructs. It begins by differentiating between theories of civilian control and praetorianism and concludes with the model, hypotheses, and research agenda pursued through the rest of the project. In sum, this chapter will unpack and underpin the following chain of theoretical claims:

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(1) The U.S. military engages in a variety of foreign military assistance and security cooperation engagements: operations, exercises, foreign military sales, international exchanges, and notably education and training.

(2) As chapter four will describe, the core element of these engagements is founded on an U.S.-centric view of professionalizing foreign forces.

(3) While professionalization includes both the learned expertise in tactical and operational warfare and the requisite tools and weapons associated with that expertise, the U.S. also incorporates a large component of democratic norms transfer, particularly as regards human rights and civil-military relations.

(4) But what if the very act of professionalizing foreign forces in the U.S. image is the “medicine” that makes the patient sicker? In the text that follows, I will describe how that very American professionalization can exacerbate or induce praetorian leanings.

Situating the Literature: A Visual Roadmap

This project links together two disparate sources of literature: foreign aid and civil-military relations. Let us first address the body of research on the provision of foreign aid. This literature was introduced in the introductory chapter as it relates to why nations might offer or accept foreign aid. However, a secondary element of this literature analyzes the impact aid has on target nations – direct and indirect, intended and unintended – and informs the first section of the discussion in this chapter. Aid impact literature has its own related body that focuses specifically on military aid, answering much the same questions: why provide it, why accept it, and what impact does it have on both the recipient nation and the strategic relationship.
The second source of theory that underpins this project is that on civil-military relations (CMR), the study of how militaries fit into societies and their governing structures. An oversimplification of CMR theory divides it into three categories: democratic (generally meaning military constructs that are subordinate to elected leaders and supportive of liberal norms), praetorian (militaries that use their power to usurp or control government leaders, elected or otherwise), and other (for example, concordance theory, which suggests that some civil-military relations are characterized by negotiations and agreement between elements of society). This research project does not address the grab-bag of other CMR theories, but instead dives deeply into both democratic and praetorian philosophies.

Figure 1. Visual Roadmap of Literature

A subset of the praetorian CMR research focuses specifically on military coup d’etat – topics such as how and why coups occur, what makes some coups successful, and why some nations are more or less coup prone. As Figure 1 depicts, this coup literature has a small but direct connection to aid literature in the work of a scant few researchers who address the impact of foreign military aid on domestic military coups. These bodies of research and their subsequent connections are also discussed in this theory chapter.

So where does this project stand in this visual roadmap? Thus far, there is almost zero research that connects democratic civil-military relations theory to the military aid and coup body of literature (the yellow arrow). Though the arrow does not explain the mechanism this project investigates, it does situate the question between these bodies of research. Conceptually, this is the gap this project seeks to fill, asking the fundamental question: does U.S. foreign military aid and training (FMAT), proffered by a democratic military with the intent to enhance democratic CMR, enhance or undermine democratic norms including civilian control?

**Foreign Military Aid: Help or Hindrance?**

To begin this conversation, we must start with the role and impact of foreign military aid. As stated, there is scant work done specifically linking foreign military aid to civil-military relations, and the work that does exist falls into two large categories: aid literature and coup literature. This section will address each in turn, concluding with the few scholarly pieces within the connector literature that specifically investigate the relationship between military aid and civil-military relations.

Aid literature is extensive in focus, but the relevant theoretical work centers on the effect of foreign aid on recipient state and societal structures. The first premise of this research agenda
posits that aid empowers, to some greater or lesser degree and with some degree of side effect, its institutional target. This is, expectedly, the goal of all forms of aid: that disaster relief aid will empower states and NGOs to relieve human suffering in disasters, that health aid will make a dent in disease and mortality rates, and that tanks and aircraft will make militaries stronger and more effective.

Two issues arise when making this claim. First, there is little agreement on whether aid ultimately empowers its target organizations, and the literature is divided on how effective aid is in achieving its goals. Many scholars conclude that even with constraints and incentives, aid has a sometimes unpredictable impact on the targeted or unrelated institutions. For example, Djankov et. al. coin the term “aid curse” and liken foreign aid to the “resource curse” that encourages rent-seeking behavior in recipient states. Using 40 years of panel data, they find that sustained aid has a significant negative impact, undermining democratic institutions. Edward Muller narrows this conclusion to U.S. economic and military aid, finding that aid dependence on the U.S. has strong negative correlation with democratic regime stability in developing nations. Though he links this finding to Cold War containment doctrines, it raises the possibility that the broader U.S. aid formula is unique and, perhaps, flawed.

Second, there is some question about ancillary side-effects of aid on institutions other than the targeted sector. Several scholars address concerns over donor aid being diverted into military expenditures, leading to the “fungibility” hypothesis of foreign aid. At its core, this

33 The best-known of these works is William Easterly, White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good (New York: Penguin Group, 2006)
theory suggests that recipient governments will directly funnel aid to desired programs (such as weapons procurement) or indirectly fill these coffers through resources freed up from foreign investments elsewhere. For example, Feyzioglu et. al. find that aid earmarked for agriculture, education, and energy are highly fungible, whereas loans for the transportation and communication sector are non-fungible.  

In addition to the idea that fungible aid for other sectors may end up directly or indirectly fueling unintended institutions (like the military), the fungibility hypothesis has direct relevance for military aid as well. First, military aid may be no different than other aid types in its susceptibility to unintended resource diversion. This is one reason cited by military diplomats involved in U.S. foreign assistance for advancing aid in concrete forms (weapon systems, school attendance) and in so doing bypassing government apparatuses to deliver the outcome directly to the armed forces. However, even “non-fungible” military aid may have its own consequence, alluded to by Savage and Caverley in their work on IMET: while an unfriendly regime could divert tanks and bullets to its most trust-worthy forces, the training and education provided by the U.S. is non-fungible. That is to say, it can never be taken away from the foreign military members it was provided to, regardless of whether they fall out of favor.

If aid generally empowers the target institution, perhaps with some amount of “spillage,” imperfect effectiveness, or knock-on side-effects, then we can also generally conclude that generally military aid empowers militaries. Constrained to Western democracies, this sentence elicits little concern: certainly the United States would want its allies and partners to have

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stronger and more empowered militaries. However, when placed in the context of weak
democratic governance structures or nascent social and political institutions, it immediately
raises red flags. Is an empowered Malian military something to be desired? What about a
stronger Nigerian Army? Better equipped and trained Kazakh special forces? Speaking with
U.S. special forces soldiers, they indicated “[the U.S.] absolutely disproportionately empowers
militaries in other countries” vis-a-vis institutions for democratic governance and civilian
control. But the safety net, so the rhetoric goes, is that the United States also teaches those
stronger and better equipped militaries to be apolitical, subordinate to civilian control, and
respectful of human rights. In the U.S., this concept is called professionalization and is the
cornerstone of this research agenda.

Theories of Civil-Military Relations – Western

In the realm of the military profession, Samuel Huntington’s canonical work on civil-
military relations grounds the literature in its pursuit of the best balance of military effectiveness
and civilian control in a democracy. Though presented as an objective measure of civil-
military relations, both Huntington and his contemporary, Morris Janowitz, proffered highly
normative prescriptions for an ideal type of civilian control. Concerned that liberal political
leaders would be unable or unwilling to take necessary steps to defend and defeat the Soviet
threat, Huntington drew inspiration from the evolution of the Prussian military profession. His
argument is that idealized control is objective (or structural / institutional) in form: that is, it is
formulated by a conscious separation between the political sphere in which civilians exercise

37 Interview with LTC Benjamin Taylor and members of U.S. Army SOC. Quote not attributed. Washington DC.
total jurisdiction and the management of violence sphere in which the military is best left to its
own devices. The crucial mechanism for maintaining control within this separation is the
professionalization of the military force – reinforcement of their unique expertise, responsibility,
and corporateness. Huntington goes on to argue that the separation itself facilitates an
apolitical military ethic. This means professionalization of the military both permits and is
enhanced by objective control, and that military subordination to civilian oversight is purchased
through freedom of action at the tactical and operational level.

Though scholars like Eliot Cohen disagree with this separation thesis and argue for the
positive effects of deeper civilian involvement in military affairs, importantly, the U.S. military
both believes – and teaches – the Huntingtonian concept within its ranks. Indeed, in the
American military mindset, the only deeply influential check on an agent with power, expertise,
autonomy, and prestige is through the establishment of professionalism. Professionalism, in
this context, is the establishment of an internal code of ethics and behaviors that govern members
of the profession independent of any external threat of punishment. It is an internal code of
conduct that dictates responsibilities and obligations to the broader society that is transmitted
through tradition, education, and practice. In the medical profession it is best represented by the

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39 Of course, some scholars counter Huntington’s exclusive spheres, arguing the involvement of civilian leadership in even tactical decision-making may lead to beneficial outcomes. See, for example, Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2002)

40 It is important here to define “professionalism,” starting at the Weberian notions of a profession as described by Larson to have a "professional association, cognitive base, institutionalized training, licensing, work autonomy, colleague control...(and) code of ethics." Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: a Sociological Analysis*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1978, p.208

41 This history is the focus of chapter four.

42 It has been argued that, by definition, a profession is no longer subject to the Principal-Agent model because professionalism dictates shirking cannot occur, so the principal is able to trust the professional to perform as desired. As discussed, Feaver and others disabuse this notion with the simple observation that even the canonical professions – medicine, law and divinity – have external oversight to regulate behavior. Feaver, P. (2003). *Armed servants: Agency, oversight, and civil-military relations*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
Hippocratic Oath; in the law, by a steady drumbeat of lecture, writing, and discussion over legal ethics. In this sense, one can argue that Huntington’s professionalism not just another control mechanism, but the strongest available when an institution possesses the other attributes of power, expertise, and prestige associated with a profession.

Morris Janowitz, a military sociologist and civil-military relations theorist, codifies the linkages between professionalism and civilian control with an understanding that professional military forces by nature of their professionalism subject themselves to civilian control. He concludes that the single-greatest mechanism supporting civilian control of the military is the self-perceived code of professionalization that inherently necessitates subordination to political masters – quite literally, civilian control happens because the military allows it to happen due to deeply held beliefs about the nature of military professionalism. This means that in the American military, the single strongest support for subordination is a belief that such subordination is part of the professional responsibility; thus, in this theory of civil-military relations, both the content and existence of professionalism are the means of enabling civilian control.

This is not to suggest that the self-regulatory nature of professionalism is in itself sufficient to monitor and control a professional military. Indeed, even the U.S. military, with perhaps the deepest philosophical belief in subordination as concomitant with professionalism, still has many other mechanisms by which civilians maintain oversight. Originating in the economics and business literature and extended by Peter Feaver to civil-military relations, Principal-Agent Theory argues that the principal-agent model best describes the relationship...

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between civilian leaders and the subordinate military institution. Essentially, “the civilian principal contracts with the military agent to develop the ability to use force in defense of the civilian’s interests,” then seeks to ensure the military agent does what civilian leadership wants without abusing its delegated powers. Feaver’s analysis thoroughly explicates the principal-agent relationships between the armed forces and civil society in the United States, identifying numerous ways in which the model accurately characterizes democratic civil-military relations. For example, he identifies the oath of office as a ritualized contract and suggests numerous ways civilians invest in monitoring – Inspector Generals, Congressional oversight, annual budget appropriations, and confirmation of senior leadership to name a few – and punishment – hearings and investigations, demotions and dismissals – to ensure the military agent behaves according to civilian interests. Feaver also recognizes that, although the military and civilian agendas are superficially linked by a desire to win on the battlefield, their preferences may differ widely in how much autonomy, authority, or resources they possess, as well as in specific policy preferences. However, as Feaver and Donnithorne point out, the latter elements have been insufficient to keep the military from occasionally bucking unfavorable legislation or presenting preferred military options.

44 Feaver (2005)
45 Ibid., p. 57
46 See most recently Jeffrey Donnithorne (2018), *Four Guardians: A Principled Agent View of American Civil-Military Relations*, Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2018. P-A theory offers two broad solution sets to the basic dilemma of shirking. The first mechanism is transactional, instituting controls that either monitor performance continuously to ensure compliance (termed “police patrols”) or sample outcomes and alert the principal in the event of deviation (called “fire alarms”). A second solution is transformational: attempting to align the interests of the agent with those of the principal, trying to lessen any gap between what the agent wants to do and what the principal wants done. Both are predicated on maintaining predictable and institutionalized control mechanisms to ensure convergent behavior by the agent. See, for example, McCubbins and Schwartz (1984), McNollgast (1987, 1989, and 1990), Kiewet and McCubbins (1991), and Brehm and Gates (1997).
Feaver’s analysis has theoretical heft but does not capture the crucial importance of professionalism in the U.S. principal-agent model. Neither transactional nor transformational solutions are perfect fits in situations where the asymmetry of information is extreme and power rests heavily in the hands of the agent. Like doctors and lawyers, soldiers possess such highly specialized knowledge that monitoring their actions is insufficient to determine shirking behaviors: imagine the utility of a hospital administrator with no medical background watching every surgery all day long as a means of monitoring her agents. Similarly, aligning the interests of agents with power and expertise is a tricky task. Professionalism as a tautological device smooths over many of the gaps in fire alarms and police patrols, turning the agent into its own self-monitor and policer at a normative level.

**Theories of Civil-Military Relations – Praetorian**

Since this research agenda focuses on what happens when the U.S. model of professionalization meets the praetorian alternative, it is important to review the literature where civilian control is not the central philosophy governing military relations. Several scholars have explored alternatives to the democratic practice of civil-military relations, depicting the praetorian state dynamic as defined by Amos Perlmutter as regimes where domestic civil-military relations are characterized by a powerful and interventionist military with dominating

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potential. In these regimes, the political leadership arises from the military (or groups supported by the military) which permits the military to assume a dominant role in key government institutions. Perlmutter differentiates between an interventionist “ruler army” praetorian dynamic and an “infiltrator army” which operates behind-the-scenes until it is forced into more or less public confrontations with the ruling regime. In these latter praetorian states, the armed forces not only wield power from behind the civilian apparatus but are likely to take direct control of the political apparatus in times of crisis or when the military sees its core interests being threatened.

Mehran Kamrava offers a typology of praetorian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa that includes autocratic officer-politician regimes (e.g. Egypt, Libya), tribally dependent monarchies (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Jordan), regimes coup-proofed by large volunteer militias (e.g. Iraq, Iran) and military democracies (only Israel and Turkey). In the first category, the military institution furnishes a civilianized political leadership and maintains veto authority through back channels, relationships with the autocratic leader, and often strong public support. Such regimes reflect complicated power sharing models, as the former-military-turned-civilian political leadership derives power and authority from the military enterprise, while simultaneously growing wary of the political power of military backers. The tribally based military institutions are heavily comprised of tribes loyal to the ruling family that generate trust through kinship ties

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49 This argument is also proffered in Brian Loveman’s work on “protected democracies,” in which the military rule was gradually replaced with relatively fair elections, with the military acting as guardians of the political transition. Loveman, B. (1994). “Protected Democracies” and Military Guardianship: Political Transitions in Latin America, 1978-1993. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 36(2), 105–189.
in place of meritocratic advancement or whose small geographic size requires reliance on foreign mercenary forces. Inclusionary states like Iraq and Iran check the political ambitions of regular military forces through highly ideological volunteer militias. Finally, the military “democracies” of Israel and Turkey are linked only in that the state predominates the political apparatus but allows the military to play an important role in domestic politics.\(^{51}\)

Derek Lutterbeck further suggests that levels of institutionalization and popular linkages to society, such as conscription, make militaries more open to popular reformist movements.\(^{52}\) Building on work by Eva Bellin, Lutterbeck defines institutionalization as “the fact that the armed forces, or the coercive apparatus more generally, are rule-bound and based on meritocratic principles” and cites Tunisia and, to a lesser degree, Egypt as examples.\(^{53}\) This contrasts with a patrimonial system, in which the security apparatus “is characterized by political favoritism and cronyism” as in Libya and Bahrain.\(^{54}\) Lutterbeck pairs institutionalization with strong linkages to society (through broad-based or general conscription) and finds a greater openness of conscripted and institutionalized militaries to pro-reform movements in Tunisia and Egypt.\(^{55}\) Of note, the description of institutionalization roughly mirrors the beliefs and expectations inherent in U.S. professionalization programs: high levels of institutionalization are identified by apolitical security forces, an absence of favoritism or corruption, and a prioritization of national

\(^{51}\) Of course, many would dispute the application of democracy to Turkey given a rich history of coups since 1960. Kamrava links it to Israel in part based on his dependent variable – neither state has experienced negative side-effects of the professionalization of military forces.


\(^{53}\) Ibid, p. 31

\(^{54}\) Ibid, p. 32

\(^{55}\) Lutterbeck does not present a complete typology, failing to test a case in which high institutionalization was coupled with low connectivity to the society at large. His focus on countries associated with the Arab Spring may have limited his research, but it does beg the question: are institutionalization and societal connectivity co-constitutive variables?
interests. Neither Bellin nor Lutterbeck assess how security forces achieve this institutionalization or what content the institution favors, but it may be possible to consider the term roughly synonymous with the American emphasis on professionalization.

S.E. Finer fleshes this point on professionalism and institutionalization out further. In stark disagreement with Huntington’s narrow definition of professionalism, Finer points out the tautological weakness in Huntington’s theory that rejects any political involvement by military as inherently unprofessional. 56 Rather, a core element of Finer’s investigation of military intervention is that professionalism actually induces both the mood and the motive for insubordination – that is, because the members of the military see themselves as professional, they interfere in politics, foreign policy, and governance. The military believes that, as a professional force, it is better equipped and informed to determine its own funding, size, equipment, and even employment than their civilian leadership. Professionalism thus increases self-centeredness, eliteness, and a sense of morality. 57 All three may inevitably pit the military against their civilian masters in a praetorian dynamic.

Though these analyses offer political and social dynamics associated with praetorian regimes, they do not fully develop an economic component. Alfred Stepan addresses this in his work on Latin America, arguing that even though military professionalism doesn’t strictly apply to non-military areas such as economics and agriculture policy, the military institution is often the best resourced and thus inevitably assume control or influence over those areas. 58

57 Ibid., 24-28.
discussing the case of Egypt, Omar Ashour argues that the “corporateness” of a military is the key economic element of praetorian dynamics. As an example, Ashour identifies the contemporary Egyptian system as the “armed institutional racketeering model” in which the military considers itself an “intact institution that believes in its superiority compared to any other state institution, including elected bodies as well as civilian judicial ones.” This thesis parallels rent-seeking literature, which argues that governments whose revenues rely on natural resource rents are more likely to have praetorian institutions to protect the elite clique in receipt of the spoils, whereas resource-poor governments must rely on taxes – and hence eventually broad-based support via voting – to fund government institutions. Ashour’s model replaces resource rents with racketeering rents, such as control of export and import licenses or valuable real estate. One could also extend this notion of rents to include foreign military aid: private spoils derived not from the public or the government that contribute to a sense of elitism and entitlement.

The corporatist identity then requires the military to fight for its specific privileges, such as economic benefits or veto power in high politics; so long as that privilege and autonomy are preserved, the military can be quite noble in its democratizing rhetoric. Corporatism extends into investment or appropriation of civilian domestic industries, maintenance of slush funds, and the creation and sustainment of funding independent of national budgets – key examples include China, Indonesia, El Salvador and Egypt. Zoltan Barany augments this definition, addressing underlying repercussions associated with a military transition into and then out of a formal

60 Ibid., p. 3
governing role – high levels of corporatism offer significant resistance to changes to the status quo if they threaten the institution or officer class, a threat that is heightened during times of crisis.61 Interestingly, further research by Barany suggests that military elites decisively influence the eventual course of democratization: their support and obedience are prerequisites for democratic consolidation, or more simply, “‘good’ militaries are a necessary, if insufficient, condition of democratization.”62 Importantly for this research, Barany that “the political and socioeconomic settings in which democratic armies must be built are different and thus pose dissimilar challenges to those crafting democratic armies and civil-military relations.63 In addition to rejecting the utility a grand theory of both military interventionism and democratization, this sentiment directly opposes the U.S. military’s one-size-fits-all model of professionalization.

Continuing in the theme of corporatism, Kristina Mani investigates the role militaries in the developing world have in business and finds that military entrepreneurship is “harmful to the achievement or maintenance of military professionalism” yet is durable due to its adaptability and centrality in the market space.64 Importantly, her typology – balancing level of state capacity and nature of military organization – suggests that moving from a parochial to professional military under a weak state capacity does not decrease the tendency towards entrepreneurial behavior but rather simply shifts it from a focus on individual benefit to a focus

63 Ibid., p 3-4
on institutional benefit. Mani identifies ideal-types in China (statist-institutional entrepreneurship achieved through high levels of state capacity and professionalism), Pakistan (institutional entrepreneurship generated by a weak state and strong professionalism), and El Salvador (spoils entrepreneurship from weakness in both axes). Her conclusion might suggest that improving the professionalism of the armed forces without simultaneously investing in state capacity only crystalizes the corporatism mentioned by Ashour. This is a point echoed by both Finer and Stepan in their own work on the topic.

Coup literature explores the extreme case of praetorian civil-military breakdown. Though it is important to note that this project seeks to assess shifts in either direction across the totality of the civil-military spectrum, using coups as a proxy for degraded civil-military relations is useful as the most conservative research choice possible. That said, coup literature provides insight into conditions informing coup propensity and execution. Samuel Finer has famously argued that “both disposition and opportunity are necessary for military intervention to occur.” Coup literature can thus be broadly divided into two camps: those scholars who focus on trigger events (national emergencies, political crises, specific personalities) which tend to be unique to a

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66 While many scholars address coups as the “tilt” end of praetorian civil-military relations, the praetorian spectrum is far broader than just coup-d’etat. I would argue that the longevity and stealth of infiltrator praetorianism is far more dangerous than outright coup because it flies under the radar, shaping a nation’s economic and foreign policy without the overt notice – or pushback – a coup provides. Infiltrator armies are rarely held to account for their political nudges or backroom deals and thus do not command the domestic or international spotlight (and consequences) associated with taking over a government. This is a point Loveman makes, as well (Loveman, 1994).
67 Of course, coups are an imperfect measure of democratic civil military relations – a powerful infiltrator army would have no need of a coup (false negative) whereas multiple coups sometimes are part of an eventual democratic process (false positive). This is why careful case study analysis is a critical component on any research in this vein.
given scenario, and those that focus on structural features that engender or permit coups to occur. The standard analogy for this bifurcation that I will adhere to for the remainder of this project is that of the *kindling* (disposition) and the *spark* (opportunity).

Structural elements – kindling – influencing coup potential can be further categorized into internal and external forces. Focusing on internal mechanisms, Alfred Stepan points to institutional change within the military resulting from a rising professionalization. 69 This professionalism results from advanced training and education of military officers in concepts such as nation-building, management, and public administration, meaning “significant numbers of officers began to feel they had the most appropriate and realistic strategy to develop the country, and the most qualified technocrats to implement this strategy.” 70 Others scholars point to the actual and relative size of the military – budgetary and numerical – in driving coup risk, suggesting an imbalance in power may encourage generals to involve themselves in civilian politics. 71 Belkin and Schofer articulate a structural understanding of coup risk distinct from the proximal cause models or coup-proofing hypotheses. 72 They argue that the strength of civil society, regime legitimacy, and history of coups are three most important structural causes in coup prevention, underscoring the importance of the relative consolidation and strength of civilian institutions with the military institution.

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70 Ibid., p. 172-4  
Unifying these concepts, Gretchen Casper suggests institutional/social, economic, and political factors may each explain different aspects of the same event.\textsuperscript{73} Institutional change explains the motivation of the military and the institutional belief in a capacity and right to rule; economic factors point to the “resources the military can amass to institute a coup”; political polarization opens the window of opportunity, indicating when the coup may occur.\textsuperscript{74} This approach is not unlike that taken by Brian Taylor in his analysis of Russian civil-military relations.\textsuperscript{75} Using a case in which a relatively strong military did not intervene despite a frequently weak civilian government, Taylor considers four possible explanations for interventions and ultimately concludes that organizational culture kept the Russian military from intervening because its military officers subscribed to a belief that they both were and ought to be “outside politics.” The norm of civilian superiority was so strong that it restrained military members from intervening even when opportunity permitted and it was in their interests to do so. Though he does not explore where this belief came from, his fundamental premise mirrors the expectations and assumptions of this research project: the Russian military did not seek power because they believed it would be wrong to so do.

Based on the literature above, there seems to be a disconcerting overlap and interaction between the elements of Western professionalism and the attributes of praetorianism. Both Huntington and Janowitz concur that the solution to praetorianism is more professionalism – Huntington as a means to increase political neutrality and voluntary subordination, Janowitz in

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p. 206
the integration of the American military with civil society and maintenance of societal linkages with its personnel. But scholars of praetorianism cite corporateness, institutionalization, and connections to the people (all strong components of Western professionalism) as enhancing potentially praetorian behaviors. How, then, to square this circle?

The Connecting Literature: Military Aid and Coup d’Etat

One way to start is to address the small body of research that connects military aid to military coup d’etat. Building off of established praetorian and coup literature a small body of research addresses external factors – such as military aid – that affect coup propensity, and the conclusions are mixed. Samuel Decalo and Bruce Farcau form the core of the coup literature in Africa and Latin America, respectively. Though Decalo’s focus on in Africa is not on the relationship of coups to military aid, he does argue that African armies cannot be viewed as cohesive, western military hierarchies that only intervene in politics out of positive or altruistic motives. Instead, he argues that these militaries are composed of ambitious officers seeking advancement for themselves and their circle of followers and that their rule has not fostered the democratic or economic advancement Africa desires.

Farcau’s work, The Coup: Tactics in the Seizure of Power, offers a micro-level account of the mechanics of the military coup, several of which he witnessed in over 16 years in Latin America as a political officer for the U.S. Department of State. His thesis argues that, far from being spontaneous and altruistic, coups take long periods of planning and coup leaders go to great lengths to mask their true intentions in

a broader socio-economic narrative. More interestingly, Farcau believes that efforts to draw causal inferences from the diverse universe of military coups are foolish and that any single-factor explanation or unifying theory will inevitably be unsatisfactory.\(^79\)

Looking positively at the distribution of military aid, Goemans and Marinov show that an increased willingness to tie foreign aid to democracy in the post-Cold War era by powerful states has resulted in fewer coups and a greater likelihood that leaders of coups will reinstate elections soon after.\(^80\) Of course, the quality and independence of these “elected” leaders is to be questioned: after 49 years of rule in Myanmar, the democratically elected (and internationally acclaimed) Prime Minister Aung San Suu Kyi and the largely ceremonial President have been powerless to stop the military’s persecution of the Muslim Rohingya despite their nominal roles as head of state under the military-drafted Constitution.\(^81\)

A positive take on the relationship of military aid to military coup d’etat (and one specifically focusing on the United States) can be found in Carol Atkinson’s quantitative study of 160 states over 30 years which finds “U.S. military-to-military contacts to be positively and systematically associated with liberalizing trends” due to the introduction and institutionalization of reformist norms in politically relevant members of society (the military).\(^82\) Atkinson found greatest positive significance in military educational exchange, formal alliance structures, and

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\(^79\) In this, I agree with Farcau – just as any basket of initial conditions is unique, so too are the causes the feed and ultimately spark a military coup. It’s for this reason that my research doesn’t attribute military coups exclusively to U.S. aid, but rather asks if U.S. aid can be a contributing factor.


U.S. troop presence; there was zero or negative significance from U.S. military sales, military assistance, or economic aid. Notably, Atkinson’s dependent variable was broad societal and political liberalization, not liberalization within the militaries of the nations she analyzed. Relatedly, and on the specific topic of military assistance, Ruby and Gibler suggest that higher levels of education and training of high-ranking foreign military officers are associated with lower risks of military coups.83

Other studies paint a far darker picture. Looking at geopolitical leverage, Thyne finds that an American signal of hostility towards another government may encourage that military to intervene to preserve its relationship with the U.S.84 And though Ruby and Gibler suggest American education of high-ranking officers decreases the probability of a coup, their study also demonstrates a small positive (and statistically significant) correlation between broader military assistance or arms transfers and coup probability. A third effort by Maniruzzaman assesses the totality of international arms transfers and concurs with Thyne, Ruby, and Gibler, concluding that arms transfer “facilitates the occurrence of coup d’état and lengthens the period of military rule.”85

Finally, some scholarly work linking aid and coups focuses on coup-proofing.86 For example, Desha Girod argues that only low-windfall postconflict leaders – those without natural

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86 Coup-proofing is a term coined by James Quinlivan that encapsulates a variety of techniques used by usually autocratic regimes to extend regime longevity and prevent coup d’état. Quinlivan identifies five structural elements in the political-military arrangements of such systems, including exploitation of family, ethnic and religious loyalties, counterbalancing parallel militaries, establishment of security agencies, encouragement of
resources or strategic importance to donors – leverage aid to fund development as a method of coup-proofing. By extension, in other scenarios postconflict leaders are less money-hungry because they can fund coup-proofing efforts via strategic military and economic aid (i.e., no or few strings attached).

Perhaps most relevantly, Savage and Caverley’s recent work builds upon this coup literature and directly underpins this research. Using a broad quantitative approach, the authors assess coup propensity based on IMET funding and find that such investment – modeled by various measures of dollar amount and numbers of students – results in a statistically significant higher propensity for military coups. Capitalizing on aid literature, they theorize that the fungibility of overall military aid actually empowers the regime, but that specific training via IMET increases the military’s human capital which is not easily offset through coup-proofing techniques. Though their causal pathways are vague and they make no attempt to perform a case-by-case analysis, their results suggest that IMET, and more importantly a specific form of U.S. military aid targeting professionalization and norms transfer, may actually reduce democratic civil-military relations in the most extreme case of military coup. Savage and Caverley use statistical tools to mitigate the danger of endogeneity and selection effect in their research, but case studies and process tracing would better shore up concerns that the U.S. aid actually increases coup propensity only because the recipients are already at higher risk for coup.

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Through several decades of scholarly research, the only clear conclusion is that results are mixed: some studies show a positive correlation between military aid and coup d’état and others show a zero or negative correlation. Policy on the topic is equally divided: both the U.S. military and Department of State believe that professionalization and assistance programs are successful in engendering or strengthening democratic norms among foreign forces, while Congress remains sufficiently skeptical as to demand “kill-switches” like those in the Foreign Assistance Act in the event of military coup d’état. As this research will show, it is entirely possible that aid is accomplishing both at once, because professionalization and subordination to civilian control are not necessarily linked outside of the American military construct and U.S. strategic culture assumptions.

**When Worlds Collide – Professionalism meets Praetorianism (A Proposed Model)**

The discussion thus far has established that, despite problems of leakage and fungibility, military aid tends to empower militaries. The U.S. military embraced the democratic model of professionalization as a means to bracket empowered militaries, and indeed professionalization is offered as a mechanism to keep militaries apolitical and subordinate to the republic. However, some of the same traits that comprise this “positive” form of professionalism seem to directly overlap with “negative” traits of praetorianism – corporateness, institutionalization, and connections with the people appear to actually work against civilian control in other nations.

This leads us to the central question of this research design: does U.S. military aid change recipient civil-military relations, either toward more democratic or more praetorian forms, and if so, why and how? On one hand, military and policy professionals argue Western civil-military
principles packaged in aid, especially military training and education, professionalize and democratize foreign forces and balance out the inherent element of empowerment aid provides. On the other hand, a body of contrary evidence suggests even such education, as well as the provision of funds and weapons, actually increases the propensity for praetorian dynamics. It would be insufficient to suggest that merely having pre-existing praetorian relations subverts the intentions of aid: indeed, the United States would have little need to invest in professionalization programs if foreign armed forces already reflected the appropriate democratic model.

It is important to pause on the overlapping terminology of professionalization. A “professional” military means something very different to the U.S. officer corps, encompassing all the baggage of the Huntingtonian and Janowitzian ideals – responsibility, corporateness, subordination, apolitical nature, respect for liberal norms – in addition to more conventional understandings: technical capability, military effectiveness, and a unique skillset reinforced by education, training, and codified doctrine. Explaining how these two definitions came to overlap to the point of inseparability in the U.S. military is the task of the next chapter, but for now it is sufficient to claim that the U.S. military believes the normative elements of professionalism are what enable the technical elements – and vice versa. In fact, the lines between the two strands of professionalism are so blurred as to inhibit institutional or individual differentiation (see Figure 2). That is to say, both the technical and normative traits comprise the definition of U.S. professionalism, often with no awareness that they are not inevitably linked. By extension, the U.S. version of “professionalization” seeks to transmit both of these elements simultaneously as a means of building better militaries in foreign countries, but without being self-aware that the normative elements are not inextricable. For example, the U.S. military has robust and highly
developed training programs to transfer technical capability, but few or none for the normative elements – it is assumed they will either backpack on the technical training or be absorbed by some other means.

![Diagram of U.S. Definition of Professionalism](image)

**Figure 2. Conceptualization of U.S. Understanding of Professionalism**

The civilian control supporting form of professionalism described above is, importantly, only the American understanding of the role and content of professionalism. What has kept the United States armed forces as honorable agents of democratic civil-military relations for decades despite immense power and autonomy has been the nature and content of their professionalism. However, this research project focuses on the potential that U.S-style professionalism can have perverse consequences when applied outside the American context.

Working from a historical institutionalist perspective, I suggest that military professionalization and assistance is largely about developing or exploiting a common narrative and is not, as Huntington argues, deterministic. Rather, any evolving civil-military dynamic is

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89 Interestingly, despite his ultimately deterministic outlook, Huntington himself implicitly acknowledges this thesis in Chapter 2 of *The Soldier and the State*. In it, he documents the rise of professionalism in Prussia, asking “why this particular country took the lead” and noting that it was the unique cultural and geopolitical situation of Prussia led to the rise of a professional officer corps. In fact, he even traces the comparative evolution in France and
highly sensitive to initial conditions. U.S. (or other foreign) intervention in the form of military assistance can only offer leverage points which may activate, deactivate, or exacerbate existing conditions and pathways. I further suggest that the packaged formula of U.S. aid characterized by a self-referential belief in the power of professionalization interacts with organic civil-military constructs in unique ways.

_Professionalism – A Corrupting Influence_

First, we should investigate whether the U.S. system of professionalization itself is a corrupting influence. On the surface, it seems plausible: after all, the explicit purpose of security cooperation is to improve the efficacy and capability of foreign military forces, and the implicit belief in professionalization as a qualitative advantage associated with achieving victory in cutting-edge warfare permeates the U.S military identity. But there may be more to it than simply building better armies in the U.S. image absent the trappings of U.S. civilian control.

To start, as S.E. Finer points out, in other cultural contexts professionalism may induce insubordination in the military agent. He identifies “military syndicalism” or corporateness that leads the military to believe that they are better equipped to determine their own funding, size, equipment, and even use than their civilian leadership. Finer also suggests that professionalism increases the tendency of the military to see itself as a servant of the people or state, not the government and, seeing its role as a defense to external enemies, to resist any command to involve itself in domestic or internal activities. Even the pursuit of “expertness” has mixed

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Britain, pointing out where their idiosyncratic characteristics hindered or helped the professionalization process. (pp 30-58.)

results. As Finer suggests, the professionalization of a force is a high wire act that may encourage interventionist motives, leaving autocratic principals the careful task of trying to enhance technical skills and belief in civilian control of the military without the trappings of corporateness, syndicalism, and nationalism.91 These effects can be particularly profound given French philosopher Alain Rouquie’s assertion that, in many nations, the military preceded the state.92 Professionalism, then, is predicated not on a technical actor having no interest in the political sphere but rather, as Janowitz has long said, on the notion that being a professional by necessity first requires an apolitical nature and subordination to civilian control.

A second corrupting element of professionalization is that it is inherently non-fungible. Extending the fungibility hypothesis proffered by Feyzioglu et. al. and Remmer above, aid that goes directly to the military apparatus, be it money, weapons, education, or training, may undermine the control mechanisms of the primary principal. Remembering that fungible aid is controlled by the leadership apparatus and may be diverted to alternative (unintended) uses, non-fungible aid specifically enhances the resources, abilities, and power of the agency it is directed toward. Since the fungibility of aid and associated corruption has been elevated as a concern in the policy community, donor governments are more inclined to deliver non-fungible aid so that it will be used for the intended purpose: so that they cannot be used to buy bullets or line political pockets, funds earmarked to build schools go directly to the Ministry of Education, those intended to buy vaccines are given to the Ministry of Health, and so on.

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92 Alain Rouquie (1987). The Military and the State in Latin America (Berkeley: University of California Press, Ltd.) Translated by Paul E. Sigmund
The bulk of U.S. military assistance is naturally non-fungible. Weapons systems are non-fungible because only the military institution has the ability to maintain and operate them. Again, it is possible that weapons systems may be reallocated by government leaders to loyal militias so they can be used at will, but provisions in the contractual elements of U.S. weapons programs generally prohibit the sale, transfer, or misuse of U.S.-provided arms. In addition, once a weapons deal is struck, it is the U.S. military and foreign military members who conduct the lengthy purchase process in which modifications to the contract are often made, not the civilian governance apparatus. Even much of the money provided by the U.S. via foreign military assistance is non-fungible. In Afghanistan, an admonishment to use local labor to the maximum extent possible led U.S. soldiers to carry briefcases full of money to execute contracts directly with local, sometimes military, contractors.93 In another example, from Fiscal Year 2002 to 2013, the U.S. had 16 different programs to provide security assistance to Uzbekistan. This multiplicity of programs was due in part to their targeted nature in an attempt to prevent graft and misuse at the federal government level.94 Most importantly, education and training provided by IMET or packaged with weapons sales are non-fungible, benefiting the immediate recipients of that schooling: the soldiers. Though national leaders may select the officers that receive some of this education, they cannot control what is taught nor what the officer learns.

Finally, professionalization has the potential to increase military aspirations for political leadership. Professionalization programs may enhance the military’s sense of corporateness, particularly within the officer corps, and strengthen the elements of institutionalization that make it beholden to the people rather than to the civilian government. It may also empower or inspire

93 Author’s personal experience.
specific individuals to believe they are better suited to leading their country than inept or corrupt civilian leaders. As Miller argues, “highly professional military officers lose patience for corrupt civilian leaders and, educated to believe they are the guardians of the state, seize control of the government to save it, often with public support.” This means U.S. military aid (specifically IMET) may enhance strategic and political understandings, infusing military leaders with a sense of “guardianship” and superiority over their civilian leadership. Spread across the institution, this sense of superiority is most likely to manifest as infiltrator praetorianism, only erupting in coup at a moment of national crisis and with high probability of succeeding. Constrained to just a few individuals, inspired superiority is likely to be evident in a small and usually unsuccessful coup attempt.

This leads to the first hypothesis:

**H1. U.S. professionalization via FMAT increases foreign military corporateness, superiority, and autonomy, increasing the propensity for interventionism in both the institution (“kindling”) and individual (“spark”).**

*Professionalism – Civilian Control versus Military Effectiveness*

Let us next focus on the efficacy of foreign militaries, an idea referred to as military effectiveness. Regardless of the beliefs of the U.S. military assistance apparatus, almost any attempt to improve the military effectiveness of a force requires untying many of the existing controls as they relate to coup-proofing. Several scholars argue that coup-proofing actually

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undermines the ability of the military to achieve victory. While elements like under-resourcing or promotion on the basis of loyalty versus capability have obviously deleterious effects on military effectiveness, others are more subtle. For example, constant monitoring makes soldiers more risk averse, which leads to a culture of hesitance and fear rather than courage and boldness.

So, when the United States military engages to improve the military effectiveness of a foreign force, some pre-existing control constructs are inevitably weakened. The U.S. promotes meritocratic promotion systems in its training and education courses, selecting the “top graduate” at programs ranging from flight training to War College on the basis of ability, not blood or loyalty. Training and educational programs teach a willingness to shoulder risk and act decisively, to value skill and intellect instead family connection. For example, counter-terrorism training in the Philippines emphasized information sharing across all branches of the security apparatus and mandated respect for human rights because the population constituted the terrorists’ base of support. Both efforts to improve military effectiveness and professionalism might undermine coup-proofing strategies to isolate the military from natural allies in the security community and the populace. Similarly, by assigning great import to foreign graduates of U.S. military education institutions like the National War College and Eisenhower School, the U.S. military ensures some influence over rising officers even in non-meritocratic promotion systems.

If the bulk of U.S. security assistance increases military effectiveness and the technical aspects of professionalism without the associated normative constraints, we should see empirical evidence that U.S. assistance does little to exacerbate praetorianism in countries that already

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96 See Quinlivan (1999), Pilster and Bohmelt (2011), and Albrecht (2014)
have strong civilian control. However, in countries with weak civilian institutions or authoritarian regimes with low levels of coup-proofing, U.S. professionalization should markedly increase praetorianism and potentially lead to military coup d’etat. As Huntington notes, “as part of the state bureaucracy, moreover, an officer corps could only be maintained by societies with highly developed governmental institutions.”

This leads to the next hypothesis:

**H2: By enhancing military effectiveness, U.S. FMAT exacerbates existing praetorianism in nations with weak civilian institutions and/or authoritarian regimes.**

**Professionalism – Civilian Control Untaught**

Since the U.S. professionalization process does seek democratic norm transference, there are only a few logical places that effort can occur. The most obvious and direct of these is through education. Therefore, the first question that must be addressed is as simple as it is fundamental – do we, in fact, actually teach civilian control of the military, either to our own forces or to the foreign servicemembers we are educating? As chapter three will indicate, the intent to imbue democratic civilian control permeates our total package approach, but is that intent operationalized in our exercises, classrooms, and training seminars? If not, then there seems to be little question that the United States is funding, equipping, training, educating, and

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97 Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, p. 33
otherwise empowering foreign militaries without any constraints as to how that power should be used – or by whom. This leads to an additional hypothesis:

**H3. U.S. professional military education does not adequately teach (or consciously foreground) civil-military relations or principles of civilian control in concert with other professionalization efforts, meaning military empowerment is unchecked by democratic norms.**

*Professionalism – Civilian Control Lost in Translation*

The second question that applies is one of interpretation. Assuming we do teach democratic civil military relations to foreign counterparts, how are they interpreting that information? The likelihood of clean comprehension within the same historical context as the American experience is negligible. Instead, instruction is funneling into foreign military members with their own unique historical contexts, values systems, and beliefs on the role of the military and its place in society.

Initial conditions are also crucially important in the professionalization question. Imagine the professional ethic as a bucket filled with the cultural norms, values, and experiences specific to an individual military or society. As mentioned, the American military professional ethic is chock full of subordination to civilian control, human rights adherence, citizenship, democratic liberal values, and subordination to just war theory and the laws of war. But other nations have different ethics and values that comprise their professional ethic. In Egypt, the depiction of the Army as the defender of the Egyptian people (rather than the state, Constitution,
or government) strongly pervades the military ethic, which may run counter to American expectations of subordination to civilian control. Many Islamic nations, like Turkey and Egypt, incorporate a strong secular component to their professional ethic, meaning highly religious elements of society and government may be perceived as a threat.

So, advocates of U.S. professionalization programs may be correct: American education and training does increase the professionalization of foreign armed forces. However, these efforts fail to recognize that the professional ethic bucket of foreign nations are filled with different cultural values, norms and experiences than the American version, and thus professionalism does not have the same normative content that the U.S. military assumes. Simply “professionalizing” in the American image does little to erase these deeply held value

Figure 3. Depiction of Professional “Baskets” of Ethics

So, advocates of U.S. professionalization programs may be correct: American education and training does increase the professionalization of foreign armed forces. However, these efforts fail to recognize that the professional ethic bucket of foreign nations are filled with different cultural values, norms and experiences than the American version, and thus professionalism does not have the same normative content that the U.S. military assumes. Simply “professionalizing” in the American image does little to erase these deeply held value
sets and may, in fact, only strengthen them through institutionalization and corporateness. To transfer the American professional ethic, there would have to be an explicit recognition that professionalism is not one-size-fits-all and ardent attempts to counter historic norms.

In as much as the historical context of foreign officers may bear little resemblance to American cultural values and historical norms, the current context may be equally strange. Governments of these professionalized foreign officers may not match the U.S. political system, in which the military serves civilian leadership, who in turn serve the electorate. Specifically, U.S. professionalization prizes human rights and is predicated on protecting the American population. Using the Principal-Agent construct, we can see that this ethic finds no conflict in a democratic society where the civilian oversight Principal to the military Agent is itself an Agent of the population, establishing the American people as the ultimate Principal (Figure 4). However, in autocratic regimes, the leader is not a servant of the population. In such a regime, the military may find themselves unable to simultaneously respect human rights and be subordinate to civilian control when, for example, given an order to repress protests. In these contexts, serving the people and obeying civilian control may be mutually inconsistent. As Huntington notes, “where there are competing authorities, or competing ideas as to what ought to be the authority, professionalism is difficult if not impossible to achieve.”98

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98 Huntington, Soldier and the State, p.35
An example of this mismatch in context is well-illustrated through the Egyptian Arab Spring. Policy wonks have pointed to the Egyptian military’s reliance on U.S. funding for one-third of their budget and 80% of their weapons procurement as one of the prime motivating factors in the army’s refusal to disperse protesters despite orders from President Mubarak.\(^9^9\) However, within the military and national security council circles, there was certainty that “it was our relationship, developed over time and hardship, that gave them the confidence to do the right thing….and not fire on civilian protesters.”\(^1^0^0\) Senior American national security decision-makers were literally high-fiving each other on the success of U.S. professionalization programs as indicated by the Egyptian army’s restraint; their mood was far different when the same army

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\(^1^0^0\) Dafna Rand. Personal interview. 12 May 2014, Washington D.C.
ousted President Morsi a year later citing identical reasoning: the protection and service of the Egyptian people.

This leads to the final set of hypotheses:

**H4.** U.S. professional military education teaches civilian control from a U.S.-centric view and does not account for different backgrounds and military cultures. Education can therefore can be misinterpreted, misunderstood, or misapplied.

**H5.** Countries with widely divergent histories from the U.S. democratic tradition (such as military coups, dictatorships, corruption) both within the military and wider society will understand civil-military education differently and have divergent outcomes predicated on the unique historical constructs within their bucket of ethics. Specifically,

**H5A.** Militaries in autocratic regimes will experience dissonance when U.S. FMAT’s focus on human rights conflicts with models of subordination to civilian control.

**H5B.** Militaries with histories of or latent praetorianism will have higher propensity to intervene.
Bringing it All Together

Let us return to the chain of logic that opened this chapter:

(1) The U.S. military engages in a variety of foreign military assistance and security cooperation engagements: operations, exercises, foreign military sales, international exchanges, and notably, education and training.

(2) As chapter three describes, the core element of these engagements is founded on a U.S.-centric view of professionalizing foreign forces.

(3) While professionalization includes both the learned expertise in tactical and operational warfare and the requisite tools and weapons associated with that expertise, the U.S. also purports to incorporate a component of democratic norms transfer, particularly as regards human rights and civil-military relations.

(4) But what if that very American professionalization can exacerbate or induce praetorian leanings? I suggest it can do so in one (or more) of three ways:

a. Civ-Mil Untaught – A failure to operationalize the democratic intent of foreign military assistance programs through lack of curriculum, lack of depth, or poor messengers.

b. Civ-Mil Misunderstood – Though taught, an Amero-centric civilian control and democratic civil military relations education does not take into account variation in the current or historical context of foreign nations.

c. Civ-Mil Misapplied – Taught and understood, professionalization is inherently damaging: increasing corporateness, autonomy, and superiority, potentially inspiring military members to take charge.
To test these theoretical elements, I’d now add the following methodological steps to advance my research. While the United States has a complex system of military aid that relies on the “total package approach,” it is reasonable to assume that the bulk of civil-military norms transfer would occur during long-duration formal education and training, particularly that which occurs in an academic environment. Thus, zeroing in on education – specifically IMET and War College – offers a hard test of the theory – if civil-military norms transfer doesn’t occur there, then it isn’t likely to be occurring in any significant quantity or quality elsewhere.

Huntington would concure with this focus on education: indeed, he highlights education, both special and general, as core elements in the emergence of professional institutions. He cites the influential British military reformer Lord Cardwell in 1871:

…if there is one lesson which we have learned from the history of the late campaign, it is this—that the secret of Prussian success has been more owing to the professional education of the officers than to any other cause to which it can be ascribed. Neither gallantry nor heroism will avail much without professional training…101

Savage and Caverley agree with this focus on IMET, and their large-N study underpins the qualitative focus of this research. They show a statistically significant correlation between IMET (both in terms of dollar amount and number of students) and coup propensity. In fact, in several of their models, participation in U.S. IMET programs actually doubles the propensity for military coup. However, Savage and Caverley are less interested in the why and how of this result, relying on broad statements of fungibility. Case study research can more directly answer

101 Huntington, Soldier and the State, p. 47
the question of mechanisms, as we look at the sequencing and connectedness of aid decision, aid delivery, and the onset of changes in levels of democratic civil-military relations.

This is where my research picks up. Zeroing in on IMET, and more specifically, professional military education, is not simply a scoping mechanism. It also presents the core normative vehicle for professionalization and the hardest test of the theory – as mentioned, if civilian control isn’t taught in the classroom to U.S. officers or foreign officers, we can be relatively certain that it isn’t being discussed on the firing range or maneuver field. In order to investigate this educational aspect, I focus on the National Defense University (NDU) in Washington DC, conducting over 40 interviews and surveying 280 graduates – U.S. and foreign military officers – across four schools on the NDU campus. In concert with a deep curricula review, the survey and interview results answer the first two explicit questions of my research: what do we teach foreign officers and what do they learn?

Because my survey data and interviews focused on questions of curriculum, teaching, and learning, and adult military officers are not a protected class, I did not seek IRB approval at the outset of my research. My research posed minimal risk to the interviewees and, under the principle of no harm, I obtained their consent both before my research and after for subsequent quotations I planned to employ; further, I made provisions to protect the privacy of all participants, did not use any deception or withholding of information, and did not delve into

102 According to Georgetown University IRB guidelines exempted research includes: “Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.” Additionally, I’ve applied for IRB approval through the United States Air Force Academy for similar research at the officer pre-commissioning level. While the research presented in this project fits in Georgetown University’s “exempt review” category, the further effort is a more sensitive case, using younger and potentially more malleable interview and survey subjects.
sensitive subjects. Additionally, having discussed my research with the National Defense University Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Accreditation Division (which acts as the contact office for NDU’s IRB and is particularly sensitive to the situations surrounding both U.S. and foreign officers), I employed their recommendations in my research process. First, individual officers interviewed signed informed consent forms (sample in Appendix B); second, both to minimize any potential risk to the officers interviewed and to ensure the most candid answers to my questions, all officers were anonymized to a degree that permitted identification by me, but not by outside readers or their nation of origin.\textsuperscript{103} For example, because there were multiple Egyptian officers attending NDU, that identifying information was retained; if only one officer from a nation was in the pool of students, they were identified by region.

Surveys were taken online and were completely anonymous, and both interview and survey participation were absolutely voluntary; connections were made through my professional and personal networks and via snowball sampling. As an example, a colleague took my survey and emailed it out to his cohort; often interviewees consented to take the survey and ask fellow officers from their country or class to take it as well. This separation was done purposely to avoid the misapprehension that the data collected would be retained by NDU or FMET program managers, and thus to gather a more honest field of responses. It also had the benefit of further anonymizing the survey-takers. To preserve the integrity of the survey sample, I included explanatory text indicating the informal and research-oriented nature of the questions. While there is always a possibility that some participants may misinterpret the intent of the survey or presume a desire for certain answers, I endeavored to minimize that possibility. And while a

\textsuperscript{103} This out of an abundance of caution to ensure that disclosure of responses outside this research would not be damaging to any interviewees.
survey can indicate propensities, differences, and correlations, by using interviews I was able to better understand why those differences and correlations might exist.

This information is then paired with case studies of foreign national recipients of U.S. military aid. Because the central premise of my thesis is that the one-size-fits-all model of FMET interacts differently in the unique baskets of historical experience and cultural norms of various target nations, it is critical to look at cases which are both exemplars of country type and outcome. In an ideal world, I would be able to use matched pairs of nations, where one nation received the U.S. FMET “treatment” and another, very similar nation does not. Because of the ubiquity of U.S. military aid globally, this is almost impossible. More importantly, because I’m not arguing that U.S. FMET is either necessary or sufficient, there should rightly be many cases of praetorianism without U.S. FMET and many cases of U.S. FMET without praetorianism.

Because matched pairs are difficult to find, I instead selected two cases – Egypt, both before and after the onset of U.S. military aid in 1979, and the Gambia leading up to the 2014 coup d’etat (Table 2A) – that do several things. First, they offer a “second best” to the matched pair concept: cases in which U.S. military aid was either turned on and off or in which the U.S. competed with another nation for the majority share of the target nation’s aid provision. That enables a with and without treatment analysis and one that identifies the unique elements of U.S. aid that enhance praetorianism versus another aid provider who does not. The nearest test of this case can be found in Egypt, where there was a marked shift in Egyptian allegiance from the Soviet Union to the United States in 1978-79 for reasons totally exogenous to civil-military relations or military aid. I analyze the impact of over three decades of Soviet aid on Egyptian military empowerment and praetorianism, and then compare it to the slightly more than three
decades of U.S. FMAT. Because the onset of military aid to Egypt was geopolitically driven as the price of peace with Israel, it offers an exogenous motive and thus lessens the risk that any outcomes were driven by intent to empower or disempower the Egyptian military. For this reason alone, it was important to include Egypt in the collection of case studies.

The Gambia provides a different lens, as focusing on the 2014 coup attempt at the individual coup leader level reveals the deep impact of U.S. PME. These cases demonstrate the ends of the spectrum in military size and U.S. aid investment: the Gambia is small on both counts where Egypt is one of the largest standing militaries and second-largest recipient of U.S. FMAT. Both nations were U.S. FMAT recipients and, notably, sent servicemembers to National Defense University. If, through process tracing, I can show the hypothesized impact in both countries, then there is some argument for the generalizability of FMET impact to other nations, particularly those with praetorian and/or autocratic divergence from the U.S. democratic context. Both nations also have extant praetorian inclinations and a history of military coups. This is a drawback, and future research will expand to additional cases with less divergent military strategic cultures, such as Ukraine or Estonia, in order to test the theory on other pathologies. However, since part of this puzzle is measuring the impact of U.S. military aid on nations who do not have the same basket of professional ethics, limiting the cases at this stage to autocratic nations with histories of praetorianism still offers a valuable test of the theory. In this sense, Egypt and the Gambia become archetypes for the type of impact U.S. FMAT may have on nations that do not possess the same military culture and democratic background. Table 1 below offers the full accounting of the cases.
Table 1. Case Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Military size</th>
<th>U.S. Military Aid</th>
<th>Coup d’etat?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Authoritarian; Newly Democratic</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>History: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Kindling”</td>
<td>Size of Armed Forces: 442,100</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total military aid: &gt;$40B since 1980</td>
<td>Successful in 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget: $5.5B (2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1.3B per year; additional $1B in arms sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>History: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Spark”</td>
<td>Size of Armed Forces: 2,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total military aid: $5.2M (1946-2010)</td>
<td>Attempt in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget: $14M (2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$118,000 (2010); additional $0 in arms sales, though eligible for EDA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent GDP: 1.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Trainees: 3-5 per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodological Cats and Dogs

To wrap up this discussion, the following table pairs the hypotheses and logic above to the methodology in the remainder of the project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Proposed Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1. U.S. intent to professionalize via FMAT increases foreign military corporateness,</td>
<td>Chapter Six: Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superiority, and autonomy, increasing the proposal for interventionism in both the</td>
<td>-- Egypt: ideal-type for enhanced institutional praetorianism (kindling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institution (“kindling”) and individual (“spark”)</td>
<td>-- The Gambia: ideal-type for inspired individual praetorianism (spark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-- USSR military aid: comparative impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2. By enhancing military effectiveness, U.S. FMAT exacerbates existing praetorianism in</td>
<td>Chapter Six: Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nations with weak civilian institutions and/or authoritarian regimes.</td>
<td>-- Impact of U.S. FMAT on autocratic nations with weak civil institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3. U.S. professional military education does not adequately teach (or consciously</td>
<td>Chapter Four: What We Teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreground) civil-military relations or principles of civilian control in concert</td>
<td>-- Curriculum review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with other professionalization efforts, meaning military empowerment is unchecked by</td>
<td>-- Instructor interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratic norms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>view and does not account for different backgrounds and military cultures. Education</td>
<td>-- Survey data testing comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can therefore can be misinterpreted, misunderstood, or misapplied.</td>
<td>-- Interview date testing interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5. Countries with widely divergent histories from the U.S. democratic tradition</td>
<td>Overarching conclusion of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(such as military coups, dictatorships, corruption) within the military and wider</td>
<td>-- Chapter 3: U.S. Case establishes groundwork for U.S.-centric professionalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>society will understand civil-military education differently and have divergent</td>
<td>-- Chapter 4: Allowances for how curriculum is taught to foreign students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outcomes predicated on the unique historical constructs within their bucket of ethics.</td>
<td>-- Chapter 5: Interpretation of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-- Chapter 6: Impact of U.S. FMAT on autocratic nations with history of coup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- H5A. Militaries in autocratic regimes will experience dissonance when U.S. FMAT’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focus on human rights conflicts with models of subordination to civilian control.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- H5B. Militaries with histories of or latent praetorianism will have higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propensity to intervene.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are external variables that may adjust the impact of military aid that are worthy of consideration alongside this internal model. For example, the presence of an immediate or looming security threat may heighten the reliance on U.S. military aid or increase the likelihood that recipient nations chafe at restrictions levied by U.S. aid packages. In contrast, alternative sources of military aid or the “reverse leverage” concept where the U.S. needs the partner nation more than the partner needs the U.S. may both lessen the relative impact on aid. While these factors may amplify or attenuate the impact of aid on civil-military relations, they are more likely to negatively affect the strategic relationship between the U.S. and the recipient nations. More simply, external competition or looming security threats will not change the baked-in character of U.S. military aid provision nor is it likely to reverse the directionality of U.S. influence on recipient civil-military relations. Nevertheless, these factors should be considered as external factors that may affect the model.

Methodologically, nearly all studies on the impact of military aid suffer from a criticism of endogeneity. The endogeneity argument flows both directions. On one hand, the U.S. may select countries for military aid based on their compliance or likeliness to evolve into democracies, so that compliance leads to aid rather than vice versa. On the other hand, the U.S. may select countries with poor track records in order to improve stability and security; in this case, any failures of democratization or civil-military relations are a result of latent internal instability rather than aid. The arguments apply both to the initial decision to bestow aid and the composition of the aid (for example, selection for IMET programs). The authors that study this cope with potential endogeneity differently. Some suggest they avoid endogeneity because their results are non-monotonic: positive correlations for IMET balanced by zero and negative
correlations for other forms of aid do partially alleviate this charge, though if the U.S. were selecting different types of aid based on country dynamics, the dilemma remains. Others use mini case studies that sample a variety of country types – democratic, non-democratic, stable (no coups) and unstable (many coups) to address the endogeneity in their statistical work. This is one of the primary methods I chose to mitigate the effect. Savage and Caverley largely dismiss endogeneity by suggesting that any effect would oppose their statistically significant findings.

The single greatest counter-argument to this inherent difficulty is the sheer scale of U.S. investment: of the 192 countries in the world today, the U.S. has delivered military aid to 181 of them. Moreover, “the factors the United States uses to determine the level of assistance are relatively finite, knowable, transparent, and measurable” and none relate explicitly to praetorianism (save the definitive prohibition on continuing military aid to militaries that take charge through military coup). Though this near universality of aid doesn’t remove the issue of endogeneity – scale and type of aid is important – it does convert it into the more manageable dilemma of selection effect. Through careful case selection in accordance with the model, I hope to balance my cases to cope with any bias. Also, by surveying the direct recipients of one very specific form of U.S. military aid – education – and using process tracing to ensure a deep

104 Atkins (2006)
105 Ruby and Gibler (2010)
106 As mentioned previously, their statistical analysis also indicates that countries that have not recently experienced a coup receive more training, mitigating the notion that their findings simply reflect that the U.S. invests more heavily in coup-prone nations.
107 Savage and Caverley, p 550
understanding of the mechanisms at work, I hope to get a more precise measurement of impact.

Again, this is not a perfect solution.
Chapter 3: The American Case: The Evolution and Exportation of Professionalism

“It was all part of a national impulse to regard America’s national experience as a model other peoples and countries wished to imitate. Inside every Russian, every Chinese, every African, indeed, every foreigner, there was an American waiting to emerge.”

~Robert Dallek

The United States has, since its founding, maintained a deep belief in the universal nature of its political order and the exportability of liberty and democracy throughout the world. As Charles Edel writes, “from the earliest days of American history, Americans have often believed that their own model of democratic capitalism was universally applicable, universally desirable, and more likely to make the world a safer place.” With roots dating to as early as 1680 and Puritan John Winthrop’s admonition to Massachusetts Bay Colonists that they were to be “as a city on the hill” American exceptionalism began as a passive model for other nations, worthy of emulation but not readily exported. The idea echoed through the terms of Presidents Jefferson, Roosevelt, Wilson, and Kennedy, over time merging with an active liberal universalism to induce a belief that “deep inside every foreigner of good will must be an American struggling to get

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out.”\textsuperscript{110} Though initially confounded by limited geopolitical power, the Cold War and post-Cold War eras in which the U.S. became accustomed to leading the “free world” saw greater adoption and faith in the premise of a packaged and deliverable democracy built on the American model. This idea was most recently articulated by the neoconservative doctrine of George W. Bush, lambasted as “democratization at gunpoint” and foundered on the realities of the “liberation” of Iraq in 2003.

While no government institution successfully resisted the self-referential nature of American universalism, the U.S. military found the concept particularly suited to its institutional mantra. Following celebrated victories in World War I and II where democracy was championed by a generation of servicemen who won a grueling contest in massive and spectacular fashion, the U.S. military had good reason to believe it was the best fighting force on the face of the earth. It would only stand to reason that such capability could be exported to allies and partners, thereby increasing partner capacity and interoperability, promoting peace and ensuring future victories. In essence, there existed a strong parallel belief that, as one military official suggested, “inside every foreign soldier is a person like us, who, with the right training and equipment, can be just as professional and effective as we are.”\textsuperscript{111}

This chapter explores the evolution and exportation of U.S. military professionalism, both in its normative form and in the details of technical military assistance programs. It begins with the historical foundations of the American Army’s (and to equal degrees, other military services’) religion of professionalism, then moves into the particular history of foreign military


\textsuperscript{111} Interview with senior military leader, Secretary of the Air Force Office of International Affairs (SAF/IA) (July 25, 2014). Washington, D.C.
assistance. Ultimately, it describes the American exceptionalism that characterizes much of U.S. foreign policy similarly pervades the U.S. military. Moreover, it demonstrates how the U.S. military came to *construct* its own unique definition of professionalism (and the associated identity and civil-military theory) and to sell it to the world. Its purpose is to support the overarching argument that U.S. FMAT is unique and comprehensive, infused with normative strains that both are and are not strictly democratic, and yet still unaware of its relationship with and reliance on the broader U.S. strategic culture such that it falls flat when applied to other nations.

**The U.S. Case: The Evolution of Professionalism in the United States Military**

The current form of U.S. military professionalism is rooted in the Huntingtonian ideal-type: the role of the military is fundamentally different, separate, and more noble than that of the politician, requires a self-centered devotion of time and effort to maintain technical expertise, and thus inevitably results in the military staying in their own, formally subordinate sphere, well outside the realm of politics. Any abridgement of this paradigm is, by definition, unprofessional. Interestingly, this definition of identity-professionalism constrains action, but it also justifies it: since the military sees itself as professional, anything the institution does under this umbrella is justifiable either as the act of a professional military or as a response to unwelcome and inappropriate political transgressions into the military sphere.¹¹² This understanding is woven

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¹¹² Many of the internal conversations the author witnessed on the Joint Staff used Obama administration National Security Council and Office of Secretary of Defense “overreach” as justification for objectively unprofessional behavior: withholding information, cherry-picking options, and a general demeanor of disrespect.
into military culture in depictions of officership, character, and the over-used term of professionalism.

But where did this definition of U.S. professionalism come from? The notion that military professionalism of any sort is static, even in a single military, is misleading. Rather, the definition and characteristics of professionalism are “a moving target” evolving due to external factors – world events or civilian cultural changes – and internal doctrine, dialogue, and leadership.\(^\text{113}\) As a brief example, what we might term the “professional” soldier of the 18\(^{\text{th}}\) Century was more mercenary than honorable warrior, whereas in Chivalric times “professionalism” was conferred by aristocratic title and wealth vice skill and study. Huntington himself argues that professionalism evolved over time and did so differently in the three cases – England, France, and Prussia – that he examined.\(^\text{114}\)

Thus, it is not surprising that current conceptions of U.S. military professionalism are not rooted in time immemorial but instead evolved rather recently in concert with three key events: the American military’s loss of the Vietnam War, the full political commitment to the All-Volunteer Force, and the shift in American culture toward liberalism. This evolution in professionalism was led by the United States Army, who felt the loss in Vietnam most keenly, but was also pursued and adopted by the rest of the U.S. military as the most salient identity in a period of confusion and the most useful political construct. An increasing emphasis on joint operations and passage of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act helped codify the universalism of the current form of professionalism across the services but the process had begun years before. This discussion of the evolving understanding of professionalism is relevant for two foundational

\(^{114}\) Huntington, *Soldier and the State*. 

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reasons. First, it explains the U.S military’s near religious devotion to professionalization as the solution to all military dilemmas, both in the United States and other nations. Second, it explicates the uniquely U.S.-centric flavor of professionalism and problematizes its application to other cultures and environments.

The American military that emerged from World War II, fought to a standstill in Korea, and entered Vietnam understood its identity as a primarily conscript force who would fight morally just causes, when threatened, and always with the support of the American public. It required a small number of career cadre, almost exclusively officers, who understood the tactical and operational nuances of conflict and exercised rigid control over less-trained average civilians in uniform.\footnote{Russell F. Weigley, \textit{The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy} (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1973), xxii.} Previous conflicts in which this model proved successful involved methodical campaigns across broad fronts – air, land, and sea – that leveraged the American advantage in material and economic capacity more than tactical brilliance or individual unit leadership.\footnote{Robert M. Citino, \textit{Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm: The Evolution of Operational Warfare} (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 228.} When this model fell apart during the Vietnam War, “it began the slow-motion unraveling of an entire matrix of thought.”\footnote{Dwight E. Phillips (2014). “Reengineering Institutional Culture and the American Way of War in the Post-Vietnam U.S. Army” Doctoral Thesis. University of Chicago, December 2014. p 9.} By the end of the war, the U.S. Army in particular appeared to be in identify freefall, “unable to even regulate itself, much less fight a war, as the My Lai massacre, widespread drug abuse, race riots, disciplinary problems, and publicly maligned careerism and integrity issues were at the forefront of American public perceptions of the Army.”\footnote{Ibid., 10} However, the identity crisis triggered by defeat and the disintegration of the “complex fabric of custom,
law, discipline, esprit, and coercion which had held the Army together” was not limited to the Army. The Air Force also found itself in a power struggle between the “bombers” of Strategic Air Command who had been so ineffective in Vietnam and the “fighters” of Tactical Air Command who ruled the skies with swashbuckling bravado, uncertain where the future of air power would lead. Both the Navy and Marine Corps had similar crises of confidence within their own understanding of American military might.

But while the faith of the whole force was shaken, there were additional complications. The disgust of the American public for the military broadly, and the policy of conscription specifically, meant the model of wartime recruitment/draft of citizen-soldiers led by a small, highly-trained officer corps was no longer feasible. Increasing technology also raised the skillsets required of the average recruit/draftee. Geopolitical concerns in the form of the Cold War necessitated far-flung basing and a standing readiness requirement sufficient to deter or defend from Soviet advances. Ultimately, the U.S. military faced a requirement for a large standing force with no model for how to maintain its discipline, morale, or raison d’etre. The sum of these factors – military loss, internal rot, public opposition, geopolitics, technology, and a kibosh on conscription triggered a reinvention of identity that quickly became the new American military professionalism.

The process for developing this new definition of professionalism – professional practices, membership, and mission – was fraught, encompassing leadership from senior levels, dialogue from innovative subordinates, codification and indoctrination, and a complex interplay

of broader American political, social, and economic developments throughout the 1970s. The new professionalism sought to resurrect the military’s image in the American public and invent an institutional “edge” that would provide the winning advantage in future conflicts that may well look much like Vietnam. Like the Air Force, the Army sought to reclaim autonomy from the perceived civilian micro-management of Vietnam and regain the trust not only of the American people, but of civilian leaders so that it would be free to manage violence on its own terms. To this end, Huntington’s theory of objective control was particularly appealing to military leaders, prescribing an ideal separation of civil-military spheres, an elitist corporate identity, and an admonition that the military be a tool for war alone. It was the Army that began the process of reconstructing U.S. military identity, and by leveraging theorists like those discussed in the preceding chapter, the “vision the Army developed for a ‘professional’ army was based on a particular interpretation of what they imagined Huntington’s functionalist ideal—expertise, societal responsibility, and corporateness—looked like in a post-industrial, post-heroic era.”

This constructed definition had several components. First, membership in the profession was expanded beyond the elite officer corps to include mid-grade non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and incorporated junior officer and enlisted members as pseudo-apprentices in the profession of arms. The core tenets that bound these different strata of military members defined the oft-cited professional ethos: “a common professional corporateness through the articulation

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121 As compared to Janowitz, who considered the application of military force in the gray areas of humanitarian intervention and democratization.
122 Phillips, 25
of a shared institutional philosophy and values system.”

Thus, in establishing an institutional mythology that would cohere across rank and background, the U.S. military reimagined the second component of constructed professionalism: the warrior ethos, possession of which enabled membership in an elite society separate from the hedonistic and decidedly “gray” world of civil society. The subsequent empowerment and recruitment of lower-level career professionals into this military society both demanded and enabled a decentralized organizational model for action, leading to the third component of the new professionalism: a technocratic expertise that enabled decentralized and highly responsive small-unit initiative. The U.S. military had created the new American “way of war,” a concept exceptionally well-suited to force employment in short-duration, high-end conventional conflicts.

The transformation of the Army’s institutional culture succeeded beyond its initial expectations. As the first post-industrial army to transition from conscription to an all-volunteer force, it served as a model for its sister services and foreign nations. As the Air Force, and to a lesser degree, Navy and Marine Corps were undergoing similar reinventions, the Army’s definition quickly spread as an antidote to the humiliation and recriminations of Vietnam. The Army’s habit of operationalizing culture through doctrine assisted in the spread: “the Army pushed other services towards joint concepts of warfare that aligned with the Army’s vision of war.” And importantly for this work, professionalization did not stop at the water’s edge: the Army so heavily exported its ‘way of war’ through FMAT that professionalization became the

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123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Phillips (2014)
dominant focus of U.S. military training and assistance programs overseas. In other words, the U.S. military had found religion and it was committed to proselytizing.

Because one of the institutional goals for reinventing professionalism was to once again wrest control of the tactical and operational battlespace from civilian oversight, it should not be unexpected that U.S. military professionalism maintains a specific and highly structured ideal-type for civil-military relations. The military’s “reworked vision of itself as a thoroughly professional force, as masters of a particular tactical and operational art, and as a self-contained ‘professional’ community with a special, exalted place in American society and national security politics changed the way American political leaders and society thought about when and how war ought to be prosecuted.” Less about civilian oversight than clear spheres of control, the dominant message of civilian control became something akin to property rights: the military would not trespass in political matters and civilians should not trespass into military ones. Army historian LTC Dwight Phillips sums it up well:

“By the end of the Cold War, America’s army was a new type of professional army ….battlefield effectiveness could be best achieved by liberating the individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills of the professional officer, NCO, and soldier within an institutional framework characterized by a shared battle-focused organizational philosophy, free exchange of information up and down the chain (made possible by the technologies of the “Information Age”), and unleashed units in the competition of battle. The role of the state was limited: preserving an Army institutional framework (particularly in resources) appropriate to such practices and identifying the conflicts where it desired military force to be employed to solve the problem. State intervention into military operations must be kept to a bare minimum, because the state could not possibly possess enough information to second-guess battlefield signals (intelligence indicators) and because powerful interest groups would inevitably distort and bias civilian political interventions in a war.”

\(^{126}\) Ibid.
\(^{127}\) Ibid., 34-5 and David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2.
This history above suggests that the U.S. military’s definition of professionalism was a constructed one, and moreover, that the process of professionalization is the mechanism for implementing it. More importantly, this model of American military professionalism, much like democracy and military capability, could be exported in an effort to improve the foreign military institutions of countless nations around the world.

A Parallel Story: The History of Foreign Military Aid and Training

At the same time the U.S. Army in particular, and U.S. military more broadly, was wrestling with success, failure, and the reinvention of professionalism within its institutional culture, a parallel history was occurring in the world of foreign military aid and training. Security cooperation in all its forms has long been a tool of U.S. foreign policy: throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries, the U.S. and other Western militaries maintained a deep history of military-to-military cooperation, to include exchanging observers, selling arms, attending foreign military staff colleges, and cross-pollinating the most current and effective methods of waging warfare. But the evolution military cooperation from simple arms trade or officer exchange into its modern form began with the close of WWII. In March 1947, President Harry Truman requested $400 million in emergency aid be allocated to Greece and Turkey to help them resist Soviet threats to their independence. Justifying this aid, Truman identified an obligation for the U.S. “to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.”

Though Truman specifically called primarily for economic and financial aid, he assigned military personnel “to assist in the tasks of reconstruction” and suggested

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128 A2-4 Greenbook
training Greek and Turkish personnel for “the purpose of supervising the use of such financial and military assistance.”¹²⁹

The aid programs – called Military Assistance Programs (or MAP) until they were integrated under the umbrella of the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP) in 1990 – were entirely gratis to participating nations and focused primarily on the emerging network of U.S. alliances in the wake of WWII. Known ultimately as the Truman Doctrine, the effort placed U.S. military advisors at the helm of these aid efforts, administering the programs both at home and within their respective countries. It also linked training and education with the provision of monetary and arms support, ostensibly to secure some future return on American investment. Perhaps most importantly, Truman’s military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey forever married military aid with broader goals of support for democratization and freedom.

The Cold War only deepened and broadened the network of U.S. military assistance and arms sales. NATO, hamstrung by a lack of standardization amongst equipment, tactics and procedures and limited by competition and incompatibility, was the first and largest target of U.S. military aid. In fact, NATO nations account for roughly 56% of all U.S. arms transfers until 1965. It was through the NATO sales programs that the U.S. crafted a philosophical framework for what would one day be called the “Total Package Approach.” To promote both capability and interoperability, the U.S. focused not just on providing weaponry and funding, but also on training, education, manufacturing, maintenance, tactical manuals, organizational structures, personnel assessment protocols, and even exercises to work out bugs and test cooperative mechanisms.

¹²⁹ Ibid.
In the context of the Cold War, military assistance was perceived as a building block of the decidedly political U.S. containment policy. In the 1950s, the original foreign aid bill was expanded from “arms to allies” to “arms to friends” to encompass a growing number of friendly, but non-allied nations. “To concepts of containment and forward defense were added new precepts of internal security, counterinsurgency, civic action, and nation building.”\textsuperscript{130} The Eisenhower Doctrine acted as a corollary to this general expansion, specifically acknowledging friendly nations in the Middle East as core partners in need of American support. With the promise of defense from external attack came concurrent commitments of military assistance under the same procedural umbrella proffered to other allied nations. Enormous initial MAP grants were soon overtaken by foreign military sales; according to the Defense Institute for Security Assistance Management Greenbook, the “bible” of foreign military aid and training, “the gradual reduction of grant aid accompanied by an increase in military sales radically altered the face of military assistance” as the U.S. worked to secure stability at almost any cost to preserve the flow of oil.\textsuperscript{131} The same process of expansion was repeated by President Kennedy in Latin America in the 1960s: the Alliance for Progress increased economic assistance with the goal of stabilizing Latin American economies to fend of revolutionary influences, but after 1961, military assistance programs joined economic aid efforts and ultimately subsumed most economic aid by the end of the 1960s.

Another marked change in U.S. military assistance occurred under the Nixon administration. U.S. entanglement in Southeast Asia led to policy adjustments that transferred immediate self-defense responsibilities to indigenous forces and shifted U.S. inputs towards

\textsuperscript{130} A2-7 Greenbook
\textsuperscript{131} A2-8 Greenbook
material and financial assistance. A greater focus on military sales over grants stemmed from a new emphasis on self-sufficiency, and linkages between security-related economic programs and military assistance led to a new term of art: security assistance. Importantly, and per the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the State Department was in charge of arms transfers, military training, and security assistance programs. The rationale was simple: diplomats, not soldiers, were charged with overseeing U.S. national interests, to include those in the military realm. This is in part why human rights and democratization were included as fundamental interests worthy of advancement, though military officials rapidly adopted those causes as mechanisms for achieving peace, security, and stability. And while the State Department retained titular authority for approving arms transfers and sales, the vast workforce of the Department of Defense did all the work of brokering, managing, evaluating, crafting, packaging, and executing military assistance programs. Over the course of the coming decades, the U.S. military gradually assumed control over all but the binary approval process for some foreign military assistance programs and was granted numerous sub-programs over which it has sole authority and purview. This “Pentagonization” of military assistance that was somewhat antithetical to the origins of U.S. foreign military aid began in the post-Vietnam era, has accelerated since, and as we will see, has reverberations in the character and nature of military aid.

**Professionalism: A Model for Export?**

It is here that the parallel history of the U.S. military’s evolution of professionalism intersects the story of military aid. After the post-Vietnam renaissance of professionalism had occurred internally, the U.S. military began to “proselytize their new religion of professional
military autonomy.”"\textsuperscript{132} Beginning with partnerships in NATO and leveraging the total package approach to military cooperation, “[military] leadership became increasingly confident, seeking to export American practices to other countries” in what were “often one-way conversations.”\textsuperscript{133} Both the practices, such as a newly empowered NCO corps and decentralized plan for tactical execution, and the philosophy of an offensively-minded and autonomous military institutional interest were appealing to foreign militaries seeking both the efficacy and political strength they perceived the U.S. military to wield. And the cycle of export was self-reinforcing: as Phillips notes about the U.S. Army, “the growing interest and adulation of foreign armies reinforces the belief of Army leadership that they had mastered the holistic body of expertise for land warfare.”\textsuperscript{134}

As the U.S. military shifted its own culture toward a view of professional military autonomy and, consequently, began to push the same normative cultural approach on allies, it did not do so in a vacuum. Andrew Bacevich argues that a new “American militarism” developed after Vietnam within American political culture, leading American military officers, defense analysts, politicians, policy-makers, intellectuals and even religious leaders to view military power as the solution to a wide variety of problems, to include its use as a tool of diplomacy and foreign policy.\textsuperscript{135} In parallel to (or perhaps because of) this view, a general sense of a “race to arm the world” pervaded the public consciousness. Arms sales and assistance to Latin America, aimed primarily at preserving U.S. access and promoting goodwill, were

\textsuperscript{132} Interview with LTC Dwight Phillips, Washington DC, 3 Nov 2016
\textsuperscript{133} Phillips, p. 346
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
highlighted as contributory to human rights violations or identified as lacking effective controls. In legislation that would eventually be incorporated into the Arms Export Control Act of 1976 (AECA), the second overarching legal control to govern U.S. FMAT\textsuperscript{136}, Congress mandated more efficient security assistance management procedures and greater control over arms transfers. Congress also retained the right to block or cease certain transfers to certain nations, and the U.S. Department of State was formally placed in a supervisory role over the military executors of security assistance.\textsuperscript{137}

Because of high profile violations and greater ease in measurement, human rights, vice democratic civilian control, would become the cornerstone of this revision. Human rights provisions from the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 were strengthened in the AECA, but it was President Carter that explicitly emphasized the importance of human rights and democratic norms in security assistance programs. A critic of arms sales in general, Carter demanded an assessment of existing arms transfer control policies and the associated military, political, and economic repercussions. Determined to reverse the trend of increasing arms sales – then $20 billion annually with the U.S. accounting for slightly more than half – he announced that arms transfers would “henceforth be viewed as an exceptional foreign policy implement” and that all security assistance efforts would be “governed by the promotion and advancement of internationally recognized democratic rights in recipient countries.”\textsuperscript{138} By this point, the newly constructed professionalism of the United States military was codified and its technocratic and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{136} Along with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. \\
\textsuperscript{137} It is worth noting that both Ford and Carter objected strenuously to the AECA and Congressional controls, claiming they hampered the Presidential ability to implement foreign policy. \\
\textsuperscript{138} A2-10, 19 May 1977
\end{flushleft}
self-referential nature was well-suited to both the significant expansion of FMAT programs and their associated normative goals.

The end of the Cold War changed the features of security assistance and arms sales. Materially, downsizing and cutbacks with the Department of Defense meant that large amounts of Excess Defense Articles (EDA) became available for transfer or sale. The same drawdowns resulted in cutbacks and cancellations of DoD weapons acquisitions, leaving the defense industry with surplus products and economic crises. Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) were authorized and expanded for the U.S. defense industry, allowing them to seek overseas markets with the approval and support of U.S. government officials.

But a more significant normative reification was also occurring within the U.S. military institution. Within fifteen months of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States achieved clear military victories against regimes in Panama and Iraq. Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama was executed nearly flawlessly, though the post-conflict reconstruction plan (ironically named BLIND LOGIC) never got off the ground, meaning efforts to rebuild were plagued by poor coordination, unplanned for requirements, and a general sense that reconstruction was not the military’s job. But the feeling of vindication of the new American professionalism was high: according to the general who commanded JUST CAUSE, “there were no lessons learned in this operation… But we did validate a lot of things.”\textsuperscript{139}

The U.S. victory over Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War was heralded as an even more unqualified success in the value of security assistance by members of the military assistance community and unequivocal proof in the efficacy of the U.S. military’s theory of professional

\textsuperscript{139} Linn, \textit{The Echo of Battle}, 220.
autonomy. On its heels, U.S. FMS agreements spiked from $14.2 billion in FY1990 to a record $23.5 billion in FY1991. All vehicles to convey military assistance were employed, from third-party transfers to EDA drawdown materials, education and training programs to over 350 new FMS cases valued at over $12 billion. Within the military community, the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine – a strict set of rules offered by the military to civilian leadership for how and when to engage military forces – was reified as the definitive rulebook for engaging in war; the speed and cleanliness of victory validated the new order of military effectiveness founded on the new construction of professional culture.

If the Gulf War saw the American arms apparatus in all its manifestations working overtime, it was the Clinton Administration that deepened the philosophical underpinnings of security assistance, incorporating building democracy, promoting and maintaining peace, promoting economic growth and development, and meeting humanitarian needs. A long overdue post-Cold War arms transfer policy was released in 1995, emphasizing restraint and awareness of regional power balances but reaffirming weapons transfers as a legitimate tool of foreign policy.\(^{140}\) It also included measures to increase control and transparency in arms transfers worldwide, specifically “to promote peaceful conflict resolution and arms control, human rights, democratization, and other U.S. foreign policy objectives.”\(^{141}\)

Instead of fighting the additional layers of oversight and “soft” focus, the U.S. military embraced them as tools to develop a professional expertise in foreign militaries modeled on their own. The American soldier’s military effectiveness, they were sure, went beyond technology and training; it was due, in part, to a web of norms, ethics, and values associated with being a

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\(^{141}\) A2-16
professional military force within the American democratic system. Thus, in addition to being a tool for hard national interests, FMAT doctrine expanded to incorporate these normative ideals. The official Greenbook Guide for the military members who manage and execute FMAT programs identifies several desirable impacts of such cooperation: “it has helped countries in peril to actively defend them, reconstruct or strengthen their militaries against a variety of threats, promote the establishment of democracies with a strong emphasis on internationally acceptable human rights, promote interoperability within strategic alliances, and strengthen coalition efforts against unacceptable use of force.”

The permeation of the U.S. model of professionalism into the programmatic construct for foreign military cooperation, sales, financing, education, and training was complete.

**American Professionalism: Why It Works (Or At Least, Has Worked So Far)**

The conceptualization of the links between professionalism, objective control, and civilian supremacy has been fully embraced by the American military establishment and permeates the armed forces conception of appropriate civil-military relations in a democracy.

But how well does this model travel to other nations? First, we should understand why it appears, so far, to have been a successful model within the U.S. democracy.

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142 Greenbook, A2-1
143 Many scholars (see, for example, H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997) and Andrew J. Bacevich, “Generals versus the President: Eisenhower and the Army, 1953-1955,” in *Security in a Changing World*, ed. Volcker C. Franke (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002)) argue that the reality of American civil military relations is a far cry from this theoretical foundation and that U.S. armed forces only grasp the parts of Huntington’s theory that benefit them. While this may be true, it is clear that the principles of professionalization of a democratic military are foundational in the US military’s belief in the depth of its own democratic subordination and military effectiveness.
One theory holds that the U.S. system of autonomy and subordination have never truly been tested. As Judith Hicks Stiehm writes,

“When civilian and military values and beliefs are congruent, the issue rarely arises. When they are not, the usual argument is that it is officer training and education, self-discipline, professionalism, and their respect for the law, their values, and tradition that account for the military’s acceptance of civilian control and of an elected politician, the president, as commander-in-chief.”

In truth, despite the occasional scandal or modicum of disrespect (Marines on Marine One failing to salute president Clinton comes to mind), there is relatively little daylight between the elements of civilian control and U.S. military leaders. Chafing under perceived micromanagement or disliking procurement decisions are not conflicts of values. In fact, the U.S. military’s frustration with progressive personnel policies – the inclusion of homosexual servicemembers, women in combat branches, and transgender personnel – are the closest the U.S. military and civilian masters have come to a true conflict in values and beliefs, which is perhaps why they have been the most angst-producing episodes in recent military memory.

Another alternative speaks to the thesis of this paper: that the unique history of the United States and its reliance on values as part of a national identity reinforce the U.S. version of professionalism. Like most citizens, American military members are inundated as school children with a national identity which is founded on checks and balances, rule of law, and separation of powers, and which acts as a force for good in a global environment with emphasis on protecting and exporting individual liberties as cherished values. These twin ideals are

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144 Stiehm, Armed Forces and Society, p. 273
145 A fact that nearly every foreign officer I interviewed pointed out almost immediately: that what we consider civ-mil “scandals” wouldn’t even raise eyebrows around most of the world.
interwoven. On the one side, rule of law ideal-types enhance respect for formal processes and structures, spheres of influence, and rules. On the other, liberal normative ideal-types imbue U.S. action with a ‘white knight’ image: acting for good, respecting and protecting personal liberties. These ideal-types are so well-rooted in the American mythos that they are instinctive, and thus rarely present as discordant.

As perhaps a better way to encapsulate the interaction of professional military functionalism with societal values, I’d offer an insider perspective. I’ve coined the term “embedded democracy”: the idea that the values of society—just war theory, freedom, honor, fairness, courage, fraternity, and civilian control to name a few—are so embedded in the individual and collective identity of service members and the broader American psyche as to be unquestioned. Instead of foregrounding debates over appropriateness of control, this terminology draws on the Weberian logic of practice which makes concepts like subordination to civilian control both intuitive and automatic, part of the background understanding in the U.S. military which informs decision-making throughout the muddy domain of war and politics. More simply, American soldiers generally respect human rights and civilian control because they believe it is un-American not to — and that notion is reinforced with the moral outrage of the public and the military institution when violations occur. In this sense, embedded democracy enables the objective autonomy Huntington desires, because functional autonomy can be built upon a bedrock of instinctive principle. In many ways this already forms the core of the American military force and is perhaps the reason that the danger of a military coup seems low and the debate over civil-military relations seems at times trivial.
Regardless of the source of congruence, this collective subconscious understanding creates three assumptions in the realm of foreign military assistance. First, there exists a strong belief in the U.S. military that appropriate civil-military relations and associated subordination to civilian control can be achieved through packaging military assistance with structural changes, doctrine adjustments, and professional education that will convert praetorian militaries into professional forces from the ground up. More simply, professionalization will lead to civilian control – by professionalizing a force tactically and operationally, it is believed that U.S. military assistance can alter its civil-military construct to preference subordination to civilian masters. Doing so is an explicit goal of most FMAT programs.

Secondly, the U.S. armed forces believe de facto civilian control can be achieved through de jure constructs of objective control. Essentially, deep-seated socio-cultural leanings may be overcome by crafting institutions and doctrine that delineate a separation of political and military spheres. This argument is usually advanced by advocates of greater and more comprehensive U.S. military involvement in foreign nations, who believe by instituting a wide swath of rules and processes – meritocratic promotion, hierarchical classification systems, formal education and training programs, even top-down organizational models – the differing cultural backgrounds of foreign militaries can be overcome.\(^{146}\) This assumption is due as much to the “rule of law” culture that permeates American society as the military’s absorption of Huntington’s thesis.\(^{147}\)

\(^{146}\) One example of this viewpoint comes from former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy & Force Development Mara Karlin (Building Militaries in Fragile States: Challenges for the United States, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2017).

Finally, the U.S. armed forces believe in the isomorphic transference of civil-military ideals through exposure to a professional force.¹⁴⁸ Through military exercises, schools and training programs the U.S. armed forces believe they teach by example, demonstrating that highly effective, highly professional militaries naturally serve civilian masters. Interestingly, the expected effect of such exposure is not merely limited to human interaction. Rather, the U.S. military believes that modernization – replete with Western tactics and doctrine adjustments – is a causal precursor of democratic professionalization. Thus, measures of modernization and interoperability all speak (in the U.S. military mind) to the level of professionalization in the force. They believe this exposure to men and machines will further calcify appropriate civil-military balance of power in foreign militaries, as foreign servicemembers subconsciously imitate American military subordination in pursuit of an American level of military effectiveness.¹⁴⁹

The proof of these assumptions lies in the programmatic details and philosophical underpinnings of U.S. foreign military aid: more specifically, the “total package approach.” Foreign military financing of weapons and equipment comprise a package of American maintenance, training, replacement parts, and upgrades that signify a broad relationship between the U.S. and its customer.¹⁵⁰ This U.S. approach contrasts with that of other nations that simply

¹⁴⁹ Of course, the normative value of these assumptions is paralleled by basic self-interest: equipping foreign militaries with US-manufactured arms bolsters the American defense industry, preserving job expertise and assembly lines and defraying per-unit costs through larger buys. These constitute additional political reasons for FMF and FMS that may undermine claims about interoperability or leverage, but largely run parallel to the isomorphic instinct of US military aid.
¹⁵⁰ Indeed, Kinsella argues that arms transfers are a powerful predictor of compliance with US foreign-policy priorities. See David Kinsella, 1989, “Arms Transfer Dependence and Foreign Policy Conflict,” Journal of Peace Research 35,1
deliver the promised goods. Moreover, the U.S. takes a holistic approach to the design of arms deals themselves. In addition to the nuts and bolts of weapons sales, the U.S. often mandates organizational changes to foreign militaries, altering the structures of control as a precondition for weapons sale. Colonel Michael Fleck, the Chief of Strategy Division in the International Affairs office of the Secretary of the Air Force concludes, “we do the ‘total package approach’ and include other forums for connection such as [military education], pilot training, doctrinal development, maintenance schools, exercises, and exchange officers that accompany the proverbial shiny object.”¹⁵¹ Specifically looking at the Middle East, Dr. Dafna Rand observes that FMAT “activities involve U.S. military officials and civilians working daily with their MENA counterparts – on the military sales, for instance, or through trainings and exercises. The actual work done together to identify items for purchase or loan and to help train and exercise together is meaningful relationship-building in its own right.” Overall, she concludes, the U.S. hopes these efforts will “professionalize MENA [Middle East – North Africa] militaries to respect civil-military boundaries and human rights norms.”¹⁵²

A major component of U.S. foreign military aid within the total package approach, and one of the focus points for this research, is funding for International Military Education and Training (IMET). This program provides grants for training and educating foreign military personnel at U.S. military schools in order to “expose foreign military and civilian personnel to

¹⁵¹ Interview with Colonel Michael Fleck, Chief, Strategy and Plans Division, Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs. Washington, DC, May 19th 2013.
¹⁵² Dafna Rand article; Dafna Rand @ CNAS, policy brief, Opportunities for American Influence in a Changing Middle East. P. 12; 1 Apr 2014 https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/179817/CNAS_MENAleverage_policybrief_final.pdf
the important roles democratic values and internationally recognized human rights can play in governance and military operations.”

The program considers itself successful:

Training and education provided under the IMET program is professional and non-political, exposing foreign students to U.S. professional military organizations and procedures and the manner in which military organizations function under civilian control…The IMET program exposes students to military justice systems and procedures and promotes the development of strong civil-military relations by showing key military and civilian leaders how to overcome barriers that can exist between armed forces, civilian officials and legislators…. Exposure to American values, quality instruction and the professionalism of the U.S. military play an important role in the IMET program.

The totality of the foundational assumptions of the American military enterprise in reforming foreign militaries for democratic governance forms the basis of the prime testable question in this project. And there are numerous examples and reasons to question the ability of the United States to professionalize in its own image.

First, the U.S. military professionalizes from a uniquely self-referential perspective, one that traces back to earlier discussion of America as a city on a hill. However, this is at the aggregate level; at the individual level, two additional logics are at play. The first is projection bias, a type of cognitive bias that involves overestimating the degree to which other people agree with you. In general, humans tend to assume that others think, feel, believe, and behave in ways very similar to their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. We assume that our way of thinking or doing is typical, and therefore other normal people will respond in a very similar manner. A subset of this mental bias is complementary projection, in which people believe that more people share their beliefs and values than actually do. We ‘project’ our beliefs and values onto other...


154 Ibid.
people and overestimate the extent to which other people also have them. This logic underlies the “inside every foreigner is an America” quotations at the beginning of the chapter. It is also echoed in the sentiment offered by then Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Mark Welsh, when he described foreign military interactions with the core belief that “airmen understand airmen, and that’s where the partnership begins.”

I’ve seen examples of these biases at work in dealings with foreign militaries in my own experience in the Pentagon. Over the course of two years working with a variety of senior level officers manning the “country desks” for the Joint Staff Policy and Strategy division, I saw varying levels of awareness of both the reality of the skills, attributes, and organizations of the national militaries for which they were responsible, and the officer’s own bias. One incident stands out as a concrete exemplar: while discussing the Leahy law’s application to a particular Central African nation, the officer tasked to vet and approve both FMS cases and the assessment of the Combatant Command on human rights abuses told me how “stupid” it was to do unit-level vetting. When I asked why, he said “because obviously people move around every few years, so it’s not like it’s the same people in the unit.” I was floored, knowing that many small nations with dubious levels of nationalism – including the one in question – generate military units geographically to increase unit cohesion and propensity to fight. In such cases, members may spend their whole career in the same unit. When asked if he was aware of the transfer rate (or

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156 The Leahy Law prohibits the State Department or Department of Defense from providing U.S. FAMT to foreign military units that violate human rights. The prohibition on units was extended to individuals in the provision of IMET education and training slots. Units and individuals must be vetted for credible evidence of human rights abuses; if evidence is found, assistance is denied until the host nation government takes effective measures to bring violators to justice.
lack thereof) in his nation of responsibility, he was confused: it had never occurred to him that there was any other option than the constant cycling inherent in the U.S. military, where individuals rotate units every two to three years.

Of course, projection bias is augmented by another characteristic of human interaction: mirroring, the process by which both linguistic choices and behaviors are adopted that mimic or mirror an interaction partner. At the individual level, this is common to business, psychology, and sociology literature, as mirroring is an organic tool that acts as a “social glue” that fosters trust and rapport, and signals cohesion and affinity. Though it often occurs at the subconscious level – for example, two people flirting naturally lean toward each other, or a student may instinctively adopt the verbal inflection or crossed arms of an instructor – it is also taught as a skill in many business courses, since the conscious application of mirroring can generate artificial affinity in situations of unequal power, such as job interviews or performance evaluations. Mirroring can scale up to the unit or group level as well, though it tends to be most evident with relatively homogenous groups, such as military units. Again, this mirroring can be organic and positive – as when a foreign group or unit begins to adopt the posture or behaviors of their instructing unit or when uniformed personnel gravitate toward each other in a sea of civilians because of an assumed affinity. But mirroring can also be manufactured and manipulated by target nations to ensure they are reflecting (and reaffirming) pre-existing projection biases.

Numerous U.S. officers have recounted observations that Iraqi units would dutifully adopt the language of democracy and human rights in a sort of “buzzword bingo” to ensure continued support. More notably, a recent example of Kurdish fighters in Syria highlights
partners’ ability to mimic the U.S. language of equality and freedom. In this case, it reflects a combination of genuine belief, affected belief, and unfortunately, coaching by U.S. senior officers, as the following incident demonstrates:

Speaking on a panel at the Aspen Security Forum, Gen. Raymond Thomas, the commander of US Special Operations Command (SOCOM), said the U.S. asked the People’s Protection Unit, or YPG, to re-brand because of its alleged linkages to the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK), an internationally designated terrorist group. “We literally replied back to them and said you got to change your brand,” Thomas said. The U.S. Kurdish allies in the fight against ISIS are currently called the Syrian Democratic Forces, but they were formerly called the YPG. The YPG changed their name to the SDF in about a day, Thomas explained, saying that it was “a stroke of brilliance” to include “democracy” in their title.157

In this sense, mirroring – whether organic or strategic – bolsters the innate projection bias held by U.S. military members that interact with foreign militaries. That makes accurate measurements of actual adoption of democratic value sets incredibly difficult: they are predisposed (and incentivized) to mirror us, and we are predisposed to believe them.

Secondly, the export of professionalization on the U.S. model runs aground on the U.S. military’s reliance on quantitative metrics of analysis. Foreign aid is generally measured in terms of inputs (money and equipment), but the real and long-term impact is in the subsequent character and capability of the recipient and the evolving relationship between nations. In the case of FMAT, the measurement is in the capability, character, and relationship of the recipient’s military forces, in particular the leadership of the officer corps. The quantification focus of the U.S. military bureaucracy does not lend itself to effective measurements of either probability for successful output or the output itself.

For example, one defense official argued that the U.S. does take into account the initial conditions into which military assistance flows in the form of “absorption capacity.” Based on measurable characteristics such as education rates, time in service, literacy, and resources, the absorption capacity is a figure that indicates how much of what the U.S. is teaching can be absorbed. It is offered in a percentage format, such as: the Malian Non-Commissioned Officer Corps has a 75% absorption ratio. The official indicated that this quantitative assessment was sufficient to understand the impact of U.S. military assistance. Beyond concerns about how this number is calculated, the problem with such an approach is immediately evident: which 25% are the Malian NCOs not going to absorb? Do they grasp how to clean, assemble, load, and fire the weapon, but miss who it should and should not be aimed at? Other assessments conducted by the DoD’s Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the agency that manages U.S. efforts to train, educate, advise, and equip foreign partners, focus on tactical productivity of FMAT programs rather than broader impacts, such as institutional reform and strategic cooperation. In another example, the professionalism of the Egyptian Army forces was measured by comparing the number of U.S. tanks to Soviet tanks in their inventory. Summing this up, the former Director of the National Security Council office for Democracy and Governance offers “there is no comprehensive, universally-applicable metric that allows U.S. foreign policymakers to assess objectively the changing quality of military to military (or civilian) relations.”

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158 Interview with senior defense leader, Defense Security Cooperation Agency. April 8, 2013. Malian NCO corps example was his own.
159 Author interview with DoD officials, Washington DC, 24 July 2017
161 Rand, p. 12
Finally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the U.S. military has a tendency to consider its unique formula to be the best solution, regardless of the nature of the problem. One of the first cases occurred in the mid-1980s, when senior Army leadership in South Korea began to push the American cultural approach to military professionalization on the Korean Army. Gen Wickham, who previously served as U.S. commander in Korea,

“urged the South Korean army to adopt American practices for NCO professional development... American generals failed to recognize how the American model of an empowered NCO corps was built upon a whole set of unit practices (leadership doctrine, counseling, collaborative training regimes) and a particular social-economic-political context (American capitalism’s late 20th century expectation of initiative from below, democratic politics, an increasingly educated working class, and an all-volunteer system).”\(^{162}\)

In this case, the U.S. Army’s NCO professional development system was not easily exportable, but “that did not keep Army leaders from seeing their model as a universal template.”\(^{163}\) This example has been replicated again and again, in nearly every country in which the United States conducts FMAT programs. It is so common that one scholar described it as “parachuting in and trying to create a mini American military in a sovereign state.”\(^{164}\) In some cases, usually where there is already significant congruence in historical experience, value sets, and technological capacity, this template is successful. In others where there is significant mismatch, the approach founders. Mara Karlin, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development, describes many such failures, including U.S. efforts to build Mali’s military. The


\(^{163}\) Philips, p. 311

\(^{164}\) Round table discussion, Brookings Institution, Washington DC., February 2015
U.S. approach focused at the tactical level, and “consisted of ad hoc assistance programs, which failed to comprehensively strengthen Mali’s military or address issues such as organization, discipline, and mission.”\textsuperscript{165} In 2012, a U.S.-trained officer staged a military coup, causing the military to fracture and leaders of elite units to defect with U.S. arms and equipment.

A more recent example can be found in Afghanistan, where the United States has spent 17 years and over $750 billion ($60 billion in U.S. security assistance alone). Certainly, the roughly 350,000 strong Afghan Army and its cadre of highly trained special forces units are a stronger military force than where they started under Taliban control. In fact, the Afghan military is competent enough to cause Paul Miller to express concerns in 2014 about Afghanistan’s coming coup.\textsuperscript{166} But even a cursory analysis indicates the degree to which the U.S. military built the Afghan Army in its own image: U.S. forces trained Afghans on remote sensing platforms and drones for intelligence collection, systems the Afghans do not understand, cannot maintain, and do not need since they speak the language and can blend in with the population; it took months for U.S. generals to understand the propensity of Afghan ground units to flee in the face of fire—because they assumed the same “golden hour” evacuation was available to remote Afghan outposts, when in fact, a wounded soldier might wait an average of four days to be evacuated; and a major effort to make military payrolls electronic was just completed, despite the fact that there is no reliable electricity, much less internet, in many remote outposts.\textsuperscript{167} As Lt Col Veneri suggested in 2011 regarding something as simple as inflating a

\textsuperscript{165} Karlin Foreign Affairs
\textsuperscript{166} Paul D, Miller, Foreign Affairs, Afghanistan’s Coming Coup; 2 April 2014; https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2014-04-02/afghanistans-coming-coup
\textsuperscript{167} Author’s personal experience and research identifying failure mechanisms of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and Secretary of Defense.
basketball, “I did not get the sense we were adapting out methods to fit the Afghan way, or even that we could.”

These are just a very few of the errors the United States military has executed in its most recent FMAT efforts, despite intensive investment in both time and resources. I offer them only to demonstrate the degree to which American military personnel wear blinders as to differences between foreign forces they train and their own cultural background and institutional construct. This U.S.-centric outlook has severe consequences at all levels, but as we will see, perhaps none more so than in the realm of civil-military relations.

Conclusion

In summary, the United States did not always exhibit or prize the particular flavor of professionalism it now possesses – and exports. To the contrary, this professionalism was constructed in the wake of an institutional crisis and has become the foundational mythology of a force that believes, at its core, to be the optimal solution to form the best military in the world. In concert with the evolution of FMAT, this belief has underpinned military cooperation efforts since as early as the 1980s and resulted in a total package approach to military aid that is lauded as both technically superior and capable of norms transference. The U.S. military’s self-referential belief in FMAT as a tool of democratization is reinforced not only by American social values and exceptionalism, but by deep cognitive biases and doctrinal constructs that evangelize professionalism as a one-size-fits-all approach to military improvement. And while professionalism may do no harm (or perhaps even reinforce the Huntingtonian prescription for

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168 Michael C. Veneri, Lt Col (USAF) “Multiplying by Zero,” Military Review Jan-Feb 2011, p. 88
civilian control) in the United States context, just like the technical and doctrinal components of the American way of war, its exportability is questionable.
Chapter 4: What We Teach: Value Transmission and Professional Military Education

“Look at what we teach. This isn’t a War College – it’s a Policy and Statecraft College.”

Former Assistant Dean for the National War College
Washington, D.C.  

Thus far I have explored the philosophical underpinnings of the U.S. military’s understanding of professionalism and its assumptions and goals in providing military aid. Because U.S. FMAT, predicated on the total package approach, seeks to professionalize foreign militaries, it’s useful to look at the content and impact of programs specifically designed to instill the principles of civilian control into foreign officers. Doing so answers the third hypothesis in this project:

**H3. U.S. professional military education does not adequately teach (or consciously foreground) civil-military relations or principles of civilian control in concert with**

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169 Interview with former Assistant Dean for the National War College, Washington D.C., Aug 8 2014
other professionalization efforts, meaning military empowerment is unchecked by democratic norms.

In this section, I take a close look at norms and values transmission of civilian control via professional military education (PME). Unlike the previous chapter, where I described the potential naïveté of the American military mindset, here I perform a face-value assessment of the specific educational programs designed to educate U.S. and foreign officers and enhance democratic civil-military relations. I hypothesize that U.S. PME programs do not effectively teach civilian control to foreign officers and indeed may confuse the concepts of appropriate subordination by focusing on incidents of disobedience in uniquely American cases. Further, I seek evidence that the U.S. PME curriculum enhances officers’ sense of corporateness, empowers them in spheres outside the normal military purview, and may, in some cases, encourage foreign officer “believers” to ignite change in their own country. In sum, PME may contribute to both the kindling and the spark of potential military coups d’état.

It’s important to reiterate that while this research focuses on the understanding and interpretations of foreign officers attending U.S. PME courses, obviously the majority of students are U.S. military officers. The dearth of civil-military education for even U.S. military members across their career is stark. At the U.S. Air Force Academy, for example, all cadets take a single one-semester core course on American Politics. This course analyzes the Constitutional foundation of the country, expands on the three branches and myriad participants in government, and asks for synthesis of current issues against core concepts of federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances. Inside it, roughly ten lessons focus on issues of national security; inside these ten hours of instruction, only two are available to encompass the
issue of civil-military relations, and those focus almost exclusively on the normal theory and McChrystal affair.\textsuperscript{171} From personal experience, the task to even cover, much less dissect and problematize, Huntington’s theory in these lessons is herculean, and course objectives simply require these future officers to be able to describe the theory itself. And tone of conversation ranges from instructor to instructor: one uniformed instructor said he begins this discussion with images of Congressmen “ripping into” four-star generals “to get [the cadets] all fired up” against Congressional oversight as a form of civilian control.\textsuperscript{172} Indeed, the overall impression of civil-military relations of many Academy graduates can be summed up in the comments of one Military History major: “leaving the Academy, my total understanding was that civilians told us when to go to war and what the goals were, then they shut up and got out of the way.”\textsuperscript{173}

Formal educational opportunities later in U.S. officers’ careers mirror this level of depth in pre-commissioning training. In fact, instructors in the mid-career course offered by the Air Force specifically indicate that civil-military relations curriculum is, and rightfully should be, taught at the senior PME levels (those analyzed in this chapter). Their reasoning is that these issues of politics and subordination are only applicable when officers achieve high ranks and deal directly with civilian leaders and overseers. There may be some validity to this idea, but then we should expect a heavy-hitting emphasis for all officers in the war college curriculum.\textsuperscript{174}

\textsuperscript{171} Once per year, USAFA also offers an elective for Political Science majors only in Comparative Civil Military Relations which dives more deeply into this concept. Course enrollment is roughly 20 in a class of 1,000. For more detail on this curriculum, see Don Snider, Robert F. Priest, and Felisa Lewis (2001) “The Civilian-Military Gap and professional Military Education at the Pre-Commissioning Level,” 27 Armed Forces and Society (2001) and Damon Coletta, “Teaching Civil-Military Relations to Military Undergraduates: The Case of the United States Air Force Academy (2007).

\textsuperscript{172} Maj Jason Castleberry. Personal interview. April 26, 2018, Colorado Springs, CO.

\textsuperscript{173} Maj Kevin Kenney. Personal interview. May 12, 2018, Colorado Springs, CO.

\textsuperscript{174} It’s also worth noting that the United States military, perhaps rightly, only intends to teach militaries to be subordinate to civilian control, not civilians to exercise it. Civilians in U.S. PME programs are getting the same educational curriculum as officers – their understandings and takeaways would be another interesting study.
Since it is not formally educated early or often in a U.S. officer’s career, and there is certainly no expectation that other sources of formal education – civilian graduate degrees or high school classrooms – are covering this material, how does the U.S. military expect to model or teach others democratic control? There are two possible explanations: either there are other modes of informal transmission of these norms (professional mentoring, implicit expectations of officerhood, character and leadership education, doctrine) or the system is reliant on the “embedded citizenship” value sets already present in the population. Most likely, the answer is both: informal learning about “officerhood” or “conduct in war” strengthen the already present strands of democratic value sets discussed in the previous chapter. “Professional” behavior is tacitly reinforced with rules and doctrine, without ever consciously fore-fronting the assumptions, theories, and ramifications of the U.S. military’s version of Huntington’s theory. The potential impact of this dearth of explicit education is significant. Internally, without unpacking and consciously analyzing the threads of civilian control, neither the institution nor the public will know when the informal reinforcement or pre-existing strands on which subordination relies are fraying. Individual officers, moreover, will have only an instinctive rather and informed ability to navigate the gray areas of military-political action. And externally, it seems ambitious to expect U.S. officers to model, train, teach, or otherwise isomorphically transfer democratic civilian control to officers with dissimilar cultural backgrounds and assumptions if they do not understand it themselves.

That said, it is possible that the senior-level PME programs do, as mid-career instructors indicate, formally delve into civil-military relations and the principles of civilian control. In order to have effective education that supports democratic civil-military relations and civilian
control of the military, there are several prerequisites. First, and perhaps most obviously, civil-
military relations theory and practice must be taught; as a clear corollary, civilian control of the
military must also be taught. In the absence of these two fundamental factors, it is difficult to
conclude that any curriculum supports education in civilian control.

Second, civilian control discussions must handle the discrepancy between perspectives
when participants possess different starting points. A simplistic depiction of the civilian control
spectrum varies from praetorian on one end to democratic (or at least subservient) on the other.
U.S. civilian control dynamics tend to fluctuate on the far democratic end of that total spectrum:
the insubordination of General Stanley McChrystal in allowing his staff to call senior civilian
leaders names pales in comparison to, for example, coup d’etat and military rule. A dilemma
occurs when discussions of civil-military relations focus on a narrow subset of the entire
spectrum: when U.S. officers express ambivalence about the behavior or punishments of minor
infractions in light of the whole spectrum, it can be misconstrued as an acceptance of
disobedience more broadly. More simply, without explicit differentiation between the arcs of
allowable behavior depicted in Figure 5 below, failure to be subordinate in one situation may
translate to failures in another situation where actions and consequences carry far more danger.
To ensure that U.S. officers grumbling about the Commander-in-Chief are not misunderstood by
observers unfamiliar with the civilian control embedded in U.S. military professionalism, any
study of civilian control should situate the conversation with respect to the total spectrum.\textsuperscript{175}

\textsuperscript{175} American military members are remarkably unaware of the relationship of incidents of U.S. insubordination to
the totality of the civilian control spectrum. In interviews, only two U.S. officers intellectually connected the
discussion of military rule to minor incidents of insubordination in the United States. Even more extreme, albeit
anecdotally, an Air Force Academy cadet in a course on democratization did not even know what a “military coup”
was.
Third, the totality of the curriculum contributes to the development of the officer. At face value, courses focusing on strategy should create better strategists; those that engage with leadership traits and models should inform better leaders. As the opening quote indicates, the curriculum at U.S. PME programs traverses well beyond the traditional spheres associated with military officers into the realms of policy, politics, economics, and statecraft. That broadening may be beneficial (or at least, potentially not detrimental) to officers steeped in a culture of democratic values and subordination to civilian control, improving their ability to work with the interagency and navigate the political and international policy processes without unduly empowering them to reach outside their profession. But the impact on participants less grounded in subordination or operating within a less democratic culture may be mixed: it might empower them to believe they have a better understanding of statecraft than existing leaders, may increase their sense of corporateness through education that reaches beyond technical attributes, and at the far end of the spectrum, may inspire them to change the conditions for their military and people within their own nation. This chapter will explore these possibilities in U.S. senior PME.
Professional Military Education

The U.S. Professional Military Education program is the most robust in the world and annually matriculates tens of thousands of American military members through a wide variety of educational programs tailored to rank, academic skill, and subject matter. Crafted in three tiers of education at the officer level correlated with career progression, PME seeks to develop career officers with a broader education separate from career-field specific training. Unlike conventional training or proficiency programs, PME focuses on education in accredited graduate schools; faculty is evenly distributed between professional educators and career military professionals. The programs may be completed either in residence or by correspondence, per the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which defined standards for the curricula and content of the programs. However, selection to attend the in-residence programs is competitive, tending to attract the top tier service-identified officers in field grade and senior service ranks — Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel.

Such education and training programs are open to foreign military personnel alongside their American counterparts. In fact, the total number of foreign military personnel trained in all Defense Department programs numbers half a million since 1950, with 9000 officers from over 100 countries trained in the year 2000 alone. While many of these foreign soldiers attend

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176 It's worth noting that though I focus on officer education, the terminology “PME” is also used at the senior enlisted and warrant officer levels in various U.S. military services. For example, U.S. Army and Marine Corps schools for professional military education exist for NCO and Warrant levels; the U.S. Air Force’s longest enlisted PME program is the 5-week senior NCO academy, a far cry from the year-long graduate-school format used for officers.

177 Increasingly, U.S. federal civil service workers are also offered slots in the military education programs as part of an effort to increase interagency understanding. The degree to which this incorporation of civilians has driven a more “whole of government” approach to subject matter beyond military strategy is unclear.

technical programs such as Undergraduate Pilot Training, joint and service schools\textsuperscript{179} offer year-long PME programs to over 200 foreign officers each year. The international officers are funded in a variety of ways: via the Foreign Military Sales program as part of the Total Package Approach to military aid, through Foreign Military Financing education grants, and through DoD-specific programs such as CTFP and security cooperation assistance (largely available to developing countries unable to fund officers independently).\textsuperscript{180}

International officers are selected and vetted for PME attendance differently, depending on country of origin. For example, long-term allies like the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada select students through their own meritorious processes with no vetting or input from the U.S. military. A middle tier of nations – such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Thailand – propose attendees who are then vetted by foreign military officers in the associated consular office. According to the reviewers, they are looking “primarily for human rights violations and how well the guy speaks English,” rather than any academic acumen, political importance, or career trajectory.\textsuperscript{181} That leaves such determinations in the hands of the nations selecting officers to send, processes which vary widely according to my interviews. For example, a Pakistani officer indicated that the services (Army, Navy, and Air Force) have complete purview over who is sent, and take turns sending someone to U.S. War Colleges.\textsuperscript{182} A Saudi officer confessed that he didn’t want to come and was not the most qualified candidate but that “bloodlines take

\textsuperscript{179}Joint and service schools are in-residence programs of varying lengths (usually one academic year) designed for full-time students and run either by individual services, such as Army War College or Air Command and Staff College, or combined services, such as National War College.


\textsuperscript{181}Interview with member of the Joint Staff J-5 (Strategy and Plans), Washington DC, 5 December 2016

\textsuperscript{182}Interview, Washington DC, 14 April 2015
precedence” over merit in his military. And a Taiwanese officer said that they have to volunteer to their central selection committee, after which selection is an entirely opaque process. Thus, the motivations, skills, and political and military professional attributes of the attendees to U.S. PME programs is a literal grab-bag of possibilities – unknown and, for all intents and purposes, unimportant to the U.S. education process. This has qualitative ramifications that will be discussed later in the chapter, but also makes for a reasonable level of randomness in the data pool for statistical analysis.

In a small portion of countries, foreign officers may be recommended for education and training programs by in-country U.S. military officials. In my research, I found only one such case; the American officer that made the recommendation worked alongside this foreign troop in training and unit restructuring programs. He said the foreign officer was interested in, and inspired by, the concepts of democracy and capitalism and their relationship to American military might. When asked what he thought the effect of PME attendance would do for the foreign officer, in addition to teaching him strategy and increasing his professional knowledge base, he said, “I don’t know…maybe it will get him fired up to turn his country around.”

Unfortunately, this sentiment also indicates a lack of understanding of civilian control by the U.S. officer, who was at one point embedded in a foreign country purportedly modeling appropriate civil-military relations.

Once in PME, foreign officers are managed by administrative offices that organize their lodging, health care, travel and social activities. Opinions were evenly split on whether these

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183 Interview, Washington DC, 13 April 2016
184 Interview with member of the Joint Staff J-5 (Strategy and Plans), Washington DC, 21 November 2016.
185 In the case of NDU, the organization is called the International Student Management Office
international officers were fully integrated into the PME experience and treated identically to the American military members. Some U.S. officers thought that foreign officers were “given a break” with regard to academic rigor, and generally cited language barriers as the cause. Others complained that the frequent travel (discussed later) caused foreign officers to miss critical assignments and exams, which indicated an institutional bias as to what the university wanted foreign officers to take away from their year in the United States. But nearly all U.S. officers interviewed openly admired their foreign counterparts for attending class, performing at least some of the readings, accomplishing the assignments, asking questions, and engaging in the discussion. Moreover, faculty members I interviewed universally maintained that the only allowances given to foreign participants in terms of performance were related to their proficiency in writing and reading the English language – “they are full-up rounds\(^{186}\), and we have the same expectations of them, except for language, that we do for the U.S. students.”\(^{187}\)

Because deep analysis of the entire PME structure would be difficult and potentially superfluous, my sample focuses on the National Defense University (NDU), the single largest professional military education school in the United States.\(^ {188}\) Located in Washington D.C., the NDU vision is to “be the premier national security institution focused on advanced joint education, leader development and scholarship.”\(^ {189}\) Tracing its origins to a 1976 effort to consolidate the defense community’s intellectual resources and streamline service-specific professional education to support a Jointly focused Department of Defense, NDU was accredited

\(^{186}\) A military colloquialism referencing live ammunition versus blanks or non-explosive rounds. In this case, it indicates a student with zero limitations expected to perform to the standard.

\(^{187}\) Interview with Lt Col Steve Engherthall, Washington DC, 30 March 2015


\(^{189}\) http://www.ndu.edu/About/VisionMission.aspx
to award four types of Masters degrees from each of its various colleges. NDU is comprised of five different colleges: the Information Resources Management College (IRMC), the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) now known as the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, the College of International Security Affairs (CISA), and the National War College. NDU also has several centers for regional and topical study and runs remote education programs for senior ranks of the U.S. and international military, but my sample focuses on these four colleges and associated elective courses offered under the NDU umbrella. Figure 4B depicts the dispersion of students across the NDU colleges and centers.

![Figure 6. National Defense University Students, Academic Year 2013-2014](image)

NOTE: These students are in addition to the 11,435 noncredit students in JFSC programs.

190 The Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) is counted among the five but manages both resident and non-resident, accredited and non-credit students and is targeted at lower ranking officers. As such, it exists separate from the other four colleges in curriculum and student body.

191 From AY13-14 Final Report, [http://www.ndu.edu/Portals/59/Documents/AA_Documents/AY13-14%20Annual%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/Portals/59/Documents/AA_Documents/AY13-14%20Annual%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf). Keystone, Pinnacle, and Capstone are U.S.-only short-courses for rising general officers. These courses primarily involve meetings with senior military leaders and familiarization travel to U.S. command locations overseas. Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) is a mid-career PME program that matriculates a large number of O-4s in-residence, online, and as noted, in nonaccredited elective programs.
I also selected NDU because it is the most joint PME program – matriculating proportional numbers of officers from the service branches – and the most interagency and international. The cohort of these schools includes members of all four U.S. military services and the Coast Guard, U.S. federal civilians, and international military officers. Ranks vary between O-5s and O-6s for American military and O-5s to O-7s for foreign military officers. This means military students range from late-30s to mid-40s and generally have 15 to 20 years in military service; U.S. officers often already have some type of graduate degree and have finished or will soon be sent to large-unit command. They are sent for a year-long, full-time graduate-level program as part of their career advancement checklist. A general breakdown of the cohort for academic year 2013-2014 is presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Cohort Composition at National Defense University, AY 2013-2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S. Military</th>
<th>International Military</th>
<th>US Civilian(^{192})</th>
<th>International Civilian(^{193})</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CISA</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eisenhower</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRMC</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>785(^{194})</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1755</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{192}\) Notably, though U.S. civilians – largely DoD, State, or intelligence services – are included in this coursework, they are getting the same educational impressions of U.S. military attitudes toward civilian control.

\(^{193}\) The incorporation of international civilian students began in Academic Year 2010. The numbers as reported by NDU may be misleading, as international civilians may include foreign-born civilians in the U.S. government or private industry fellowships.

\(^{194}\) The IRMC is the most business and cyber focused of the schools, and uses an eResident model of distributed learning for the bulk of US civilian participants. Most coursework is done via online courses, with one week resident courses at specific points in the curriculum. It is included in this sample because IRMC offers classroom courses available to resident students from the other college programs.
Though international officers matriculate in all of the colleges assessed, it’s interesting to note that CISA has a disproportionate number of international officers when compared to other schools. As the literal college for international security affairs, it both attracts a higher number of foreign participants and has them directed into its coursework. In particular, beginning in 2007, the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (paid for by grant money under CTPF - Counterterrorism Partnership Fund) began focusing its student fellowships on CISA. The fellowship targets countries subject to terrorist threats, including but not limited to officers from my case countries, Egypt and the Gambia, as well numerous nations in Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Interestingly, the only “western” nation to attend CISA was Hungary – NATO and anglophone nations overwhelmingly attend the National War College or the Eisenhower school. The preponderance of international student population at CISA might logically indicate a deliberately more internationally curriculum; but as is discussed later, the U.S.-centric approach is fully operational even in a school that is nearly one-third international officers.

There are numerous reasons formally and informally cited for incorporating foreign military officers in the PME programs offered by the U.S. military. First, and most simply, these slots are used as added incentives in crafting FMS deals: adding an additional training or education package to an arms acquisition program is an easy way to compensate for other refusals in the negotiation process. One officer at the Defense Institute for Security Assistance

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195 This is not to say that non-western or developed nations don’t attend other schools, including for example Afghan and Algerian students at Eisenhower, but the CTFP focuses on CISA.

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Management (DISAM) argued “when we have to tell them that they aren’t getting the Class A radars or the missiles they want, it helps to have other goodies to offer instead.”¹⁹⁶

Incorporating foreign officers into PME programs is also (and most commonly) highlighted in terms of public diplomacy and strategic communications, more specifically as a way to build military-military relationships and craft a better understanding of the United States, democracy, and the western way of life. To these latter points, foreign officers take part in a series of trips around the country to introduce them to different areas of the United States. To some degree, this purpose achieves its goal: a Pakistani Brigadier General told me that this exposure to everyday Americans at Yellowstone and Yosemite changed his mind about the nation’s character. He said he was “surprised at how nice you [Americans] are” even though he has “brown skin and an accent.”¹⁹⁷

It is interesting to note that none of the faculty or U.S. officers interviewed voluntarily identified learning from international officers as a core purpose in the exchange. This unidirectionality of norms transmission and information did not seem abnormal to these subjects until they were asked if they learned anything from interacting with their foreign counterparts. Nearly all said yes, but one interviewee summed up the sentiment well: “Of course I learned from them, but I don’t think that was really the point. I mean, they’re here to learn from us.”¹⁹⁸

Finally, professionalization is frequently cited as a core purpose in the PME exchanges. Because being professional incorporates strong threads of education in the U.S. military mindset (hence Professional Military Education), I do not strongly distinguish this motivation from the

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Air Force Lt Col, Columbus, OH, 11 January 2016.
¹⁹⁷ Interview with Pakistanis Brig Gen, Washington DC, 3 April 2015
¹⁹⁸ Interview with Suttlemyer, Washington DC,
motivation to educate. Thus, although familiarization and mil-mil relationships are among the goals of co-education, every professor interviewed maintained that the core purpose is to educate all officers in the classroom, including the foreign participants. To that end, it is worth assessing what curriculum is being taught, how much of it is being absorbed, and what change in attitudes or comprehension it creates in both American and foreign students.

**What Do We Teach?**

*Course Curricula*

The first question that must be answered when assessing the potential impact of U.S. professional military education on the civil-military conceptions of foreign students is: what are we teaching? Building on the work of Judith Steihm, who did an initial curriculum review of several of the professional military education programs and their civil-military focus, I examined the lesson plans and electives offered for all five colleges in the National Defense University consortium for Academic Year 13-14.\(^{199}\) Looking at course titles, descriptions, syllabi, required readings, and instructional objectives, I classified each course by preponderance of content into one (or more) of 14 categories, described briefly below.\(^{200}\)

*Civil-Military Relations* – In this category, most courses were more broadly theoretical in their focus on civil-military relations and included titles such as “Civil-Military Relations,” “U.S. Civil-Military Relations Today” and “Ethics

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\(^{200}\) I used a variety of resources to achieve the best coding possible for courses: course title and description, course objectives, and where available, syllabi.
and the Profession of Arms.” Both this category and the civilian control category will be explored in greater detail later in the chapter.

Civilian Control – The few courses that fell into this category included an ICAF course entitled “War Powers” which at several points asked the question: “should legislative bodies have the right to place restrictions or caveats on…military forces?” It also included a course on “Congress and National Security” and one entitled “Securing the Sword: The Challenge of U.S. Civ-Mil Relations.”

Leadership – Courses marked in this category focused heavily on leadership principles and narratives, and included examples such as: “Lessons in Leadership” and “Leadership Challenges: Case Studies of Real People Providing Extraordinary Leadership.”

Strategy – The majority of courses fell into this category because of a focus on either crafting or analyzing strategies. Two emblematic titles included “Doing Strategy: Lessons Learned for Modern Strategists” and “Strategies of the Great War.”

Foreign Policy – Courses marked as foreign policy focused looked at foreign policy more broadly than within a specific region. Examples include: “Wicked Problems in Complex, Chaotic National Security Environments” and “Foreign Policy: a Practitioner's Perspective.”

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201 “War Powers” course syllabus, National Defense University, Academic Year 13-14

Academic – These courses were more academic in nature, including courses entitled “Cooperative Game Theory” and “Non-cooperative Game Theory.”

Cyber – Also somewhat self-explanatory, this group of courses focused on cyber security, cyber weapons and cyber awareness. Examples include: “Strategic Challenges in Cyberspace” and “Cyber Security in the 21st Century.”

Economics / Acquisitions – Courses relating to economics and acquisitions were clustered in the Eisenhower School and ranged from MBA-like classes in business strategy or decision-making to classes that focused on building or supporting a defense industry or on understanding acquisitions processes. Sample titles include: “Business, Industry and the Changing Way of American National Security,” “Executive Business Decision-making: Creating a Strategic Framework,” and several courses on U.S. acquisition policy such as “Acquisition Policy I: Strategic Acquisition: Sustaining Technological Advantage in Defense Acquisition.”

Head-of-State / Politics – By far the most interesting category, this bin included courses that asked military members to act like Heads of State, focused on military leaders that were or became heads of state, or discussed and questioned the political realm of the U.S. government. Sample titles include: “Ethics and

United States – These courses focused explicitly on the United States in either a historical or contemporary context. Two exemplar courses are “Carnage, Cotton, and Steel: America in Civil War, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation” and “Introduction to U.S. Special Operations (USSOCOM) Roles and Missions.”

Regional – These courses focused on security issues in a specific nation or region outside the United States. Though examples abound, two sample titles are “Southeast Asia Regional Security Study” and “Trans-Atlantic and European Security.”

Law of Armed Conflict – Courses in this category included those focused exclusively on law and the law of armed conflict; sample courses include “Law of the Sea” and “International Law and Military Operations.”

Homeland Defense – These courses focused on terrorism and homeland security mission concerns, and included titles such as “Non-Lethal Weapons: Support for 21st Century Warfare and Homeland Defense” and “Consequence Management: Responding to Catastrophic Events.”
Of 274 total courses surveyed, 31 were double-categorized, almost exclusively those overlapping the United States category with a subject-matter specific content such as “Cyber Operations and U.S. National Security Strategy.” Three courses were restricted to American students only due to security clearance requirements and were discarded from the count. The results are tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4: Course Survey of National Defense University Courses, AY 2013-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Area</th>
<th>ICAF</th>
<th>IRMC</th>
<th>NDU</th>
<th>NWC</th>
<th>CISA</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil-Military Relations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Control</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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It is worth noting that CISA, the college with the highest proportion of international officers (30%), offers zero courses specifically on civilian control or civil-military relations. CISA instructors and students indicated that, per the syllabus, one 50-minute class period was
devoted to a discussion of civil-military relations. A total of 11 courses were catalogued as focusing on civil-military relations and only three on civilian control of the military. This compares to 52 Strategy courses, 26 Leadership courses, and 29 courses that fit in the Politics/Head-of-State category. At 15, even Homeland Defense courses out-number civil-military and civilian-control courses combined. The proportional representation of subject matter can be seen in Figure 7.

![Proportional Representation of Course Categories, National Defense University AY 13-14](image-url)
Looking at the categories in light of the “War College” title, a pattern emerges. Summing only those courses questionably suited for uniformed personnel – Head of State, Economics, Homeland Defense, and Foreign Policy courses – yields 36% of the total educational content. Reaching back to the concepts of “embedded civilian control” these excursions outside the traditional purview of military members may create more informed American officers, better able to navigate domestic and international minefields of policy and politics. But the composition of the coursework also means a greater focus on non-military activities for all participants, including international students. For U.S. officers, this may blur the lines in their own understandings of civil-military relations, compromising their ability to model or train international officers in other contexts or even perform appropriately in the execution of their military duties; for international officers, the disproportionate emphasis may enhance or exacerbate latent praetorian impulses.

Civil-Military Relations Course Content

Certainly, simply counting courses is insufficient to capture the nature by which civil-military relations is taught: one must also investigate the context in which the discussions occur, the literature assigned that frames that discussion, and the object lessons students take away from the course. Take, for example, the National Security Studies core course for ICAF’s Fall 2013 syllabus. Only one lesson is devoted to civil-military relations; it follows seven lessons on constitutionalism, free press, courts, and democracy, and precedes 23 lessons on politics, economics, foreign policy, revolutions and popular movements, and security concerns like cyberspace and energy security. The stated purpose of the single civil-military lesson is:
To examine the relationship that exists, and properly ought to exist, between the military, the military’s elected and appointed civilian overseers, and society as a whole in a democracy such as the United States.\textsuperscript{202} Lesson objectives focus on trying to understand the nature of civil-military relations in a democratic society and “to evaluate the lengths and limits of uniformed dissent and its relationship to disobedience.” The readings associated with that class period include exclusively accessible readings such as Marybeth P. Ulrich, “The General Stanley McChrystal Affair: A Case Study in Civil-Military Relations,” from the Spring 2011 edition of \textit{Parameters} and Walter Karp, “Truman vs. MacArthur,” from \textit{American Heritage Magazine}, April/ May 1984.\textsuperscript{203} According to professors, an assumption is made that students are already familiar with Huntington, Janowitz, and the basics of civil-military relations scholarship. When asked about this rather important assumption, instructors at senior-level PME argued it made sense in the context of the three-tier PME system, where foundational knowledge is almost certainly introduced prior to senior service school. However, as previously discussed, the time spent on Huntington or civil-military relations more broadly across the 15- to 20-year career of even U.S. officers in the classroom is sparse; foreign officers would, of course, have no expectation of education in this peculiarly American vision of civ-mil.

So, let us consider a foreign officer in this lesson. Likely, he has zero or little knowledge of the Huntingtonian civil-military relations theory that underpins both civil-military relations in the United States writ large and, more specifically, the discussion framework of the class. His readings focus on instances of severe public dissent and disobedience from senior ranking

\textsuperscript{202} National Security Studies course syllabus, Fall 2013.
\textsuperscript{203} 08 ES_National Security Studies Core Course Syllabus 2014_Unit 1_NSS8
military officers, and the discussion, according to several students interviewed, focuses on whether the general officers were right or wrong in their behavior. His framework for evaluation thus far is only his own experience and a focus on the unique elements of the U.S. government as they relate to a constitutional system. One officer told me he hadn’t realized the U.S.-centric nature of the course material until the Turkish officer in his classroom sagely commented that, in his country, behavior like General McChrystal’s would have landed the officer in jail – at best. Notably, this comment occurred well before the attempted Turkish coup in 2016 that landed hundreds of officers in jail; the Turkish General to which my interviewee referred is now serving a life sentence for treason in a Turkish prison for his role in the coup attempt.

This is only one example of the civil-military education presented to foreign officers because they are included in education designed for U.S. career military members. In an elective entitled “Securing the Sword: The Challenge of U.S. Civ-Mil Relations,” the course wrestles with deeper understandings of Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* and “asks students to formulate their own views on the essence and state of current U.S. civil-military relations, as well as a sense of the direction those relations may -- or should -- take in the near future.” The course is open to U.S. and international students alike, and their different apprehensions of appropriate civil-military relations will be discussed in the following chapter.

The elective course formally entitled “Civil-Military Relations” and offered through the NDU umbrella is designed “to provide students with an understanding of some of the major topics in the study of the connections between the military, the state, and society.”

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204 Interview with Lt Col Jon Suttlemyer, USAF. Washington DC, 23 June 2014.
205 Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, P. 62
206 Ibid., P. 22
with Huntington and exploring “major aspects of the debate” over time, the course is the only one to assume an (at least partially) international perspective. The latter half of the course explores topics “ranging from the military's role in processes of state formation, to questions of military rule, civilian control, and modes of analysis of the military-state-society relations in the Latin American region, especially from the angle of problems of democratization.” Capped at 40 students and offered only one semester, the course is the most robust analysis of civil-military relations outside the assumptions of a U.S.-centric democracy.

Comparing this current snapshot of PME curricula with historical courses demonstrates that little has meaningfully changed. When Steihm performed her curricula analysis in the late 1990s, she observed that despite having only one lesson on civil-military relations in the core (required) course, the National War College “gives more emphasis to the governmental processes and to diplomacy than do the other schools.” She focused on two elective courses – “The Soldier and the State” (no longer offered) and “Military Professionalism and Civilian Control” (now offered under another title) – and concluded both to be “current and realistic,” “push[ing] students to think about the principle of civilian control in ever-changing contexts.” She specifically highlighted a comparative assessment of civil-military relations in other nations that encouraged students to question “the appropriateness of the U.S. model for others,” but noted that both courses were elective, rather than required. Unfortunately, in my research, neither faculty or student interview subjects could remember a similar problematization of the U.S. model in their contemporary courses.

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207 Ibid., P. 22
208 Steihm, p. 281.
209 Ibid., p. 282.
210 Ibid.
Steihm also analyzed the Industrial War College of the Armed Forces (ICW), the predecessor of today’s Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy. Her description of civil-military relations being “at the center” of ICW curriculum stands, but not in the context of civilian control then or now. The school’s focus on the intersection between national security and industry necessarily crosses the civ-mil divide, but its focus on acquisition, national resource allocation, infrastructure, economics, information technology, and other elements of the business-security paradigm appear to have their own perverse impact on student’s understanding of civilian control – for U.S. and international officers alike.

Other Course Contents and Objectives

It is also worth assessing the content of some of the many courses not associated with a civil-military theme. As my research revealed, 95% of courses have little or nothing to do with civil-military relations, while fully 36% of courses offered to American and international students fall into categories what would seem to at least confuse, if not contradict, the lessons of civilian control.

For example, one lesson in the core National Security course for ICAF students explores “the causes of revolution, the reasons for their success and failure, and the policies adopted by the United States in their regard.” It focuses on the revolutions in Europe in 1848 and draws parallels to the Arab Spring, asking questions about the causes of victory and short versus long-
term success. One American student identified that “long-term success commonly follows short-term failure, and vice versa” was a key take-away.212

An ICAF elective entitled The Great Captains “examines six great captains who made a major impact on strategy and warfare through the ages: Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Grant, and MacArthur.”213 Of those six, five went on to rule (or in the case of Ulysses S. Grant, lead) their nations and MacArthur was fired by his civilian leader for over-stepping the bounds. Pitched as a leadership class, the core assignment was selection of an additional “great captain” to research and present to the class; the Pakistani officer in the course presented, albeit controversially, on General Ayub Khan, the leader of the 1958 coup and military ruler of Pakistan from 1958 to 1971.214 The selection may be indicative of a misinterpretation of the interplay between greatness as a military officer and greatness as a country leader.

Another course, The Successful Strategic Advisor, explores the necessity to “‘switch hats’ from the ‘leader’ side of your job to the ‘advisor’ side.”215 The course acknowledges the difficulty in the roles – “while an advisor may have a regulatory, statutory or moral obligation to provide advice, the strategic leader has no obligation to accept or act on that advice” – and for the final project, students study a strategic advisor of their own choosing, noting that “many of these individuals went on to become strategic leaders in their own right.”

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212 Interview with Cordova, Washington Dc, 16 Feb 2016
213 AY 13-14 NDU Electives Catalog, P. 8
214 It is certainly possible that the feedback the Pakistani officer received from his classmates and professor corrected his misapprehension of the course theme. However, he did not fail the class nor have to re-present a new great captain.
215 AY 13-14 NDU Electives Catalog, P. 23-4
A foreign policy course entitled Foreign Policy: A Practitioner’s Perspective “aims to examine the range of non-military U.S. foreign policy structures and techniques” and an economics course, Partnering Power: Public-Private Collaboration for National Security, analyzes “public-private collaborations as an element of U.S. power, the ways in which strategists have used them to engage in statecraft, and their role in national security strategy….the course aim is to help students understand the capabilities for and limitations on the strategic use of public-private collaboration as an element of US statecraft.” Neither of these courses are objectively subversive to civilian control of the military, but designed with U.S. military officers in mind, they neglect the potentially empowering impact on foreign officers outside their traditional military sphere.

International Officer Specific Curricula

Finally, the American Studies course is the only course designed explicitly for international students and incorporates a field studies travel element discussed earlier in the chapter. The description of the course follows:

The International Fellows American Studies/Field Studies course supports and supplements the US Field Studies Program for Foreign Military Trainees objectives to promote an understanding of US society, institutions, and ideals in a way in which these elements reflect US commitment to basic principles of internationally recognized human rights. Five areas of focus include: American Identity, Civil Rights and Diversity, American Culture, Religion in America, and Geography and the Environment. The Civil Rights and Diversity block focuses on the role of ethnic and racial minorities in defining American identity and way of life. Themes in the readings and discussed in seminars and in the writing requirement provide focus and theoretical foundations for the field studies.

216 AY 13-14 NDU Electives Catalog, p. 27-8
Students are required to take the American Identity block and one of the remaining four and participate in a minimum of 6 field studies trips.\textsuperscript{217}

Much can be deduced from the analysis of the foundational course for international military officers and the only course to be offered solely for their educational progress. First, the clear course objective is familiarization with the United States and associated cultural themes. There is no mention of civil-military relations or democratic society; in fact, the emphasis lies in a focus on how these elements support the principles of international human rights. Second, there is little by way of structural framework to help international officers situate the rest of their educational coursework. Nearly every foreign officer interviewed said they greatly enjoyed the travel, but that its academic value was limited and its connectivity to other coursework or their own national identities was tenuous at best. More than one interviewee articulated variations on the following quote from a Ugandan officer: “I enjoyed the travel very much. But, of course, your country is not like mine. What works here…would not work in my home.”\textsuperscript{218}

\textbf{What Do We Teach? - Recap}

Individually, the lack of solid civil-military relations instruction from a non-U.S.-centric viewpoint, the focus in civilian control courses and discussions on dissent and disobedience, and the wealth of educational work beyond the bounds of traditional military spheres are not alarming. Even considering the aggregate of these forces on a U.S. military officer yields, as one professor commented, “a senior leader who can better navigate the interagency, the international

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., 54.
\textsuperscript{218} Interview with Ugandan Colonel, Washington DC, 2 March 2015
community, and the political sectors in which he must operate.”

What is disconcerting is the potential aggregate effect on the foreign military officer who lacks any element of embedded civilian control assumed in U.S. professionalism. However, it is also important to assess the foundational philosophies that underpin this education as related by the students and professors.

First, the courses are written for American students. While no professor interviewed claimed that they discounted foreign officers in their curriculum choices – indeed, several pointed out more accessible readings in their syllabi as compromise for diminished language skills – the content, lesson objectives and educational assumptions are designed for U.S. military officers. This means that, with the sole exception of the American Studies course, international officers are absorbing material not created with them in mind.

Second, as one professor related, “we treat all these countries as ‘democracies’ when the officers show up” regardless of the actual state of their government. All coursework is directed toward or founded upon democratic frameworks, sometimes explicitly but more often implicitly beneath the readings and discussions. As earlier chapters demonstrate, this presumes a markedly different architecture than the cultural background of many foreign officers, given that U.S. PME educates soldiers from a wide swath of countries. Though it is lengthy, Table 5 offers a reference of the diversity of nations represented at NDU in the 2013-2014 Academic Year. It is hard to fathom that an officer from Pakistan interprets the nature of democracy that underpins PME coursework in the same fashion as an officer from Jordan, Nigeria, Yemen, Australia, or the United States.

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219 Interview with Costa, Washington DC, March 4, 2015
220 Interview with Meiser, Washington DC, March 4, 2015
Table 5: International Student Enrollment for National Defense University, AY 2013-2014

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Table 5. (Cont’d)

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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, according to one professor, “Amerocentric education has an impact.”

He identified a weakness of the system in that “we teach at foreign officers rather than letting them teach us.” On the single lesson on civil-military relations in his ICAF core course, he said the

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221 Interview, Mar 17, 2015
discussion rarely turns to engage the international officers in the room, but instead delves deeply into the appropriateness of McChrystal’s firing and when a senior leader should resign. And the U.S.-centric philosophy creates a ripple effect beyond simply content, especially in the context of officers from non-democratic states.

Jeffrey Meiser, former professor at CISA, described coursework that focused on democracy and security and included the importance of redressing grievances and permitting freedom in politics. Students, regardless of nation of origin, built a strategic plan for stability in their home nations. He recalls:

We built up the sense that they needed to be a strategist. Looking back, we taught them like they’d have carte blanche to implement strategic reform when they returned. We encouraged them to think they’ll go back and run things or change things.²²²

He equates this encouragement to pursue democratic ideals and federal structures in the academic world to “cheering from the sidelines,” as professors and students either ignore the realities that face many of these foreign officers at home or even hope that this education might somehow bring about change. His conclusion after years of teaching is that, at the very least, the PME system needs to be predicated on a principle of “do no harm,” and that to do that, the institution must have a better appreciation for and understanding of foreign officers at the beginning.

²²² Interview with Dr. Jeffrey Meiser, Washington D.C., March 4, 2015


Other Professional Military Education School Curricula

Thus far, I have dealt with the potential for U.S. PME to be indirectly or inadvertently deleterious to foreign officers’ understanding of democratic civil-military relations. However, the impact of other elements of U.S. Professional Military Education can be directly deleterious to foreign conceptions of civilian control of the military, as well. For example, during a 2008 exercise at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, home of the U.S. Air War College, a student population comprised of both American and international senior officers (O-5s and O-6s) coped with a North Korean threat scenario.

Because of the sensitive composition of the international participants – including South Korean and Japanese officers – U.S. officers were told that nuclear response was off the table by order of the National Command Authority. However, one Air Force Colonel decided that such arbitrary limits hamstrung his team and precluded victory. In the final brief, his team openly challenged the nuclear prohibition and discussed the series of strikes they would accomplish to win the war. Though the Colonel was immediately and privately reprimanded, the impact on the international population was clear: questions from international participants during the day-long hot wash focused on who controlled the nuclear decision and when it was appropriate for lower-level officers to take matters into their own hands. The incident demonstrates not only the potential impact on foreign officers, but highlights that U.S. officers also do not always fully grasp or embody the norm of civilian control.223

Though I have focused on the NDU consortium of colleges because of its accessibility and high ratio of foreign to American military students, it’s important to note that the depiction

223 Interview with John Soto, Washington DC, 14 Jan 2014
of “what we teach” holds across service-specific War Colleges that educate officers at similar levels of rank and professional development. Judith Stiehm’s excellent analysis of NDU’s sister schools is summarized in Table 6 below.\(^\text{224}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Civil-Military Specific Focus</th>
<th>Other Opportunities for Discussion</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army War College</td>
<td>One core (required) course entitled “Civil-Military Relations.”</td>
<td>--Various elements of Civil-Military relations considered a “special theme” in other coursework</td>
<td>--“Classes help war college students accept as legitimate what may seem to be both irrational policy-making processes and irrational conclusions.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--While there was limited emphasis on civilian control specifically, “the principle of civilian control is certainly not undermined by any of the curriculum materials.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval War College</td>
<td>Civil-military relations specifically considered in one of three core courses entitled “Strategy and Policy”</td>
<td>--The two other core courses were “attentive to civil-military interaction, but did not address directly or affirm the principle of civilian control.”</td>
<td>--A focus, both in the classroom and at conferences, on the media as the most problematic civil-military relationship builds on “substantial informal discussion about the ‘sick,’ decadent, immoral civilian society.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--Civil-military relations considered with a mind to military effectiveness vice morality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{224}\) Stiehm, 2001.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Civil-Military Specific Focus</th>
<th>Other Opportunities for Discussion</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Air War College | Only one class over the course of the year specifically entitled Civil-Military Relations. | --One year-long course in Leadership and Ethics, in which civil-military relations falls under two of three blocks: command and ethics.  
--Elective courses in “Core Values” and “Command and Conscience” that touch on civil-military themes. | --Case study-style education with “an emphasis on a perfectionist ethic for the military officer, and a tendency to be critical of civilian society.”  
--The single lesson explicitly on civil-military relations “began by unequivocally stating that civilian supremacy is ‘the unchallenged first principle of the strategic leadership of the United States,’” but then immediately challenged “whether or not theory and practice were different.”  
--A (civilian) instructor for the Core Values course wondered “if holding officers to a higher standard than civilians would eventually lead the military to think it had a duty to ‘instruct’ civilians. (He suspected the Marines might already have assumed such a duty).” |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Civil-Military Specific Focus</th>
<th>Other Opportunities for Discussion</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps War College</td>
<td>Single lesson on civil-military relations, held in conjunction with “Constitution Day.”</td>
<td>--The small class size (often fewer than 20 students) allows travel to Washington, DC to meet with members of Congress, staffers, and Executive branch officials. Some portion of these discussions may explore civil-military relations.</td>
<td>--Two ideal-type military professionals are presented: the “Doberman Pinscher in a cage” who was absolutely apolitical and silent in public but would offer advice to the Congress or Executive when asked and the military professional with the “obligation to speak and do so publicly” on matters of both state and war so that “military views can be part of public discourse during the decision-making process.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

Fundamentally, it is reasonable to say that U.S. Professional Military Education spends comparatively little time on civilian-military relations and even less on the concept of civilian control. Instead, the bulk of coursework focuses on other aspects of the military profession – technocracy, regional dynamics, and perhaps dangerously, statecraft. Moreover, regardless of

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225 My experience with Marine Corps leaders who came of age during Stiehm’s analysis squarely supports her conclusions. Of the numerous USMC general officers I encountered on the Joint Staff, roughly half subscribed to each ideal type and were religious in their adherence.
intent, PME programmatic, course content and discussions, and the premises which underpin and constitute desired outcomes may be interpolated by foreign officers towards greater empowerment, non-democratic civil-military relations, or even anti-government reform. However, for the same reason that not all students perform identically with the same material, the mere presence or absence of content cannot dictate impact. To do that, we have to ask more than “what are we teaching?” We must also ask: what are they learning?
Chapter 5: What They Learn: Learning Transfer in the Military Classroom

“In learning transfer, the word ‘transfer’ itself is problematic. It implies that some bit of knowledge can be picked up and moved from one mind to another, without changing in content or context. The further apart the learner and the teacher are in mindset, the more impossible this becomes.”

Dr. Melody Pugh
Professor, United States Air Force Academy

As the previous chapter articulated, one of the most basic premises of U.S. military FMET is that both American and foreign officers can be taught a series of objectives, theories, ideas, or norms in the classroom. On the surface, this seems to be a reasonable assumption and it underpins most of global education. But a brief review of the literature on learning transfer immediately problematizes this operating principle. According to leading scholars in the field David Perkins and Gavriel Salomon,

Transfer of learning occurs when learning in one context enhances (positive transfer) or undermines (negative transfer) a related performance in another context. Transfer includes near transfer (to closely related contexts and performances) and far transfer (to rather different contexts and performances). Transfer is crucial to education, which generally aspires to impact on contexts quite different from the context of learning. Research on transfer argues that very often transfer does not occur, especially “far” transfer. Findings from various sources suggest that transfer happens by way of two rather different mechanisms. Reflexive or low road transfer involves the triggering of well-practiced routines by stimulus conditions similar to those in the learning context. Mindful or high road transfer involves deliberate effortful abstraction and a search for connections. Conventional educational practices often fail to establish the conditions either for reflexive or mindful transfer.

226 Interview April 12, 2018, Colorado Springs, CO
Examples of transfer are numerous: learning to drive a car can transfer to help one learn to more easily drive a truck; learning math problems in class transfers to doing different, more difficult math problems on a test but also to personal finance, investing, or balancing a checkbook; and in the context of Professional Military Education, theoretically, discussing the McChrystal case of civilian control should transfer to inform how officers conduct themselves and expect civilian leaders to behave in their professional leadership roles.

The problem, as Perkins and Salomon describe, is that perfect transfer is impossible and that the farther apart the application is from the learning environment, the less likely that transfer will occur. As importantly, human instinct is to fall back on the Weberian logics of habit, called in learning literature reflexive transfer, rather than reach for the high-level and abstract connections afforded by mindful learning. In sum, the further apart the learning is from application and the more effort the transfer requires, the less likely it is to occur. Placed in the context of U.S. PME, the more abstract the theory and unrelated the context to the students’ operating environment, the less likely they are to learn and adopt the principles presented. As an example, teaching Huntington’s normal theory to Egyptian military officers violates both principles, making fulsome norms transfer a near impossibility.

Transfer can also describe the movement of information from one mind to another – from teacher to student, or student to student.\(^{228}\) A classical case interviewed a college professor and his students on expectations for an assignment immediately after the professor explicitly described the assignment to his students in class. In interviews afterwards, the professor described the assignment as quite difficult, ticking off a number of high-level performance

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objectives he expected students to achieve. The students, who had just listened to the professor describe the assignment in class, described it as quite easy, and proceeded to tick off their own, utterly different lists of low-level performance requirements. In this case, both students and professor were English-speaking U.S. citizens in a small liberal arts college. The potential for convergence in understanding would be even less if the participants were communicating across different languages, mindsets, disciplines (engineering and humanities, for example), or cultures. Like a game of telephone, the transferred information gets distorted; unlike the game of telephone, the distortion is magnified by different cultural, historical, or habitual norms.

That different cultures interpret the same information differently is no great surprise. Therefore, it should not be any more surprising that culture deeply influences even militaries trained in the much same techniques and dogmas. Dr. Nina Silove remembers posing identical grand strategy scenarios to teams of U.S. and Japanese defense professionals that included both civilian and military members. The American teams crafted primarily military solutions to complex problems; the Japanese teams, even though they were almost universally trained and schooled in U.S. professional military education programs, gravitated immediately to diplomatic and economic solution sets.

It is also worth considering the condition of negative transfer. This outcome occurs when the learning in one context undermines performance in another. Pilots often discuss this phenomenon: for example, the same arm motion in an F-16 that increases engine power actually decreases engine power in a helicopter. When the brain is occupied or under stress, like in final

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229 Interview, Dr. Melody Pugh, April 12, 2018, Colorado Springs, CO.
230 Group discussion with Dr. Nina Silove, Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Clements Center for National Security, Beaver Creek, CO, July 27, 2015
approach to landing, reflexive habit will take over and the arm will move out of muscle-memory to try to achieve a desired power effect. In the negative transfer case described, that could have disastrous consequences, cutting power when one intends to increase it.  

Pilots who fly multiple airframes are specifically taught to look out for and combat negative transfer by slowing down – identifying possible negative transfers in advance and being less instinctive and more mindful. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that U.S. PME considers the potential for, or consequences of, negative transfer in either its American or foreign students. This isn’t unique to the military: Perkins acknowledges that negative transfer is “a real and often problematic phenomenon of learning, [but] it is of much less concern to education than positive transfer.”

With limited time, instructors are often focused solely on covering course objectives (teaching); those with more time and experience add additional focus on whether students absorb those objectives (learning); few have the bandwidth to consider how those objectives are being shifted, shaped, or modified in the learner’s mind, toward positive or negative outcomes.

A final point for consideration is the flexibility of the learner. As mentioned, students as U.S. PME students range from late-30s to mid-40s and generally have 15 to 20 years in military service; U.S. officers often already have some type of graduate degree and have finished or will soon be sent to large-unit command. Simply being selected for in-residence education means they have already been successful in navigating the professional constraints and requirements of

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231 This incident happened to the author, who found herself on short final trying to add power so the helicopter would make the runway, while her instructor queried incredulously why she was cutting power.

232 Perkins, p 4

233 The Air Force Academy, recognizing this pathology in its curriculum, has engaged faculty in a program that specifically emphasizes cadet learning over faculty teaching. Course objectives are supposed to be crafted in terms of what cadets should learn, vice what faculty will cover in class. Its impact is mixed: with only 53 minutes to cover course material, many instructors find themselves in perpetual catch-up mode, with far less focus on that is being learned than ensuring everything necessary is being taught.
their chosen career. In sum, these are not blank slates. Rather, military students come to the classroom broadly sure that they have the right answers, confident in their understanding of their profession, and with varying levels of openness to new or contradictory information. In my interviews, nearly every U.S. officer made an oversight, over-simplification, or outright error in describing the normal theory of civil-military relations even after unequivocally indicating that they knew Huntington’s theory and how it applied in the U.S. context. And academic learning is rarely students’ first priority. War college attendance has acquired a reputation for being a break from the fight, a year to rest, recover, and prepare for the next high-paced assignment. Even the Dean of NDU admits that this year of full-time education is as much about “taking a knee” in the high ops tempo of today’s military climate as it is about academic rigor: “the need for war-weary and battle-hardened veterans to recuperate and reconnect with their families is genuine and we support it, but we must try to balance quality of life for our returning heroes with an academically rigorous program.”

It is with this dubious starting point that we enter the analysis of the impact of U.S. professional military education. The previous chapter focused on the teaching side of the equation, demonstrating how little civil-military relations instruction actually goes on and how much it is dwarfed by other, potentially deleterious topics of education. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the hypothesis about whether recipients of U.S. PME learn (and transfer) their education on civil-military relations and other topics. The chapter describes the results of

234 Gregg F. Martin and John W. Yaeger. “Break Out: A Plan for Better Equipping the Nation’s Future Strategic Leaders.” Joint Forces Quarterly 73 (2nd Quarter 2014). The authors are the dean and provost of National Defense University, respectively.

235 Interestingly, the difficulty of actually educating foreign officers may be why U.S. FMET programs list “developing mil-mil relationships” as the primary purpose of foreign officer attendance at U.S. PME: truly educating them is a lower priority than simply having them present for BBQs and bonding.
an extensive survey and interview process with both American and foreign military officers attending National Defense University and concludes with mixed results on how much the U.S.-centric civil-military relations curriculum was internalized by either set of officers. Ultimately, this chapter seeks to test hypothesis four:

**H4. U.S. professional military education teaches civilian control from a U.S.-centric view and does not account for different backgrounds and military cultures.**

**Education can therefore can be misinterpreted, misunderstood, or misapplied.**

**What Are They Learning?**

Education of foreign military officers is an input into a system with two possible outputs for each individual student: either the education has an effect, or it doesn’t. If there is no demonstrable effect – that is, if there is no change in the officer from start to end - then the associated goals of nurturing mil-mil relationships must be sufficient to warrant the expense of education and the time lost in the classroom that might have been better spent traveling the country. As one NDU professor said, “Education either has an effect, or it doesn’t…if it doesn’t, then we’re wasting our time. If it does, shouldn’t we care what the effect is?”

In reality, this bifurcation over-simplifies the impact of education because it imagines homogeneity across individuals. In a more nuanced description, some officers will internalize little or no impact from the education, some will reject it wholesale, and some will buy into the precepts presented. Yet even this description defies reality: in truth, each individual will understand and retain different parts of the curriculum to different degrees and in different ways.

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236 Jeffrey Meiser. Telephone interview.
influenced and filtered by their cultural and historical context. It is this complexity that makes measurement of educational impact difficult, but necessary.

Previous scholars have tried to tackle this question of “what they learn” using survey data. Judith Steihm, referenced in earlier chapters, used survey data conducted by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies to tease out implications of her curricula review. As she admits, the lack of direct connection between the TISS survey and students undertaking the coursework she describes attenuates the relevance between the data and PME, making it impossible to “demonstrate a causal connection between war college curricula and student beliefs.”

To achieve a more direct correlation, I conducted a survey of 280 U.S. and foreign officers immediately after they completed PME at NDU in academic year 2014-15. Survey participation was voluntary, online, and connections were made through my professional and personal networks and via snowball sampling. As an example, a colleague took my survey and emailed it out to his cohort; often interviewees consented to take the survey and ask fellow officers from their country or class to take it as well. This was done purposely to avoid the misapprehension that the data collected would be retained by NDU or FMET program managers, and thus to gather a more honest field of responses. To preserve the integrity of the sample, I included explanatory text indicating the informal and research-oriented nature of the questions. While it is always possible for some participants to misinterpret the intent of the survey or presume a desire for certain answers, I endeavor to minimize that possibility. And while a survey indicates propensities, differences, and correlations, by using interviews I was able to better understand why those differences and correlations might exist.

237 Steihm, p 284
Table 7: Demographic Data for National Defense University Student Survey

<table>
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<th>Nationality</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
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<td>224 (80%)</td>
<td>56 (20%)</td>
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<th>School</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>ICAF</td>
<td>66 (23.6%)</td>
<td>19 (6.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>72 (25.7%)</td>
<td>13 (4.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISA</td>
<td>64 (22.9%)</td>
<td>16 (5.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRMC</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JFSC</td>
<td>22 (7.8%)</td>
<td>8 (2.8%)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>219 (78.2%)</td>
<td>56 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 (1.8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O-5 (Lt Col equivalent)</td>
<td>107 (38.2%)</td>
<td>21 (7.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-6 (Colonel equivalent)</td>
<td>117 (41.8%)</td>
<td>25 (8.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-7 and above (General officer equivalent)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10 (3.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Branch of Service</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>53 (18.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>62 (22.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>56 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps</td>
<td>26 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast Guard</td>
<td>27 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>111 (39.6%)</td>
<td>34 (12.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>113 (40.4%)</td>
<td>22 (7.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The demographics of the survey participants are presented in the table above. Based on a population size of 802 total U.S. and foreign officers at NDU per year, the total sample size of 280 respondents yields an overall margin of error of 5% at the 95% confidence interval. This margin of error holds looking only at U.S. officers, and increases to 9% when assessing foreign officers. The small population size of foreign officers (115 for the 2014-15 academic year) skews this calculation slightly, despite 56 individuals (or 48.6% of the total population) participating. The degree to which the NDU population can be determined to be reflective of the global population of military officers is limited, but since this research is specifically assessing the impact of PME on the officers who attend, it is also less relevant. For statistical analysis, I employed the surveyset tool in Stata, which extrapolates the sample out to a larger population to determine statistical significance. This allowed me to articulate differences not just within my sample cohort but also to identify when the U.S. and foreign officer responses were different enough to achieve statistical significance in the larger population.

**Survey Section One: Professional Military Education Curriculum**

The first section of questions established a baseline on which courses participants have taken and what they think that coursework emphasizes. The questions were split into queries on courses, coursework, and class discussion. Figures 8 reflects the percent of the individual populations of U.S. and foreign military officers for a baseline comparison; Figures 9 and 10 depict the mean weight and standard deviation of responses applied to each curriculum category.

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238 Additionally, the full survey can be found in Appendix C.
Figure 8: Student Descriptions of Individual Course Curriculum
(by percentage of survey respondents)

Figure 9: Student Perceptions of Course Content Emphasis
The data above tracks expectations based on the previous analysis of civil-military curriculum. When asked which courses they have taken, a large proportion of U.S. officers took U.S. National Security courses while a large proportion of foreign officers took regionally focused courses, likely in their own native regions (Figure 8). Nearly all U.S. and foreign military officer respondents identified taking courses in strategy (97% of U.S. officers; 100% of foreign officers) and leadership (75% of U.S. officers; 70% of foreign officers). Few (four U.S.; one foreign) identified taking courses in civil-military relations; the same four U.S. officers also identified taking a course described as “civilian control.” This is particularly interesting, since it appears that unlike his U.S. counterparts, the foreign survey respondent did not equate his class on civil-military relations with a course on civilian control.
Asked about the less directly measurable elements of instruction, course emphasis and classroom discussion, U.S. and foreign officers matched closely in reporting heavy emphasis on leadership and strategy and low emphasis on civil-military relations. As expected, the subjects of classroom discussion and perception of course emphasis remained closely mirrored across topics, indicating that in-class discussions did not range far afield from course emphasis and lessening concerns that the intangible of classroom discussions could vary my results. The only notable distinction (albeit within the margin of error) between U.S. and foreign officers was in perception of course emphasis on civil-military relations. It is possible that, given a deeper foundation of knowledge and practice in U.S. understandings of civ-mil, U.S. officers tended to pick up on more tangential or non-explicit emphasis on civ-mil than did foreign officers. Alternatively, U.S. officers could have entered the coursework with an expectation bias that led them to imagine more emphasis on civ-mil than actually existed. Combined, the baseline charts demonstrate the perceived low importance of civil-military relations education for both U.S. and international officers when compared to other courses at NDU, both in terms of courses taken and in-course emphasis. The data also depict fairly consistent perceptions among both U.S. and foreign officers as to the content of the PME curriculum.

Survey Section Two: U.S. Civil-Military Relations

The next section of the survey tackled students’ understanding of civil-military relations both in terms of their overall understanding and the degree to which the PME coursework helped to educate or inform them as to U.S. civil-military relations. Because these surveys were
completed at the end of the PME academic year, they are designed to test post-education knowledge rather than establish a difference between pre- and post-PME views.

The questions were as follows, with the same emphasis found in the survey:

- How much do you know about the theories of U.S. Civil-Military Relations? (Scale of 1-5)
- How much did your coursework help you understand general principles of civil-military relations? (Scale of 1-5)
- How important are various aspects of U.S. Civil-Military Relations?
- How much did your coursework help you to understand principles of civilian control of the military? (Scale 1-5)
- How much do you know about the practice of U.S. Civil-Military Relations? (Scale 1-5)
- How much did your coursework help you understand principles of U.S. Civil-Military Relations? (Scale 1-5)
- Do you think the United States could ever be in danger of having a military coup d’etat? (Yes, No, Maybe, Other (write-in))

Though I won’t go through an exhaustive recitation of the answers to all of these questions, several specific examples are useful to demonstrate the knowledge of both U.S. and foreign officers post-PME and the role they saw PME playing in their understandings of U.S. civil-military theory and practice, as well as general principles of civil-military relations and civilian control.

One would expect there to be differing levels of knowledge between U.S. officers and foreign officers on civil-military relations at the beginning of the school year. However, since ostensibly one of the purposes of U.S. PME is to educate and professionalize, survey data taken at the end of the academic year should appear more homogeneous between the two groups.

Instead, there remained a large and statistically significant difference in knowledge and
understanding of civil-military relations. For example, officers were asked how much they knew about U.S. civ-mil theory. The results are tabulated below:

Table 8. How Much Do You Know About the Theories of U.S. Civil-Military Relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nothing at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>I am very familiar</th>
<th>I am an expert</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Officers</td>
<td>0 (--)</td>
<td>41 (18%)</td>
<td>81 (36%)</td>
<td>86 (38%)</td>
<td>16 (7%)</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Officers</td>
<td>20 (36%)</td>
<td>13 (23%)</td>
<td>17 (30%)</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>0 (--)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20 (7%)</td>
<td>54 (19%)</td>
<td>98 (35%)</td>
<td>92 (33%)</td>
<td>16 (6%)</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Pearson chi2(4) = 95.437** Likelihood-ratio chi2(4) = 85.833**)
When asked if they were familiar with any other theorists, virtually all of the American interviewees responded with a quizzical expression – they seemed unaware that there were other theories of civil-military relations. The foreign officers responded slightly differently: few could remember or name Huntington or objective control (though when described, they indicated familiarity), but many could describe (if not cite) other civil-military relations constructs. One Brigadier General from India even named “concordance theory,” before confessing that he had written a paper on it the last time he came to U.S. PME.239

Three survey questions addressed how the PME coursework contributed to students’ understanding of general principles of civil-military relations, principles of U.S. civil-military relations, and civilian control of the military. Given a scale from 1-5 (1 = Not any help at all; 2 = A little help; 3 = A moderate amount of help; 4 = A lot of help; 5 = A great deal of help), zero survey respondents selected either 4 (a lot of help) or 5 (a great deal of help) in answering the three questions. This means that both foreign and U.S. officers found the coursework to be, at best, moderately helpful in forming their understandings of civil-military relations both in relation to the United States and more broadly. On the specific topic of civilian control, two foreign officers and one U.S. officer found the coursework to be no value at all, and a higher proportion of foreign officers than U.S. officers found it to be only a little help. This response rate alone is extraordinary, indicating that despite its theoretical primacy of place in educating on civil-military relations, PME is doing little to aid either American or international officers in understanding or transferring this knowledge.

The two most interesting questions in this section asked officers the importance of a variety of aspects of U.S. civil-military relations and whether the U.S. could ever be in danger of a coup. The first question asked respondents to rate the importance of each aspect on a scale of one to five, with five being very important, three being neither important nor unimportant, and one being unimportant. Again, remembering that this question asked for perceptions of U.S. civil-military relations, not civil-military relations in general, the views of foreign officers likely reflect what they perceive the U.S. emphasizes for both its own force and any forces it trains. The results are presented in the table below, with the weighted mean listed first and the standard deviation in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Civil Military Relations</th>
<th>U.S. Officers</th>
<th>Foreign Officers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military being representative of the people</td>
<td>3.55 (1.07)</td>
<td>3.625 (1.07)</td>
<td>3.56 (1.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism of the military officer</td>
<td>4.28 (0.78)**</td>
<td>3.286 (1.12)**</td>
<td>4.08 (0.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of civilian control</td>
<td>4.51 (0.50)**</td>
<td>3.61 (0.97)**</td>
<td>4.33 (0.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military adherence to human rights</td>
<td>4.06 (0.83)</td>
<td>4.04 (0.74)</td>
<td>4.05 (0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military adherence to the laws of armed conflict</td>
<td>3.95 (0.83)</td>
<td>4.07 (0.85)</td>
<td>3.975 (0.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional budget authority</td>
<td>1.99 (0.83)</td>
<td>1.98 (0.82)</td>
<td>1.99 (0.825)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chain of command with the Commander-in-Chief at the top</td>
<td>4.31 (0.80)**</td>
<td>3.34 (1.10)**</td>
<td>4.11 (0.95)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(** = significant pop subset diff at 99% level  * = significant pop subset diff at 95% level)

Overall, all factors except Congressional Budget Authority were considered to be important (above 3.0) with the most important factors identified (in descending order) as civilian
control, professionalism, chain of command, and human rights all having mean ratings of above 4.0 (somewhat important). The aspect considered to be the most important by each subset of respondents was civilian control for U.S. officers and adherence to the laws of armed conflict for foreign officers (followed very closely by observance human rights). This in itself is an interesting differentiation, one in part explained by the overwhelming emphasis FMAT places on ensuring foreign militaries adhere to human rights and LOAC conventions. As one military officer with FMAT experience explained, “what we worry about most are human rights violations…no one wants another [School of the Americas].”240 His coworker agreed, saying “for foreign officers, civilian control is a distant second in our educational priorities behind LOAC and human rights. Those are our focus.”241 Thus, it would be reasonable for foreign officers to assume the most important aspect of U.S. civil-military relations falls under human rights and LOAC, since that is what they hear about the most while engaging in FMAT programs.

Other differences between U.S. and foreign military officers, however, were stark. All U.S. officers overwhelmingly indicated civilian control was either somewhat important (48.7%) or very important (51.3%), while foreign officers were far less convinced: 25% said it was neither important nor unimportant and over 16% said it was somewhat unimportant. Less than 18% of foreign officers valued civilian control as very important. Given again that this is foreign officers’ perception of U.S. civil-military relations, it likely reflects a lack of emphasis on civilian control in FMAT programs or an impression that U.S. military officers are less subservient than they believe – or both.

This disparity in view was replicated in the category of chain of command, where again foreign officers viewed respect for the Commander-in-Chief as far less important overall than did U.S. officers. It is possible that foreign officers found the concept to be redundant to the question of civilian control, meaning this measure has little additional weight beyond that of the civilian control disparity. However, it is also possible that the role of a Commander-in-Chief was perceived to be less relevant to U.S. military dynamics. An officer from Poland told me that it was hard to take the Commander-in-Chief seriously when every case study discussed involved U.S. general officers – MacArthur, McChrystal – disobeying or being disrespectful to the president.\textsuperscript{242} Regardless, the empirical evidence indicates foreign officers perceive far less import to chain of command and the Commander-in-Chief in the U.S. system than do U.S. officers. For both the civilian control and Commander-in-Chief category, the difference in sample distributions is statistically significant when scaled to the population level at 99% confidence, allowing us to conclude that even after the same professional military education, U.S. and foreign officers have widely divergent views on the importance of civilian control to the U.S. military.

The difference between U.S. and foreign military officer views on the importance of professionalism in the U.S. is another interesting data point. Also significant at the 99% level, the sub-populations of U.S. and foreign military officers valued professionalism as a component of civil-military relations at different rates. While no foreign officers described professionalism as \textit{unimportant}, 32% indicated it was \textit{somewhat unimportant} and 27% percent called it \textit{neither important nor unimportant}. The most likely explanation was revealed through my conversations

\textsuperscript{242}Interview, April 17 2014, Washington, D.C.
with U.S. and foreign officers. In speaking with these officers via interviews, many did not fully agree with the U.S. definition of professionalism. Asked to describe professionalism, officers from non-Western nations used terms that indicated military efficacy: good order and discipline, skill, effectiveness, following orders, possessing high-tech equipment, to name a few. They tended to distinguish between military effectiveness and ethical or moral behavior, instead of lumping the two together as the American version suggests. Both, most indicated, could inspire trust from above, in civilian leadership, and below, in the population. But efficacy appeared to be valued more highly than U.S. views on ethics, and the two could easily be in conflict with one another. An officer from Eastern Europe told me that ethics “were in the eye of the beholder” and scoffed the American view on ethics as “rigid” and “a luxury.”

The following table lists the terms used to describe professionalism from U.S. and foreign officers.

Table 10. Interview Responses: What Does Military Professionalism Mean?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. officers “military professionalism”</th>
<th>Foreign officers “military professionalism”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honorable</strong></td>
<td><strong>Secular (Egypt)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Heroic (Thailand)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>Management of Violence</strong></em></td>
<td><em><strong>Military effectiveness</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Subordinate</em>*</td>
<td><strong>High-tech</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apolitical</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skilled</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doctrinal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Objective control</em>*</td>
<td><strong>Protect the People</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educated</strong></td>
<td><em><strong>Protect the Homeland</strong></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-political (UK)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Of the people (Mali)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Responsible</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*<strong>Follow orders</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(***almost universal  ** very common  *common  no star = once)

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243 As this officer was the only representative from his country, his nation of origin is masked to protect his identity. Interview, April 6, 2014. Washington, D.C.
The degree to which “follow orders” was equivalent to “subordinate” varied between interviewees. Some foreign officers specified orders from civilian leadership; others agreed that, of course, civilians should be included with military officers when prompted; a young Thai Lieutenant Colonel specifically stated military orders, and when prompted about civilians, merely shrugged.\footnote{A disconcerting response, given the 2014 military coup in Thailand, the twelfth in a long history of military rule since the country’s first coup in 1932.}

This view on professionalism as somewhat separate from the civil-military construct so highly valued in the American military may in part explain the disparity seen in the survey. But there may be another explanation, as well. Fully 48\% of U.S. military officers rated professionalism as a \textit{very important} aspect of civil-military relations. Based on the historical evolution in the American military’s pursuit of professionalism, that number is not surprising, but it demonstrates (perhaps) over-emphasis on the professional ideal-type in addition to miscommunication on the nature of professionalism to foreign officers.

The final survey question in this section asked if the U.S. could ever be in danger of a military coup d’etat. Table 11 reports the distribution below. Perhaps unsurprisingly, foreign officers were far less likely to offer an unequivocal “\textit{no}” than U.S. officers, and far more likely to offer an unequivocal “\textit{yes}.” Again, the distributions, when scaled up to population size, were statistically significantly different to the 99\% confidence level.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & No & Maybe & Yes & Total \\
\hline
U.S. Officers & 109 (48.6\%) & 83 (37.0\%) & 32 (14.3\%) & 224 \\
Foreign Officers & 6 (10.7\%) & 28 (50.0\%) & 22 (39.3\%) & 56 \\
\hline
Total & 115 & 54 & 111 & 280 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Do You Think the United States Could Ever Be in Danger of a Military Coup?}
\end{table}

\[ (Pearson \, \text{chi}^2 = 32.119^{**} \quad Likelihood \, \text{Ratio \, chi}^2 = 34.724^{**}) \]
Unpacking this data distribution via interviews, it became clear that American officers had absolute certainty that a military coup in the United States was impossible, despite the fact that many had read Charles Dunlap’s “Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012” which details an American military perceived as an increasingly better alternative to the messy and crisis-prone civilian government institutions.\(^{245}\) Foreign officers that hailed from states that had experienced military coup attempts were almost universally skeptical that the United States was somehow coup-proof. Yet, the most interesting comment came from an Egyptian Lieutenant Colonel, who opined, “Why would you [American military officers] ever have a coup? You already have all the power.”\(^{246}\)

**Survey Section Three: Country of Origin Civil-Military Relations**

The next section of the survey applied only to survey respondents who indicated they were foreign officers. It asked questions specifically on the civil-military construct in their home nation, starting with how much they knew about civil-military relations in their own country. Unlike their American counterparts, a greater proportion of foreign officers (16% versus 7% of U.S. officers) indicated they were experts in the civ-mil of their country of origin and a smaller proportion (12.5% as compared to 18% of U.S. officers) indicated knowing only a little. Overall, 67.9% of foreign officers identified as very familiar or an expert in their nation’s civil-military relations, compared to only 45% of U.S. officers. It is possible this difference comes from the comparatively higher ranks of foreign officers, their selection process, or from their habit of


\(^{246}\) Interview, May 1, 2014, Washington D.C.
representing their nation over the course of the academic year. The information gleaned from interviews suggests that the latter may carry the most weight: many foreign officers operated as subject matter experts in their own military and nation over the academic year, and became accustomed to opining on the history, perspectives, and security concerns of their home country.

The following series of charts reflects responses to the question: how important are the following aspects of your country’s civil-military relations? The question was asked after the previous sections primed respondents to think in terms of the civil-military relations education they had received. It provides a baseline snapshot of the variety of civil-military constructs from which foreign officers in U.S. PME programs come. Additionally, it mirrors the question asked to both U.S. and foreign officers in the preceding section, allowing a comparison of both U.S. and foreign beliefs on their national civ-mil constructs as well as foreign officer views on their nation versus their understanding of the United States.

**How important are the following aspects of your country’s Civil-Military Relations?**

0 – N/A  1 – Unimportant  2 – Somewhat Important  3 – Neither Important nor Unimportant  4- Somewhat Important  5 – Very Important
Figure 11. Survey Responses to Native Nation Civil-Military Relations (percent)
A few observations can be made from the charts above. First, in all categories except military professionalism, at least some foreign officers found the characteristic to be “not applicable.” This phenomenon demanded attention in interviews. All of the foreign officers (as well as the American ones, for that matter) said that military professionalism was important to civil-military relations in their nation. However, as previously discussed, when asked to describe what professionalism meant, answers varied.

Another interesting facet of these charts is that no foreign officers found the military being representative of the people “unimportant” while the highest ratio in the question (52%) found it to be “very important.” This is a sharp contrast to the questions earlier in the survey in which U.S. officers described the importance of the military being representative of the people. There, the plot was far more of a bell curve, centered around a mean rating of 3.55 (1.07 SD) or slightly less than “somewhat important.” Interviews confirmed this perception, with many foreign officers describing their military’s relationship with the people as fundamental to their legitimacy, prestige, or raison d’etre. The Egyptian Colonel I spoke with called it “sacred” and a Pakistani flag officer said “it is critical that the people know we are of them, and for them.”

Finally, an interesting plurality (21%) described congressional or parliamentary budget authority as “not applicable” when thinking about civil-military relations. Given that these officers are all from nations who are FMET recipients, it is certainly possible that U.S. military aid makes up enough of their budget that they rarely feel the pinch of legislative purse strings. It is equally possible that the answer reflects a reality that the executive branch controls military funding in many countries. It is also possible that these officers had not yet risen to positions in

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247 Interviews with PME graduates, Washington D.C.
which they would have engaged on budgetary matters, and in nations without a free press, their knowledge of budget debates could be limited. However, comparative data from earlier in the survey indicates that U.S. officers also rate Congressional Budget Authority lower than other elements of civil-military relations.

Comparing these results to the analysis of U.S. civil-military relations accomplished earlier yields the following table:

### Table 12. Consolidated Perceptions on Civil Military Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military being representative of the people</td>
<td>3.55 (1.07)</td>
<td>3.625 (1.07)</td>
<td>3.85 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism of the military officer</td>
<td>4.28 (0.78)**</td>
<td>3.286 (1.12)**</td>
<td>3.39 (1.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of civilian control</td>
<td>4.51 (0.50)**</td>
<td>3.61 (0.97)**</td>
<td>2.86 (1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military adherence to human rights</td>
<td>4.06 (0.83)</td>
<td>4.04 (0.74)</td>
<td>3.41 (1.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military adherence to the laws of armed conflict</td>
<td>3.95 (0.83)</td>
<td>4.07 (0.85)</td>
<td>3.21 (1.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional/Parliamentary budget authority</td>
<td>1.99 (0.83)</td>
<td>1.98 (0.82)</td>
<td>1.35 (1.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chain of command with the Commander-in-Chief at the top</td>
<td>4.31 (0.80)**</td>
<td>3.34 (1.10)**</td>
<td>2.59 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(** = significant pop subset diff at 99% level * = significant pop subset diff at 95% level)

Every categorical aspect considered by international officers regarding their home civil-military constructs falls below (less important than) both what American officers think about U.S. civil-military relations and the importance international officers assign to elements of the U.S. civ-mil construct. There is one exception: the military’s representation of the people rates
slightly higher among foreign officers considering their own countries than their estimation of the U.S., as well as slightly higher than American officers rated its importance in the United States.

It is also interesting to compare the data on the principle of civilian control. It is the highest (most important) concept to American military officers in describing their own country, rating between *important* and *very important*. To foreign officers assessing the U.S. system, it is rated almost a full point lower, falling between *important* and *neither important nor unimportant*. And for foreign officers assessing their own countries, the value drops almost another full point, falling to between *somewhat unimportant* and *neither important nor unimportant*. Overall, U.S. officers were 25 times more likely to rate civilian control *very important* to the U.S. (and eight times more likely to rate it *somewhat important*) than foreign officers were to give civilian control the same ratings in their home nations.

Another survey question asked if U.S.-style civil-military relations would work in the FMET recipient’s country; 85.7% of respondents said “no,” meaning only eight officers (14.3%) responded in the affirmative. The follow-up question asked them explain why they may have indicated U.S.-style civ-mil would not work. The answers varied in length and thoughtfulness but offered significant insight into what these foreign officers thought about U.S. civil-military relations, their education, and the transferability to their own nations. Some indicated fundamental misunderstandings about U.S. civil-military relations (such as one that said that, unlike the U.S., his nation’s Generals could not decide to go to war) even after completing the NDU curriculum. Many pointed to religion and wealth as reasons the U.S. system was incompatible (implying or explicitly stating that when a military is not given a large enough
budget or religious freedom, civil-military rules must be bent). A few examples are listed below.

Because the surveys were anonymous, the following responses are not attributable (and have not been corrected for syntax):

- *US has always been democracy. No coups, so strong military is possible.*
- *The Americans are the strongest military in the world. They are educated and practiced in democracy. They have rule of law. My country is still developing from colonialism and dictatorship. We must educate our people and increase our economy before democracy. Until then, we need military to defend against threats.*
- *There are security threats inside and outside our borders that threaten our people and way of life. The military must be strong when politicians do not know how to lead.*
- *Britain is not as conservative as the United States, its military is smaller, and it has a longer tradition of democracy. It can grant greater leeway to its officers than the strict U.S. system.*
- *Civilians are powerful and corrupt. More than US.*
- *The Americans have the luxury of two oceans to protect them. Everyone is afraid of them. We are bordered on all sides by failed, failing, and enemy countries. We must always be prepared to protect the people even if they don’t know it.*

**Bringing it All Together**

Thus far we have explored how effectively NDU curriculum has transferred to U.S. and foreign officers, as well as FMAT recipients’ conceptions of their own civil-military relations *vis-à-vis* the American construct. One survey question in particular asked both U.S. and foreign officers to sum up what their NDU experience best prepared them for. On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (above all), respondents were asked if their experience prepared them to be:

- A better leader for my military;
- A better strategist;
- A better foreign policy advisor;
- A better leader for my country;
• A better security advisor;
• A better political advisor;
• Better able to serve my political leadership;
• Better able to serve the people of my nation.

The table below indicates the mean numeric response for U.S. versus foreign officers, the
standard deviation in responses, and the minimum and maximum value selected by respondents.
The numbers are broadly similar, with major deviations occurring in only two categories:
Country Leader and Political Advisor.

Table 13. Survey Data for Prompt “My Experience Prepared Me To Be…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S. Officers</th>
<th>Foreign Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader</td>
<td>4.545 (0.499)*</td>
<td>4.39 (0.493)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 4</td>
<td>Min: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategist</td>
<td>4.237 (0.71)</td>
<td>4.27 (0.618)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy Advisor</td>
<td>3.973 (0.803)</td>
<td>3.98 (0.798)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Leader</td>
<td>2.26 (1.146)**</td>
<td>3.768 (1.279)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 0</td>
<td>Min: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Advisor</td>
<td>4.313 (0.696)</td>
<td>4.161 (0.733)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
<td>Min: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Advisor</td>
<td>2.862 (0.934)**</td>
<td>3.929 (0.97)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 2</td>
<td>Min: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve Political Leadership</td>
<td>3.781 (0.962)</td>
<td>3.73 (0.944)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 2</td>
<td>Min: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve People of Nation</td>
<td>4.54 (0.499)</td>
<td>4.57 (0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min: 4</td>
<td>Min: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
<td>Max: 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(** = significant pop subset diff at 99% level  * = significant pop subset diff at 95% level)
Foreign officers appeared more comfortable assessing the political element of the NDU experience, rating the education’s role in preparing them to be a political advisor over one point higher than their U.S. counterparts. Within the sample set alone, these responses fall outside the standard deviation. Nearly half of U.S. respondents (104 or 46%) reported their education helped only “a little” at their ability to be a political advisor, compared to only 10.7% of foreign officers. These survey results could mean that U.S. officers simply don’t perceive the political elements of their education or willfully ignore it because it does not fit into their metal models of the apolitical American military. More than one American military officer interviewed indicated that political advice was not the purview of military officers. Even when follow-up questions led to the Clausewitzian aphorism “war is politics by other means,” few relinquished their dogmatic stance that military advisors provide only military advice. The difference could also mean that U.S. military member aspirations differ from their foreign counterparts in ultimately playing a political role in their home country. Most of the non-Western officers I spoke to had a much blurrier understanding of the line between military and political advice and roles; in fact, a Thai officer proffered Clausewitz’s bottom line by way of explaining his comfort with the political-military gray area.

The second major gap occurred in the category of “leader for my country.” The mean response for foreign officers to the question of whether their NDU experience prepared them to lead their country was a full 1.5 points higher than their U.S. counterparts and well outside the

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248 This is despite the fact that none would criticize the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs or Service Chiefs for offering advice that strayed from the military sphere, most found McChrystal’s transgression to be inappropriate but not deserving of removal, and nearly all willingly commented on political matters across the spectrum in critiquing the Obama Administration. It seemed that the mantra of limiting military advice was almost reflexive; an instinctive “right answer” disconnected from the situations in which it would almost certainly be applied.
standard deviation, even within the sample set. Exactly 55 U.S. officers (25%) said their NDU experience did not prepare them at all to be a leader for their country compared to three foreign officers (5%); only one U.S. officer reported NDU preparing him for national leadership “above all” compared to 22 foreign officers (39%). Perhaps most interestingly, ten U.S. officers selected “not applicable” for the head-of-state option compared to zero of their foreign counterparts. This comports with the interview information I collected. Most American officers did not immediately identify national leadership as a desired outcome of PME, but when prompted, agreed that it probably furthered that end. Only one categorically resisted the notion that PME curriculum might contribute to the knowledge required as a head-of-state. Foreign officers interviewed were far quicker to identify both political and national leadership elements of their education at NDU, including helping them ultimately run for office; even officers from Western Europe mentioned that the education might aid them in political roles within the Ministry of Defense. The specific distribution of answers to the Country Leader option are broken out below.

### Table 14. PME Impact on Preparing for National Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 (N/A)</th>
<th>1 (Not at all)</th>
<th>2 (A little)</th>
<th>3 (A moderate amount)</th>
<th>4 (A great deal)</th>
<th>5 (Above all)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Officer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Confounding Factors

It is worth exploring the possibility that this survey captured particularly praetorian individuals from foreign nations, or perhaps even that FMET attracts particularly praetorian military officers. The Defense Institute for Security Assistance Management (DISAM) dictates that students are chosen based upon “leadership potential and likelihood of being assigned, subsequent to IMET participation, to a job relevant to their training for a period of time to warrant the training expense.”

Further, the number of slots each country receives are dictated by American interests: officials from both the DoD and State agree on a set type and number of positions in accordance with the total package approach. Thus, a more or less coup-prone nation is not any more or less likely to receive training or education slots based upon their levels of praetorianism. Finally, since host governments often select the individual soldiers who attend, it’s reasonable to assume that they are sending the least likely to be coup-prone to the United States for training, and instead are rewarding trusted loyalists with a sojourn to the United States and the skills they will bring home. For example, a Pakistani one-star I spoke to chuckled when asked if his PME attendance could possibly be threatening to the government of Pakistan. His response was simple: “No – I’m in the Navy, not the Army.”

250 Interview. Pakistan has had three successful coups (1958, 1977, and 1999) and numerous unsuccessful attempts, all of which were led by Army General Officers. Since achieving independence in 1947, Pakistan has spent almost four decades under (Army) military rule.
Summary and Conclusion

Learning transfer is difficult; it is made more so by differences in context, culture, language, and history. The level of abstraction required makes it still more arduous to affect. And yet this description perfectly characterizes the situation of U.S. FMET: combining native and foreign officers from widely divergent backgrounds in a single classroom for a drastically short interval of focus, covering the theoretical abstractions of civil-military relations theory and seemingly irrelevant case studies predicated on the U.S. model, and hoping that somehow both knowledge and norms transfer is occurring.

The research above seems to lend support for skepticism. Few U.S. or international officers identified taking courses in civil-military relations; those that did reported only moderate amounts of knowledge transferred, only marginally more than their counterparts that did not take explicit courses of instruction. Classroom discussion and course emphasis mirrored this trend.

Moreover, the civil-military backgrounds of the student population were divergent. Foreign students understood core terms, such as military professionalism, differently than their American counterparts, which was different still than the body of literature on which U.S. civil-military relations is founded. They also valued traditionally Western elements of civil-military constructs – such a civilian control and adherence to human rights – differently and less importantly than their U.S. cohort. It is no wonder, then, that the vast majority indicated that U.S.-style civil-military relations was incompatible with their own national situations.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these foundational differences, foreign officers developed an incomplete, often inaccurate, and highly skewed understanding of the U.S. civil-military
principles FMET desires to teach. It remains to be seen if this understanding has any ultimate effect when officers return home to their native nations. For that, we must turn to case studies.
Chapter 6: A Tale of Two Coups: Process Tracing in Egypt and The Gambia

*We teach them our approach to a “profession of arms” and professional ethics, and we teach them our approach to how they can create a successful, secure, and prosperous society back home. But what happens when there are profound contradictions between the ideal they are taught in their PME education and the reality they see back home?*

*Professor Jeffrey Meisner*

*Former Instructor, National Defense University*

Thus far, I have analyzed the nature and content of the course curriculum presented at the highest level of U.S. Foreign Military Aid and Training (FMAT) and demonstrated that it teaches very little as to democratic civil-military relations and a great deal on tools of statecraft and leadership. Secondly, I have endeavored to assess the impact of that curriculum across American and foreign servicemembers, both in terms of their understanding of democratic civil-military relations post-education and their overall empowerment at the end of the FMAT process. The outcome of that analysis indicates that PME students receive little if any learning transfer on the topic of civil-military relations and even less on civilian control. It also demonstrates the vast distance in the understandings of professionalism, importance placed on traditionally Western elements of civil-military relations, and overall impact made on foreign and U.S. students alike.

However, the fundamental test of this theory – that U.S. FMAT increases praetorianism and, in some cases, coup potential in target nations through professionalization – lies in careful process tracing through case studies. Because the central premise of my thesis is that the one-

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size-fits-all model of FMAT interacts differently in the unique baskets of historical experience and cultural norms of target nations, it is critical to look at cases which are exemplars of country type and outcome. In an ideal world, I would be able to use matched pairs of nations, where one nation received the U.S. FMAT “treatment” and another, very similar nation does not. Because of the ubiquity of U.S. military aid globally, this is almost impossible. More importantly, because I’m not arguing that U.S. FMAT is either necessary or sufficient for praetorianism to exist or coups to occur, there should rightly be many cases of praetorianism without U.S. FMAT and many cases of U.S. FMAT without praetorianism.

Because matched pairs are difficult to find, I instead selected two cases that do several things. First, they offer a “second best” to the matched pair concept: cases in which U.S. military aid was either turned on and off or in which the U.S. competed with another nation for the majority share of the target nation’s aid provision. This enables a “with” and “without” treatment analysis and one that identifies the unique elements of U.S. aid that enhance praetorianism versus another aid provider who does not. The nearest test of this case can be found in Egypt, where there was a marked shift in Egyptian allegiance from the Soviet Union to the United States in 1978 for reasons totally exogenous to civil-military relations or military aid. For this reason alone, it was important to include Egypt as a case study.

Second, these cases demonstrate the ends of the spectrum in military size and U.S. aid investment: the Gambia is small and Egypt is large. Both nations were U.S. FMAT recipients and, notably, sent servicemembers to National Defense University. If, through process tracing, I can show the hypothesized impact in both countries, then there is some argument for the generalizability of FMAT impact to other nations with similar authoritarian or praetorian
background. Both nations also experienced a significant change in leadership in the time period in focus. Finally, both states display different forms of praetorianism. Table 15 below offers the full accounting of the cases.

Table 15. Case Study Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Military size</th>
<th>U.S. Military Aid</th>
<th>Coup d’etat?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Authoritarian; Newly Democratic</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>History: Yes Successful in 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Kindling”</td>
<td>Size of Armed Forces: 442,100</td>
<td>Total military aid: $40B since 1980</td>
<td>$1.3B per year; additional $1B in arms sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>History: Yes Attempt in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Spark”</td>
<td>Size of Armed Forces: 2,000</td>
<td>Total military aid: $5.2M (1946-2010)</td>
<td>$118,000 (2010); additional $0 in arms sales, though eligible for EDA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget: $14M (2015)</td>
<td>Percent GDP: 1.5%</td>
<td>Total Trainees: 3-5 per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final benefit of these cases is in their representation of how U.S. FMAT can empower specific praetorian leanings in different ways. In Egypt, the story is that of Finer’s “kindling,” an extensive U.S. FMAT relationship predicated on geostrategic rationale that over time reinforced the Egyptian military’s worst praetorian tendencies. In the Gambia, we see instead a manifestation of Finer’s “spark,” where the explicit teachings of U.S. FMAT inspired and empowered a young officer to right his country’s wrongs through military coup. Each of
these cases offers insight into how U.S. FMAT interacted with the specific baskets of military ethics and norms to empower praetorianism to undemocratic ends.

This chapter proceeds in three parts. First, I explore the case of Egypt under three decades of Soviet military aid. This requires a brief history of the Egyptian military and review of historical events in the more than two decades between the establishment of the Egyptian republic and the 1978 Camp David Accords. The second section performs hypothesis testing on the case of contemporary Egypt: describing the type and influence of U.S. aid and exploring its impact in positive or negative professionalization in light of the 2013 military coup. The total of these sections demonstrates that U.S. military aid, unlike other aid providers, enhances and encourages military praetorianism by providing the proverbial “kindling” for military coup. The final section explores the case of the Gambia in 2014, where U.S. professional military education (PME), ignorant of the basket into which it flowed, actually provided Finer’s “spark” for a coup d’etat. Ultimately, this section is designed to test the following hypotheses from Chapter 2:

H1. U.S. intent to professionalize via FMAT increases foreign military corporateness, superiority, and autonomy, increasing the propensity for interventionism in both the institution (“kindling”) and individual (“spark”).
H2. By enhancing military effectiveness, U.S. FMAT exacerbates existing praetorianism in nations with weak civilian institutions and/or authoritarian regimes.
H5. Countries with widely divergent histories from the U.S. democratic tradition (such as military coups, dictatorships, corruption) within the military and wider society will understand civil-military education differently and have divergent outcomes predicated on the unique historical constructs within their bucket of ethics.

--H5A. Militaries in autocratic regimes will experience dissonance when U.S. FMAT’s focus on human rights conflicts with models of subordination to civilian control.

--H5B. Militaries with histories of or latent praetorianism will have higher propensity to intervene.
Egypt: U.S. FMAT as the “Kindling”

“The Egyptian military had never acted as a cohesive, united, corporate body—either in peace or in war.”

The Egyptian case is particularly conducive to study, as the clear onset of U.S. military aid in 1979, the contrast with almost exclusive Soviet aid in the decades previous, and the consistency with which U.S. aid has been applied for over three decades make the comparison of evolving civil-military relations feasible, while other factors are controlled for (to some degree) by using the same nation with the same military apparatus. This section explores how a military can evolve from a negligible military identity and culture to one that ultimately overthrows its first true democratically elected leader in favor of a military coup d’etat. It specifically compares the impact of both Soviet and American military aid and makes the argument that U.S. FMAT enhanced and empowered existing strains of Egyptian praetorianism that were, indirectly, undermined by the Soviet approach. In so doing, the United States built up the kindling that made Egypt ripe for military coup in 2013.

Characterized by a powerful and interventionist military with dominating potential, Egypt can be defined as one of Perlmutter’s praetorian states that vacillates between a more interventionist “ruler army” and a behind-the-scenes “infiltrator army” as it is forced into more or less public confrontations with the ruling regime. In these praetorian states, the armed forces not only wield power from behind the civilian apparatus, but are likely to take direct control of the political apparatus in times of crisis or when the military sees its core interests being threatened. This definition can be further clarified using Kamrava’s typology of

\[\begin{align*}
253 & \text{Ibid.}
\end{align*}\]
“autocratic officer-politician regimes” in which the military institution furnishes a civilianized political leadership, and maintains veto authority through back channels, relationships with the autocratic leader and often strong public support.\textsuperscript{254} Such regimes reflect complicated power sharing models, as the former-military-turned-civilian political leadership derives power and authority from the military enterprise, while simultaneously growing wary of the political power of military backers.

Derek Lutterbeck further suggests that the moderate level of institutionalization of the Egyptian military, coupled with its strong link to society through conscription, make it somewhat open to the reformist movements that characterized the Arab Spring.\textsuperscript{255} His assessment is accurate, although he neglects the historical and cultural mythology that accompanies the Egyptian military’s role as protector of the people and which afford the institution more leeway. His analysis also stops short of addressing Barany’s underlying repercussions associated with a military transition into and then out of a formal governing role – high levels of corporatism offer significant resistance to changes to the status quo if they threaten the institution or officer class, a threat that is heightened during times of crisis.\textsuperscript{256}

It is important to understand that Egypt reflected the praetorian model of civil-military relations before American aid and continues to adhere to the model after decades of assistance. This is crucial to the case study, as the true a test of my theory requires a cultural and historical background that lacks the “embedded democracy” of the U.S. model. Indeed, one could argue

that the United States would have had little need to invest in broad professionalization programs if the Egyptian armed forces already reflected the appropriate democratic model. \(^{257}\) Therefore, the question is not a matter of altering the dynamics of civil-military relations but rather how far the needle can be moved toward or away from praetorian inclinations. The case typing of the theories above suggest that regular large infusions of direct military aid to the Egyptian armed forces may actually increase its autonomy from civilian oversight and empower its sense of independence. Further, professionalization programs may enhance the Egyptian military’s sense of corporateness, particularly within the officer corps, and strengthen the elements of institutionalization that make it beholden to the people rather than to the civilian government.

*Historical Background: Praetorianism and the Egyptian Armed Forces*

Amos Perlmutter argues that the conditions favorable to praetorianism in Egypt date back to the pre-modern era, though the military itself experienced widely differing levels of power across its history. \(^{258}\) His work on the Nasser era focuses more the numerous social conditions that make Egypt more or less favorable to praetorianism – for example, low social cohesion, low levels of political institutionalization, and no established tradition of professionalism – than the military’s praetorianism itself. However, his research is the first to establish the contents of the Egyptian military’s “basket of ethics” into which both Soviet and American aid flowed. We can identify four primary elements that characterize Egyptian praetorianism today that have historical roots. First, *social conditions* that Perlmutter highlights favor a powerful infiltrating or

\(^{257}\) Doing so would neglect the fact that normative professionalization is inseparable from technical professionalization in U.S. military FMAT, so the degree that a recipient nation reflects democratic norms has little to do with whether they are transmitted.

\(^{258}\) Amos Perlmutter (1974).
ruling military. Second, *public image* and support is a core element of Egyptian praetorianism, most clearly derived through the military’s battlefield performance. Third, there exists a strong strain of *secularism* despite being comprised almost exclusively of Muslim servicemembers and defending a quintessentially Muslim country. And fourth, a *corporatism* founded both on an elitist identity and the subsequent economic power that arose through U.S. professionalization programs.

From at least 200 B.C., the Egyptian army was almost entirely mercenary; no native Egyptian, no matter his social status, was required to do military service, an exemption broadly considered a fundamental right. Muhammad Ali, a commander in the Ottoman army who ruled Egypt and Sudan for the Ottoman Empire from 1805-1849, made no attempt to change that tradition as he preferred Egyptians work in agriculture. Forced by the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence to recruit native Egyptians into military service for the first time in 2,000 years, Ali dictated that the Egyptians were not allowed to sit for examinations or be awarded rank. Extended conflict expanded native Egyptian participation but also codified the resentment and unrest of these conscripted soldiers who could not achieve leadership positions and of whom none ultimately held rank greater than Captain. Despite, or perhaps because these failings, Ali represents the first attempt to modernize and reform the largely non-existent Egyptian military system. It is also first time the Egyptian army, now manned by native Egyptians bound by a common discrimination, developed a sense of national consciousness. However, when Ali’s successors were overcome by the British in 1882, the British government under Lord Cromer promptly reduced the nascent Egyptian army to a small native force operating as a branch of the

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259 Ibid., 23-24
Civil Service. This effectively ended any notion of Egyptian military power, much less praetorianism, for more than half a century.

Egypt formally achieved its independence from Britain in 1922 but stayed under British control through the interwar period. Both before independence and for the next 25 years, the Egyptian military was a decidedly weak institution. The British continued to occupy the country until 1947, and while some elements of the Egyptian Army fought alongside British forces in World War II, the British had every incentive to keep the native Egyptian military weak. Until 1948, important for the formation of Israel and the first Arab-Israeli war, “the Egyptian army had little standing with public and a very limited role in government affairs.”260 Its reputation and power was not improved with over a year of humiliating defeats by the Israeli defenders, and many point to the military’s performance as the key element in undermining the British-backed King Farouk.

The military itself certainly blamed the King for its defeat, and in 1952, a group of Egyptian Army officers calling themselves the Free Officers Movement deposed him, setting the framework for over a half-century of autocratic rule. With the exception of a brief flirtation with democracy in 2012, each of the four subsequent rulers – Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954-1970), Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), Hosni Mubarak (1921-2011), and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (2013-present) – came from and ruled with the strong backing of the Egyptian military and security establishment.

While this research does not focus on the Free Officers coup, it remains a clear moment of praetorianism that must be addressed. As several scholars relate, the military was not the real

impetus for King Farouk’s fall. In early 1949, the Free Officers partnered with the increasingly powerful Muslim Brotherhood (MB) led by Sheikh Hasan al-Banna. As part of the growing anti-European nationalism that extended across the Arab world, the MB advocated for Arab and Egyptian self-rule under the auspices of sharia law. Al-Banna had made specific efforts to recruit members of the military, with only limited success. The number of politically active officers in the Egyptian army before 1952 never exceeded 300 of more than 20,000 members; fewer than 50 were real activists. The Muslim Brotherhood also never fully trusted the Free Officers, refusing to seat them on its high councils and using them as instruments vice partners toward the goal of self-rule. Nasser himself was no believer, spouting at various times both Islamist and secular socialist rhetoric, and ultimately betrayed the Muslim Brotherhood after the 1952 coup.

It was in this context and Nasser’s rise to power that the first grain of secularism was planted in the Egyptian military ethic. Despite the Muslim Brotherhood being the primary fomenters of the King’s fall, Nasser established the Revolutionary Command Council without MB participation, and over the course of the next two years began to carefully yet systematically purge all religious influences from government. Unable to directly attack an organization so popular with the citizenry, Nasser slowly consolidated power through loyal appointments and espionage. The campaign culminated when the Muslim Brotherhood declared open war on Nasser’s junta and, in December 1954, the Liberation Court sentenced 19 MB leaders to death. By 1954, the battle lines between military secularism and religious activism were drawn: the new

261 See for example, Tarek Osman’s *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak* (2010) or Steven Cook’s *The Struggle for Egypt* (2012).
262 Perlmutter, p 139
263 Perlmutter, 48-51
Egyptian government under Nasser published its list of ideological commitments, including the secular sentiment “Religion for God’s sake, the Nation for the sake of us all.”

Thus, looking historically, the Egyptian military was not the professional praetorian powerhouse that seized power in 2013. Unquestionably, the societal and cultural characteristics cited in the literature as congruent with military praetorianism were present: low social cohesion, low trust in or existence of political institutions, high social polarity, and ineffective efforts of political parties. But the Egyptian military was weak and incapable of truly capitalizing on these conditions. In fact, that the military ended up taking power in the 1952 coup was almost accidental: it was the Muslim Brotherhood that had instigated, funded, and drawn popular support for self-rule. Absent Nasser’s shrewd campaign for personal power and the military’s passivity in politics, Egypt would likely have shifted to an Islamist state run by leaders of the MB. However, under Nasser, the next decades of Soviet support would present an opportunity to codify the military’s praetorian capabilities.

*Egypt and Soviet Military Aid*

Formally a republic, Egypt has been governed by several versions of constitution which have all generally granted the executive branch and military significant unilateral power. In fact, since 1952, the Egyptian military has gradually grown to be the strongest government entity in the country. Power was far from immediate: despite his military background, Nasser was unable to rebuild the Egyptian military as a competent fighting force even with the significant help of the Soviet Union. To the contrary, military aid offered by the Soviet Union was at best neutral.

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and at worst acted against the Egyptian Army’s praetorian impulses, in three primary ways. First, a weapons-only aid policy facilitated the Egyptian Army’s defeat, losing the support of the Egyptian public. Second, Soviet doctrine did not encourage comprehensive professionalization of foreign forces, meaning no Egyptian servicemembers were sent to Russian military schools or training programs that taught a professional approach. Third, to the degree that communism permeated the army ranks, it discouraged elitism and corporatism within the Egyptian Army, encouraging instead an “of the people” mentality in the officer corps.

The impetus for Soviet involvement with Egypt was no mystery. In the aftermath of World War II, both the Soviet Union and the West saw the Middle East as a critical geostrategic region for competition. Initially wary of Nasser’s western leanings and propensity for prosecuting communists, Moscow saw an opportunity in 1955 when the United States and Great Britain refused to provide the arms necessary for Egypt to retaliate against Israeli cross-border raids. The USSR became the only country willing to provide weaponry to Cairo, and on Sept 27th 1955, Egypt signed an arms agreement for over $200 million in airplanes, tanks, and military equipment with Czechoslovakia using Moscow’s financing.265

Though Soviet aid began as military hardware (indeed, those arms were precisely the proverbial “foot in the door” Moscow needed to pry Egypt away from the West), it also extended economic aid to Cairo. Between 1958 and 1965, the USSR offered $841 million (unadjusted) for industrial projects, wheat loans, and construction of the Aswan High Dam.266 But the bulk of

265 Special Analysis, United States Interest in the Middle East, American Enterprise Institute, Analysis N° 17, Oct. 1968.

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assistance came in the form of military aid. In the first year of cooperation, the USSR delivered an estimated $880 million (unadjusted) of military equipment, including two destroyers, T-24 and JS-III tanks, MiG-15s, IL-28 and IL-12 bombers, and sundry pieces of heavy artillery and light infantry weapons.\textsuperscript{267} In 1956, following the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion, new negotiations resulted in the delivery of submarines and MiG-17s, transport aircraft, and surface ships. By September 1957, Egypt claimed that its military capability had more than doubled since the Suez War. This pattern continued through the early 1960s, with over $840 million (unadjusted) in arms agreements concluded between 1955 and 1963. By the eve of the Six-Day War in June 1967, the Egyptians had received from the USSR: 476 combat aircraft, 25 SAM-2 batteries, 6 destroyers, 18 surface ships, and 1200 tanks and assault guns.\textsuperscript{268}

It’s important to note that, in Soviet style, these arms deliveries were just that. No comprehensive training and education programs, maintenance packages, logistics promises, or multi-year relationships were built on the backs of the arms deals.\textsuperscript{269} Each agreement was short-term; it wasn’t until 1971 that Moscow signed a 15-year arms agreement with Cairo, which would end up lasting only a third of its planned duration.\textsuperscript{270} In fact, Moscow went to great lengths to emphasize the commercial and transactional nature of these sales, in part to insulate themselves with the language of the capitalist West and in part as a realistic reflection of the agreements. The USSR was playing a simple game: sell weapons to gain influence, making Egypt reliant on Moscow for military equipment. Communizing Egyptian politics was a low-

\textsuperscript{267} Ibid., 157
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid., 160
\textsuperscript{269} To be fair, the United States was doing very little differently in this time period, as the focus on professionalism was still two decades away.
\textsuperscript{270} Anderson, Raymond H (May 28, 1971) “Soviet and Egypt Sign 15-year Pact; Aid Will Continue” \textit{New York Times}
priority goal, evidenced by the Soviets repeatedly instructing the Egyptian Communist Party to cease operations lest they spook Nasser. A temporary rift did occur between leaders when Nasser worried about communist influence in Kassem’s newly USSR-leaning Iraq, calling communism the enemy of pan-Arab nationalism. Khrushchev quickly patched things up, personally affirming that the USSR, “has not interfered and does not intend to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries.” Thus, the USSR was not seeking norms transfer or professionalization of the Egyptian military in these initial arms deals, but rather to offload military surplus and develop influence in a geostrategically crucial area of the world.

In 1967, the efficacy of Soviet support would be put to the test. Quantitatively, the Arab forces aligned against Israel in the Six-Days War were overwhelmingly superior. Nevertheless, Nasser’s forces suffered a spectacular defeat, ultimately losing the entire Sinai Peninsula to Israeli forces. Far from creating a professional force, Soviet support had done almost nothing to enhance the military effectiveness of Egyptian armed forces. A focus on hardware alone had left the Egyptian military over-confident and under-prepared; outdated equipment was no match for the modern Israeli arsenal, provided courtesy of the United States and Great Britain, and the Soviets had spent no time or effort training the Egyptians in maintenance, employment, or doctrine. The military “not only withdrew [from Sinai], but in fact it lost its equipment and many soldiers came back running.” The military’s credibility was shredded. According to Nezar Al-Sayyed, chair of UC-Berkeley’s Center for Middle Eastern Studies, “the military became the

\[\text{\small 271 For the text of Khrushchev's speech, see Alvin Z. Rubinstein (ed.), The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union, New York 1966, pp. 412-41}\]
butt of jokes within the Egyptian public.” Its public reputation in tatters and much of its hardware destroyed or captured, the military’s influence and self-esteem was at an all-time low. Despite, or because of Soviet aid, the Egyptian military was further than ever from the powerful praetorian force it would someday become.

Following defeat in 1967, the USSR began a massive resupply to help Egypt recover from its loss and doubled down in its support to the Egyptian military in three ways. First, instead of military surplus, it began to deliver modern weaponry of the caliber used by the current Red Army. According to the Institute for Strategic Studies, “never before (1970) had the Soviet Union injected anything like the quantity of sophisticated military equipment into a non-Communist country in such a short time.”

Second, Moscow offered an unprecedented number of skilled replacement troops: surface-to-air missile sites along the Suez were manned not by Egyptian soldiers, but 3500 to 5000 Soviet technicians; Soviet pilots manned advanced fighter aircraft in defensive patrols, even engaging Israeli fighters in aerial combat. The Egyptian air defense system rapidly became dependent on its Soviet operators, both in tactical proficiency and strategic coordination. The nearest modern-day equivalent might be the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, where in addition to an extensive train-and-equip program, the United States provides nearly sole air support, medical evacuation, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance analysis.

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Third, the USSR began to employ a more robust training program to accompany their weapons deliveries, an early and incomplete prototype of the current U.S. total package approach. Soviet military advisors were assigned for training purposes down to the battalion level, constituting a deployment of over 10,000 personnel across the Egyptian military. These advisors offered largely unwelcome suggestions ranging from how to conduct desert warfare and to “how to replace [the Egyptian] officer corps by a new one whose social origins would assure a greater class harmony with ordinary soldiers.” Concerned that inferior Soviet weaponry and tactics might be blamed for the defeat, the USSR quickly found internal Egyptian sources for blame and established a prerequisite for rebuilding the Egyptian force: purge the armed forces of hundreds of generals and officers who “did not wish to defend the progressive transformation of the republic, and as a result took part in an anti-government conspiracy.” The expediency of this blame was evident: Soviet sources privately assessed the real reason for disaster was instead the military unpreparedness of Egypt, [Saudi Arabia], and Jordan for military action.

These reforms did not last long, and their impact on Egyptian praetorianism was mixed. Egyptian officers were still not invited to Russian military education programs and tactically-focused advising at the battalion level did little to professionalize the Egyptian forces. Resentment of Russian interference meant suggestions beyond low-level adjustments were often dismissed. Strategic suggestions made directly to Nasser, like purging the officer corps, were taken, but only further fractured military leadership system instead of creating a cohesive

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274 Holbik, p 159
276 Ibid. p 13
professional institution. Also, by the end of 1970, an estimated 12,000 Russian operators manned air defense sites, 200 pilots flew defense sorties, and an additional 9,000 offered training and advisory missions.\(^{277}\) This meant that the most technically-skilled “professional” positions were not held by Egyptians at all, reducing corporate pride and decreasing the number of long-serving highly-skilled professionals in the Egyptian military body. Even Cairo recognized that while the Soviet presence discouraged Israeli attack, it did not bolster Egypt’s native military capability.

When Nasser was assassinated in 1970, his successor, Anwar Sadat picked up the mantel of military reform. Convinced that the only way to recover the self-esteem and honor of the Arab people was by decisive military victory over Israel, he demanded advanced military weaponry and chafed at Soviet hesitance to provide it. Soviet military personnel were increasingly unwelcome across the country: rude stories were told about Russians haggling over food prices in markets and the Egyptian military fumed at the arrogance of Russians barring even high-ranking Egyptian officers from Soviet bases.\(^{278}\) Fed up with Soviet restrictions and under pressure to do something to end the War of Attrition, in July 1972, Sadat expelled all Russian military personnel from Egypt so he could pursue vindication with the Yom Kippur War of 1973. While arms sales continued to trickle in, Moscow’s five-year flirtation with the “total package approach” to military assistance was over.

The Yom Kippur War offered a form of restoration for the flagging Egyptian military. *U.S. News and World Report* called Arab advances “unprecedented military successes” while the *New York Times* expressed surprise that the Arab militaries were capable of using and servicing

\(^{277}\) Ibid, 15
\(^{278}\) Ibid, 19
modern weapons while advancing in battle.\textsuperscript{279} The Cairo correspondent for \textit{Pravda} wrote, “stepping across the Suez canal was, for the Egyptian soldier, a step across the 1967 defeat….the Egyptian people gained confidence in their own forces.”\textsuperscript{280} The war was ultimately a draw, with Western powers pressuring the USSR to broker a peace agreement. The UN-enforced agreement came too late, however, for the Egyptian Army’s reputation: after the agreement was signed but before the ceasefire had reached the front lines, the Egyptian Third Army was entirely encircled by Israeli forces and, but for the ceasefire, would have surrendered or been annihilated. The mixed result of conflict had a mirroring impact on the military. The public and private images of the Egyptian military was improved slightly, and both civilians and soldiers drew confidence that Egyptian forces did not need Russian surrogates to operate efficiently. And military leadership learned another important lesson that would characterize their future arms-purchasing arrangements: the value of high-grade weapons systems.

Though Moscow had continued to resupply Egyptian troops throughout the conflict with a veritable air bridge of weapons and ammunition, the relationship was nearly over. In 1974, Sadat announced a desire to diversify its sources of military aid, and over the coming years tensions increased while arms shipments slowed. Egypt complained bitterly of Russian duplicity and failure to provide modern equipment; Russia responded with demands for cash payments and attacks on the Egyptian government as imperialist and an American supplicant. The stage was set for the United States to assume its aid role in 1979.

Overall, the Soviet relationship with Egypt is perhaps best characterized by Nasser’s statement to Alexander Shelepin in January of 1969: "I always tell my Arab friends and our own

\textsuperscript{279} Hopkins, p 29
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid.
Egyptian people that, even if the Russians are slow, in the end they give us what we want. That is the important thing; and it is what makes them different from the Americans.”281 From 1955 to the end of 1973, Egypt received $3.1 billion (unadjusted) in Soviet military aid, more than 15% of the total aid Moscow offered to other nations, including Warsaw Pact countries and North Vietnam.282 However, only a short five years of this relationship constituted anything more than military hardware delivery, and even the Soviet version of the “total package approach” fell far short of the U.S. version: no educational programs attempted to imbue professionalism, training was limited to tactical levels, and Russian operators manned the most sophisticated platforms, occupying the critical tactical, operational, and strategic nodes of air defense. A crushing military defeat in 1967 and mixed result in 1973 highlighted the lack of Egyptian military effectiveness and tarnished their reputation and influence with the public, government leaders, and internally. Purges and socialist promotion practices eroded military corporatism, leaving the institution weak. The end result was an unprofessional and ineffective force, degraded in the public eye, and far from its praetorian potential.

It’s important to note that this did not mean the Egyptian military lacked praetorian leanings during the Soviet assistance era, but rather that Soviet aid did not exacerbate – and in fact undermined – them. During the Soviet era of support, praetorianism was nurtured by Nasser and Sadat themselves. Nasser was aware that on the whole, the officer corps was not political and that those that were political were divided in their loyalties. The Free Officers movement was led by the Free Officers Corps (FOC) a hand-picked group of politically minded and loyal

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military members. Non-political officers and new recruits were purged from the FOC’s successor, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), as Nasser consolidated power. The military high command and cabinet were purged of RCC opposition. But as the RCC grew more powerful, Nasser checked its influence with lower-level loyalties: he garnered support from divisional commanders who were nonpolitical career soldiers, and while supporting power was still derived from the military, Nasser was no longer dependent on senior ranking officers. This, however made Nasser vulnerable to the complaints of the army, including pressure for more numerous and advanced weapons from the USSR.

The military debacle of 1967 and subsequent purge may have lessened military reputation and influence in the public, but it only increased pressure on Nasser for the means to rehabilitate the army’s image. In particular, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim ‘Amer, nick-named “Father-in-Chief” of the Army, acted as both the advocate for the rank and file of the military profession and as the chief military spy overseeing the officer corps.‘Amer culled deviant (non-Nasserist) political ideology from the ranks, heralding it as an apolitical and professional military ideal. This was yet another instance of the Egyptian military beginning to equate “professionalism” with something highly political, deeply praetorian, and decidedly different than the American definition. Upper military echelons, trained that their professionalism and non-interference was predicated on domination and representation by a small political group in the high command, had fundamentally confused the meaning of professionalism from that which U.S. military members would recognize. In fact, it was ‘Amer and his cabal who clandestinely planned for the 1967 showdown with Israel and who ultimately secured Nasser’s support for the

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283 Perlmutter, 175

197
disastrous operation. By the end of 1967, the military was betrayed by Nasser, who blamed the
catastrophe squarely on the officer corps. ‘Amer demanded Nasser either take all the blame and
resign, or share the blame with ‘Amer and resign together. Instead, and with the support of the
USSR, Nasser began a historically unprecedented political purge, dismissing officers all the way
into the mid-level and junior ranks. ‘Amer’s abortive coup attempt and his subsequent suicide ended the crisis, but indelibly harnessed the military to the world of politics. Strong personal
support among the newly purged military carried over to Anwar Sadat’s promise to continue the
Nasserite legacy, and power remained deeply vested in the supportive and powerful army
bureaucracy.

What can be learned from this portion of the Egyptian case? Despite praetorian indicators in society, a weakly corporate Egyptian military was actually undermined by the
weapons-only military assistance and brief dabble in advice and training offered by the USSR.
Neither low- nor high-tech weaponry provision moved the praetorian needle, an important
observation when comparing to U.S. FMAT that goes far above and beyond delivering the
proverbial shiny object. If we see increased or decreased praetorianism under U.S. FMAT it is
not likely to be due to the type, quality, or quantity of weapons provided. Military
effectiveness was not enhanced by Soviet cooperation and the Egyptian military suffered a
corresponding loss of prestige in the public eye. This will be a key differentiator for my
hypotheses when we proceed to U.S. FMAT. Provision of military aid was mostly concrete vice

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284 Accounts vary as to whether ‘Amer’s suicide was voluntary, ordered, or in fact murder. Al-Youm, Al-Masry. (May 5, 2015) Abdel Hakim Amer’s family: The Field Marshal’s death was murder. Egypt Independent, http://www.egyptindependent.com/abdel-hakim-amer-s-family-field-marshals-death-was-murder/
285 Contrary to many of the measurement mechanisms of the U.S. security cooperation enterprise, which counted the ratios of Soviet to US tanks as a measure of professionalism.
monetary, though the USSR did suspend payment requirements on loans and offer some modicum of monetary assistance. This presented some fungibility for displacing funds, but not the potential for slush fund use that we will see in the American case. The time period of aid provision across roughly two decades offers sufficient temporal comparison to the U.S. cooperation period; different time periods are a possible albeit unlikely cause of differentiation in results. The geostrategic pressure Egypt felt was perhaps even greater in the early years of the establishment of Israel than in the period of U.S. assistance, suggesting an even higher likelihood for praetorian influence under Soviet aid models since the stakes would have been perceived to be higher. Finally, the degree to which that the military remained influential in politics was almost exclusively due to Egyptian political leadership – Nasser and Sadat – and their actions led to a corrupted understanding of what military professionalism meant in the Egyptian military mind.

_Egypt and U.S. Military Aid (1979 – present)_

In 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter brokered the Camp David Accords between Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem. The agreement went into effect in 1979, and a critical element of the deal was the U.S. commitment to provide massive amounts military aid to both Israel and Egypt. Though the Accords were certainly beneficial for establishing some level of peace between these warring nations, they are also beneficial for this research project. The Accords present a mostly exogenous break between Soviet and American military aid, allowing me to assess two different typologies of aid within the same country. The geostrategic nature of the decision to provide aid also eliminates the
potential for endogeneity: the United States did not begin military aid in order to professionalize Egyptian forces, spread democracy, or prevent coup in a particularly praetorian nation. Rather, high levels of military aid were a *quid pro quo* for regional stability. That said, the already deep praetorian conditions were not accounted for in the U.S. aid package and, as we will see, the unique U.S. approach to professionalization only encouraged and enhanced the military’s praetorian power.

Jumping forward slightly more than 30 years, the 2011 Arab Spring brought millions of Egyptians to the streets to protest the rule of 80-year-old Hosni Mubarak. Though it initially remained silent, the Egyptian military ultimately turned against its leader and commander-in-chief, stating that its duty was to the people of Egypt. Mubarak was deposed and a period of military rule by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) followed, but public opinion quickly turned against the military government whom the people (and the international community) felt were delaying a democratic turn-over. In 2012, after encoding military power into the new constitution, the SCAF was disbanded and Egypt’s first free and fair democratic elections brought the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Morsi to the presidency.

Almost exactly a year later, Egyptian supreme commander Lt. Gen. Abdul-Fattah al-Sisi deposed Morsi after he failed to agree to the SCAF’s ultimatum: meet protesters’ demands for a more inclusive government that would permit strong opposition parties or be forced from office.

This case explores the role of U.S. military aid across those 30 years in setting the conditions for Egypt’s first military coup in more than half a century. Far from enhancing subordination to civilian control and U.S. PME desires, it appears that American military aid enhanced and empowered the praetorian ethics of the Egyptian armed forces: increasing the
military prestige, corporateness, and secularism that provided the “kindling” for the Egyptian military coup of 2013.

As described, Egypt fits the praetorian model of civil-military relations, but the leadership role of the armed forces has shifted with (r)evolutions in the political landscape. Generally preferring to remain in the background, secure in its political, economic, and social power but without the scrutiny and disillusion of governance, the Egyptian armed forces grudgingly cast off their veneer of subordination in 2013 and took an active rulership role. However, an unclear legal structure and history of shared power arrangements in Egyptian civil-military relations describe the basket into which U.S. military aid was introduced.

On paper, the Egyptian military is subordinate to the civilian leadership, although it is granted a level of autonomy and specific powers incomparable in the American civil-military system. The president is a civilian that is also constitutionally the highest ranking officer in the military, much like the American Commander-in-Chief. A cabinet made up of political appointees provide leadership and oversight of the functional areas of the Egyptian government including the military. A parliament—comprised of an upper and lower house—gathers popularly elected individuals to form committees which further regulate government affairs and apportion money and legislation to the national security apparatus. A clause in the now defunct 1971 constitution specifically dictates that the Egyptian armed forces “shall belong to the people,” a phrase taken to heart by both the military and public. Officers take an oath of office to the Republic of Egypt—the laws and state—rather than to a specific president, but also promise to obey their command authority which culminates with the president as the supreme commander of the armed forces.
This unclear legal structure is compounded by the over 50 years of military entrenchment in governmental leadership, some of which was described above. In addition to the former military officers turned politicians who have ruled Egypt prior to Israel’s defeat of Egypt in 1967, no fewer than eight and as many as 20 cabinet members were active military officers. Moreover, a provision that reserves half of the seats in the lower house for “farmers” and “workers” provides a vehicle for retired military personnel to enter politics.²⁸⁶ “In reality 90 percent of the ‘farmers’” are former military officers and these men quickly populate the National Security and Defense Committees tasked with providing supervision and oversight to their former service.²⁸⁷ In another example, the military uses regime-appointed provincial governorships to distribute patronage. These positions are often rewards for long-term service to the reigning autocrat because their monopoly on local projects make them a lucrative endeavor; during the Mubarak era approximately three-quarters of these seats were filled with military, security, or intelligence service personnel.²⁸⁸ This proportion only increased in the months following the 2011 revolution. The degree of formal governmental influence of Egyptian military officers is important not because it has significantly changed since 1979, but rather because the budgetary and political monopoly exercised by the military over their own funding streams augments the effect of the American aid – although military aid money is ostensibly given to the “Egyptian government,” it is wielded directly by military actors.

This description paints a picture of the nation into which U.S. military aid began to flow in 1979. Initially, military assistance was set at $1.5 billion over three years in a mix of loans

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 3
²⁸⁸ Ibid., p 4.
and grants. However, by 1985, the Reagan administration had converted all the loans to grants totaling over $1 billion. The annual total U.S. aid to Egypt for the following three decades averaged $1.55 billion; $1.3 billion of this money was exclusively foreign military aid, with an additional $250 million in economic aid and $1 million in dedicated IMET funds. Egypt also received hundreds of millions in Excess Defense Article (EDA) transfers, whereby the U.S. military sells or gives outdated equipment to foreign militaries. Figure 12 plots U.S. assistance to Egypt, while Table 16 offers a truncated view of U.S. aid to Egypt. As we can see, U.S. assistance prior to 1978 was entirely economic; military aid did not start in earnest until 1979, and in 1983 it was pegged to the negotiated $1.3 billion annual allotment that has continued for over 30 years. The only major deviation from this sum occurred in 2014, as the Obama Administration dealt with the ramifications of General Abdel al-Sisi’s military coup.

Figure 12. U.S. Assistance to Egypt, 1946-2011


289 Cook (2012), p 218
Table 16. U.S. Foreign Aid to Egypt, 1926-2017

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The $1.3 billion in military aid provided by the United States covers approximately 80% of the procurement costs for the Egyptian military and approximately one-third of its overall budget. By means of comparison, Egypt is the second-largest recipient of U.S. military aid over the last 30 years, and has only recently dropped to fourth place behind Iraq and Afghanistan. Most of the budget is allocated to purchasing or upgrading American military equipment from American companies, including large purchases of tanks and fighter aircraft in addition to missiles, radios, and other equipment. As Figure 13 demonstrates, the amount of military aid dwarfs comparative funding in economic aid; while Egypt ranks second overall in

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291 Martini, p. 5
292 In contrast, the single greatest recipient of US military aid, Israel, receives approximately $2.5 billion annually, which represents less than 18% of its overall defense budget.
military aid, it is 32\textsuperscript{nd} in economic assistance.\textsuperscript{293} This disparity coupled with the largely physical output of the funding (in the form of weapons) grossly favors the Egyptian armed forces over the civilianized government as recipients of money and power.

![Figure 13. U.S. Assistance to Egypt, 2001-2014](image)

\textit{Figure 13. U.S. Assistance to Egypt, 2001-2014 (Annual Appropriations in Current U.S. $)}


Justification for the massive and consistent injection of aid aligns with U.S. interests and regional stability: “interests include maintaining U.S. naval access to the Suez Canal, maintaining the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty, and promoting democracy and growth within Egypt, the region’s largest Arab country.”\textsuperscript{294} Additional interests such as supporting the

\textsuperscript{293} Again, compared to Israel, Egypt receives a wildly disproportionate ratio of military to economic aid. In Israel, economic aid over the past decades has exceeded or matched military aid, fluctuating between $2 and $3 billion dollars apiece. Recent reductions aimed at reaching only $120 million per year are part of a broader effort to make Israel economically independent.

floundering Egyptian economy in order to forestall added chaos, retaining uninhibited access to Egyptian air and sea lanes, and keeping American arms manufacturers in business have arisen over time. Evidence indicates that Egypt accepts this deal in exchange for peace with Israel. A 2009 embassy cable released by Wikileaks states:

President Mubarak and military leaders view our military assistance program as the cornerstone of our mutual relationship and consider the USD 1.3 billion in annual FMF as “untouchable compensation” for making and maintaining peace with Israel.

Quantitatively, aid was predicated on an informal 2:3 ratio: Egypt would receive two-thirds of whatever Israel received. Qualitatively, the U.S. committed to Israel to always preserve its Qualitative Military Edge (QME) by providing equipment and software unavailable to its Arab neighbors. Though the ratio and QME were never formally agreed to in 1979, the Egyptians zealously guarded the concept and continually benchmarked their aid requests against Israeli outlays.

Regardless of the variety of motives and justifications for creating and maintaining the U.S. – Egyptian military aid program, it is important to note that one clearly stated goal is to promote democracy within Egypt. This goal is presumably antithetical to programs that

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295 Just last year, the United States flew more than 2000 armed air sorties through Egyptian airspace and moved warships to the head of the line in transiting the Suez Canal over 40 times.

296 When suggestions that aid be suspended after human rights crackdowns in 2011, Secretary of State Clinton waived the provisions of aid disbursement. Evidence indicates that she did so because “a delay or cut in the $1.3 billion in military aid to Egypt risked breaking existing contracts with American arms manufacturers that could have shut down productions lines in the middle of President Obama’s re-election campaign and involved significant financial penalties.” Myers, Steven Lee (2012). “Once Imperiled, US Aid to Egypt is Restored.” New York Times, March 23, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/24/world/middleeast/once-imperiled-united-states-aid-to-egypt-is-restored.html?r=0


298 In reality, it was much more complicated than this, as both nations availed themselves of other programs (EDA, BPC, CTFP) to add to their capabilities. Cook (2012), p 223
empower the military elite and encourage a military coup d’etat, especially in a nation with a history of coups and deep praetorian leanings. This leads us to our hypothesis testing: does the massive aid program achieve its contextual objective of professionalizing the Egyptian military and thereby bringing them willingly under civilian control, or undermine it by exacerbating the autonomy, corporateness, and elitism that provide the kindling for military rule?

Unlike the Soviet case, there are few major political or military events to point to in the decades between the onset of U.S. military aid and the Arab Spring, Egyptian revolution, and military coup that occurred in 2011-2013 – indeed, Hazem Kandil calls the period from 1974 to 2011 “the long lull before the perfect storm.” Combined with the absolute consistency in quantity and quality of U.S. aid (a drawback to its exogenous impetus), this makes careful process tracing somewhat difficult. However, by focusing on the economic consolidation of military power, the role of the military in driving both internal and external security, and the United States’ own responses to the provision of FMAT to Egypt, the evolving picture becomes clearer. Key events in this time period include Mubarak’s solidification of power from 1981-1987 including the deployment of the army to Cairo to quell an uprising by the Central Security paramilitary force; the Egyptian role in coalition efforts to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait in 1991; and of course the events and statements surrounding the 2011-2013 Egyptian revolution, brief experiment with democracy, and subsequent military coup. To further flesh out the impact of military aid on praetorianism, I also use the economic, political, and public power of the military at the onset of U.S. aid in 1979 as a baseline and compare it to the contemporary Egyptian military clout in the same areas after three decades of U.S. FMAT.

As a final clarifying point, I am testing whether U.S. aid *empowers existing* praetorian leanings through a variety of mechanisms and, to some degree, separately asking whether the aid increases the probability of military intervention via coup. Distinguishing the test this way is important because for an infiltrator army such as Egypt, the two results may align or diverge. U.S. FMAT may increase the power of the praetorian infiltration as suggested, making coup less likely because it is unnecessary, or FMAT could conversely weaken praetorian infiltration, making a military intervention more likely if the military stands to lose power. What we will see in the case of Egypt is that not only is U.S. professionalization not changing the values sets of the Egyptian officer corps toward democratic civil-military relations, both power praetorianism and coup propensity are increasing with U.S. aid.

*Inducing Professionalism via Military Aid?*

Any good research must first consider that the hypothesis is wrong; that is, that U.S. professionalization might have the impact it intends in enhancing both technical skill and adherence to democratic norms. Having established that the praetorianism in Egypt existed prior to U.S. aid onset, I endeavor to give FMAT the benefit of the doubt and test the possibility that it actually did decrease or inhibit praetorian leanings.

There are some observers of Egyptian military history that point to the Free Officer’s coup of 1952 and Nasser’s reign as the high-point of Egyptian praetorianism.\(^{300}\) These

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journalists and academics usually identify the military’s humiliation in 1967 as the culminating point for praetorianism, after which the Egyptian officer corps retreated from politics and played an ever-decreasing role in society, “staying in their barracks” as the phrase usually goes. If true, on its surface, this version of history could undermine my hypothesis about U.S. military aid exacerbating praetorianism in Egypt, since that very aid didn’t even begin until a decade after the supposed apex of power.

However, even if this trajectory were true, my hypothesis could still be valid in two ways. First, the public withdrawal from politics could mask an even greater infiltration in the political apparatus. Recognizing, as many “infiltrator armies” do, that politics in the public eye are fraught with consequences, ownership, and blame, the Egyptian military may have actually consolidated and empowered their praetorianism by pulling it out of the spotlight. This makes even more sense when considered in the context of U.S. professionalization: strategically, the best way to guarantee the influx of money and equipment from the American “embedded democracy” programming would be to ensure you didn’t do anything that would showcase insubordination or praetorian leanings. The second way that my hypothesis may be true even if the Egyptian military truly returned to their barracks is in considering the end state: an originally praetorian military, gradually disempowered by civilian masters and constrained externally levied requirements, might ultimately emerge to retake their perceived rightful place in leadership via military rule or military coup.

On the superficial level, the Egyptian military appears to mimic the idealized civil-military relations model associated with Western democracy. Since the mid-1980s, the military has eschewed open political partisanship, voluntarily refraining from voting in popular elections
or publicly supporting candidates. Joel Benin of Stanford University calls this a “neutral patriotism” where the military is the guarantor of unpopular regimes without losing public trust by being visibly linked to them. Mark Cooper points to the demilitarization of the Egyptian cabinet through the 1970s and 80s, but even this reduction of political power still permitted strong military independence: technical functions such as Military Transportation or Civil Aviation were left in the hands of officers, and the Ministry of Defense continued to be run by a commanding general. The influence of this latter position cannot be understated: its occupation by uniformed personnel ensures that the military escapes any parliamentary or civil oversight. The efficacy of this evidence is uncertain: just as the reduction in formal military sway appears to be more closely linked to power battles between the president and military authority – such as when Anwar Sadat went through seven Ministers of Defense in nine years as he tried to wrest control of the military from its generals – than to any impact of U.S. professionalization efforts. This mimics the Soviet era, when it was Egyptian leadership who had the most influence over the levers of praetorian intent. However, the military’s tendency to lean away from the spotlight and adopt the language of democracy did not begin until the 1980s, after U.S. training and educational aid began flowing. This could indicate that U.S. professionalization programs were indeed transferring democratic norms and values. However, in light of the military coup of 2013 and anti-democratic violence, it appears more likely to be the mirroring discussed in chapter three – a superficial adoption of American language, no doubt

301 Kechichian, Joseph and Jeanne Nazimek (2000).
304 Gotowicki, p. 13
learned though FMAT programming, that U.S. military partners were predisposed to accept and reward.

However, there is a greater proportion of evidence that suggests the myth of the retreat to the barracks was mostly for show, if it truly occurred at all. Steven Cook offers a theory with more evidentiary support:

Notwithstanding the trend in which senior commanders have become adept in the discourse of democratization and liberalization, military officers [in Egypt] have over time demonstrated less interest in progressive political programs than in protecting the prevailing political order from which the commanders derive significant benefit…On the surface it seemed as if the Egyptian political system was becoming more open, but the military-political elite actually retained and refined the means of control.\(^{305}\)

Far from a “retreat to the barracks,” the Egyptian military has learned to allow for the appearance of pluralism, concealing themselves behind democratic or bureaucratic institutions but retaining a firm grip on the levers of power. For example, in addition to the officers that staff the president (and the president himself, drawn from the military culture and both resistant to and complicit in its praetorianism), a majority of the 26 governors are senior ranking military and police officers who remove their uniforms for their positions.\(^{306}\) Their purpose is to root out anything that might challenge institutional equities, including anything that might look like actual popular political empowerment; their masquerade as civilians insulates the military from critique. Unlike the humiliating period after the military’s swift defeat in 1967, the evolved democratic veneer means public dissatisfaction is directed at civilian leadership, insulating the military from any prospect for blame and permitting them to focus on their own corporate

\(^{305}\) Cook (2007), p 15, 26

\(^{306}\) Ibid., p 26
interests: nominally, military capability and economic success. This insulation is particularly important in Egypt, where much of the military’s prestige derives from popular nationalism.

Military Effectiveness

The first, and most simple, expected outcome of my theory comes from the relationship between the Egyptian military’s effectiveness and praetorianism. I suggest that increased military effectiveness (skill, flexibility, initiative, and competence-based promotion) will cut coup-proofing constraints such as senior leader loyalty or general military incompetence. However, my theory founders on the basic conclusion that U.S. professionalization did not enhance the Egyptian military’s effectiveness at all. In his seminal work, *Arabs at War*, Ken Pollack details the failure (and frustration) of U.S. military professionalization efforts to imbue the Egyptian military with the hallmarks of military effectiveness: initiative, decentralized execution, combined arms operations, flexibility and responsiveness, and basic skill capabilities. He reports that even after decades of training, all tactical and operational engagements (even simple training flights) are heavily scripted: “they know where to turn, when to pretend to fire munitions, and who is going to win” before they ever take-off.”307 The highly centralized command structure is utterly unable to delegate, and when the rare delegation occurs, junior officers and tactical commanders demonstrate no initiative to act without approval. Egyptian military performance in Desert Storm (1990-91) was similarly rigid, set-piece, slow to respond and uncoordinated.308 In terms of skills, DoD and military officers who have worked with

308 Ibid. p 139-142
Egyptians “unanimously agree that Egyptian enlisted personnel are incapable of performing military tasks requiring the use of equipment more sophisticated than a rifle or a shovel.”

Though, according to Pollack, by the mid-1980s the core of the Egyptian military had shed their Soviet practices through reciprocal training programs facilitated by FMAT, the conclusion was clear:

The Gulf War revealed what U.S. military personnel had privately admitted for years: that despite fifteen years of American aid, advice, and training, Egyptian military effectiveness had improved little, if any, since the Arab-Israeli wars.

While Pollack’s analysis stops in 1991, the sentiments regarding the performance of the Egyptian military have changed little. In dealing with ISIS-Sinai, Pentagon staff routinely lamented the clumsy, slow, and ham-fisted efforts by the Egyptian military to protect the United Nations mission forces on the peninsula.

The core mechanism identified which may undermine coup-proofing and potentially increase praetorian power was an adjustment to meritocratic promotion systems, as doing so might undermine the systems of loyalty and patronage civilian leaders emplace to protect them from military intervention. Again, there are mixed results in this realm: though the military promotion system nominally emphasized merit over political loyalty in accordance with U.S. professionalization efforts, Mubarak increasingly assigned senior command billets primarily on the basis of political connections and clout vice competence and experience. Additional evidence indicates that, after clashing with a particular general officer who was favored both by

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309 Ibid., p 138
310 Ibid., p 142
311 Author’s experience.
312 Pollack (2002), p 138-9
the United States and the public, Mubarak made efforts to limit U.S. influence in the military by constraining the career paths of American-trained officers.\textsuperscript{313} Thus, it appears that military effectiveness characterized both by the capability of the forces and the meritorious promotion of competent leaders did not take hold in Egypt allowing coup-proofing techniques to remain intact. However, praetorianism remained strong – Mubarak’s political appointees were still military officers, just ones he trusted were not deeply influenced by the Americans.

It is worth setting the professionalization hypothesis test aside for a moment and remembering the initial null possibility discussed in the first portion of this project: that U.S. FMAT doesn’t accomplish its stated goals. Despite the amount of FMF funding pegged at $1.3 billion per year, thousands of Egyptian servicemembers trained and educated at U.S. schools and by Americans in Egyptian training programs, millions of dollars in equipment sold or transferred to Egyptian military, and dozens of combined military exercises across more than three decades, both scholars of military strategy and knowledgeable members of the U.S. defense community flatly state that Egyptian military effectiveness is no better today than it was when the Russians left in the mid-1970s.\textsuperscript{314} Understanding why the second largest FMAT partner has not improved in over three decades is beyond the scope of this project but is certainly worthy of deeper investigation. Undoubtedly, at least part of the answer lies in the mismatch between Egypt’s basket of initial conditions (to include praetorianism, culture, and politics) and the fact that the one-size-fits-all U.S. program could not and did not adjust to them.

\textsuperscript{314} Pollack, p 146.
Military Aid and Prestige

All that said, there remains one possible outcome for praetorianism based not on military effectiveness, but rather the prestige that comes from perceived effectiveness. Linking the relationship between the Egyptian military’s effectiveness, popularity, and praetorianism, I suggest that increasing levels of perceived military effectiveness will also increase praetorianism by increasing public support for military forces, thereby affording them more power as a political actor. Civilian leaders will be afraid to cut funding, reduce force levels, fire popular generals, or do anything that might be cast as anti-military. This thesis is derived from the literature and from observations of recent U.S. civil-military dynamics: in the age of “support the troops,” any hint that an American politician is anti-military can torpedo their career.

The Egyptian case supports this theory. Before the onset of American military aid, there was a linkage between the lack of public support and the poor performance of Egyptian forces in 1967. That lack of public support undermined the military’s political influence both publicly and privately: Nasser not only blamed the military for the loss but proceeded to purge the ranks with no resultant public outcry. In fact, the lack of public support for the military was just the opening Nasser needed to get rid of political opposition and consolidate control over a powerful military institution.

The provision of high-tech American equipment, prized by the Egyptians, almost certainly raised both their internal sense of eliteness and external perceptions of capability. For example, the Egyptian military routinely paraded their American F-16s and M1A1 Abrams tanks for public holidays – even though their ability to maintain or operate that equipment in combat was negligible. Risa Brooks reports that “Egyptian generals consistently lobby for high-
technology, high-prestige weapons systems” more for their ability to enhance military image than improve their battlefield effectiveness. My experience both in the State Department Office of Regional Security and Arms Transfer and the Pentagon Joint Staff unequivocally supports her observation: an Egyptian Air Force officer confessed that they trained in older F-4s, rarely flying their F-16s in part to ensure they remain in pristine condition for public displays.

However, the Egyptian military has had scant opportunity to demonstrate their prowess in combat after the onset of U.S. military aid. The two primary opportunities were their participation in Desert Storm, which was wildly opposed by the general Egyptian public (a situation that will be explored later) and their fight against ISIS, during which the Egyptian military has placed special emphasis on areas important to the Egyptian people: notably Cairo and the tourist destinations of Sharm al-Sheik, but not on the Sinai peninsula or along the largely uninhabited western border with Libya. Despite (or because) the Egyptian military has had little opportunity to repeat the mistakes of 1967, Egyptian society generally holds their armed forces in high regard. They are seen as technically competent, trustworthy, loyal, and above the political machinations and corruption that characterize the autocracies and bureaucracies of Egypt’s civilian leaders. Public approval ratings continually hover around 90% and are unmatched by any other element of society. Because of Egypt’s proximity to contested regions and its effort to play a powerful role in the Middle East and North Africa, issues of national security and defense are at the forefront of the public mind and privilege the institution responsible for protecting the people. Both the Egyptian public and the military value the constitutional mandate which decrees the Egyptian armed forces’ responsibility and

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315 Brooks, p 29
316 Martini, p. 6
subordination to the “people of Egypt” as opposed to any formal office, document, or civilian leader.\textsuperscript{317} Both the military and the people view the armed forces as legitimate protectors of common Egyptians from threats, foreign and domestic – indeed, it is from the public that the Egyptian military believes it derives its power and legitimacy.\textsuperscript{318} The armed forces work hard to cultivate this image, leading scholars to observe that all the democratic rhetoric masks an effort by the generals to “create a system of carefully shaped institutions that will preserve their power and reduce chances that any single political group can challenge them.”\textsuperscript{319} Given the degree to which the Egyptian public link military prestige with battlefield prowess, the vast array of U.S. arms and appearance of military effectiveness certainly bolstered the military’s image and, consequently, its influence both in government and the public square. Thus, while actual increases in military effectiveness did not occur in Egypt, and hence could not undermine coup-proofing and increase the probability of coup, the perception and prestige associated with high-tech U.S. weapons systems with no chance to showcase incompetence did increase the political power of the military through its deep public support.

\textit{Empowering Praetorian Leanings via Military Aid – Autonomy and Corporateness}

The single broadest source of military power in Egypt lies in its corporatist identity built on economic foundations. Omar Ashour identifies the Egyptian system as the “armed


\textsuperscript{318} This element will be an important component of the assessment of the Egyptian military’s actions after protests began in Tahir Square. “Officers clearly believed that the armed forces remained the repository for the legitimacy of the Egyptian state, the groups that led the uprising in Tahir believed that legitimacy rested with them.” Steven Cook (2012) \textit{The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahir Square} (Oxford University Press: New York, 2012) p 301

\textsuperscript{319} Martini, p. 2
institutional racketeering model” in which the military considers itself an “intact institution that believes in its superiority compared to any other state institution, including elected bodies as well as civilian judicial ones.” The corporatist identity then requires the military to fight for its specific privileges, such as economic benefits and veto power in high politics. So long as that privilege and autonomy are preserved, the military can be quite noble in its democratizing intent. Though the political history and social support bolster this racketeering model, it is the Egyptian military’s economic involvement that seals it.

Two primary factors contributed to the massive expansion in military autonomy and corporatism post-1979. The first was internally driven: first Sadat and then Mubarak pursued a policy of intifah, or “open door,” that was designed to open the Egyptian economy to privatization, commercialization, and private capital. The second was a direct result of U.S. FMAT programs. In 1981, shortly after the establishment of the annual $1.3 billion aid contribution, Anwar Sadat was assassinated and Hosni Mubarak took over as head-of-state. Mubarak moved swiftly to capitalize on the influx of American dollars, expanding and modernizing the military force. But perhaps more importantly, American aid coupled with Mubarak’s shift to economic liberalism in the 1990s combined to create the most corporate and capitalist force Egypt had ever seen. According to Al-Sayyed, “the military became an economic company, if you will…it became an enterprise.”

320 Ashour, p. 2
321 Ibid., p. 3
322 To be clear, corporatism goes beyond economics to a mindset that values the institution and its interests over those of civilian control. But a corporate mentality is difficult to measure directly; using economics and business as a proxy is an effective course of action.
In the 1980s, the military expanded into and collaborated with the private sector under the leadership of Defense Minister Field Marshal Abdel al-Halim Abu Ghazala. The Egyptian military is currently estimated to contribute between 25% and 40% of the Egyptian GDP, making it the single largest contributor to the Egyptian economy. It does so through military industries including moderate arms exports and production of civilian goods in military production facilities; through agriculture and infrastructure projects; and through private sector military-owned businesses ranging from bread factories to hotels to chemical plants. The military’s expansion since the 1980s into manufacturing, agriculture, construction, land, and even tourism were initially justified on the grounds that the military is best equipped to lead these fields. Profits from these activities are considered entirely off-book and return to the military’s coffers through the same oversight system that determines budgets – namely, the parliamentary committees manned by former officers. The Egyptian Army in particular possesses extensive land and business holdings and is currently comprised of nearly half a million personnel. And as the military’s economic power increased, so too did its civil and political capabilities.

But how does this relate to U.S. military FMAT? First, and simply, the massive amount of military aid (which funds 80% of the Egyptian military’s procurement budget, much of the senior professional education, and all of its sustainment and logistics costs) permits state funds to be spent on other military enterprises, specifically those desired by the military corps. This, in

324 ElMahdi, Rabab (2011) “Civil-Military Relations in Egypt” The Arabist, p. 3
325 Brooks, p 27
turn, buys military support for the political regime: “as one observer puts it, the Egyptian military is more than happy to stay out of politics as long as it can run its own economy.” For example, the military “has achieved virtual vertical integration, producing its own food, providing its own housing and medical care, and building its own holiday facilities.” While salaries are not high, military members enjoy comfortable accommodations and lavish morale and welfare programs, including long trips to the resorts of Sh’arm Al-Sheik. More importantly, individual officers benefit with extra income through ties with the private sector; aspiration to higher ranks has more to do with the ability to pocket more of the pie than to lead or manage military units.

The means of aid distribution also reinforce the Egyptian military’s economic clout. Unlike the Soviet system of weapons provision, the United States funds Egyptian defense industrial projects, all of which are owned and operated by the Egyptian military. For example, U.S.-Egyptian coproduction of the M1A1 Abrams tank began in 1988 as one of the cornerstones of American military assistance to Egypt. Under the terms of the program, a percentage of the tank’s components are manufactured in an Egyptian facility outside Cairo and the remaining parts are produced in the United States and then shipped to Egypt for final assembly. This factory and assembly facility are, unsurprisingly, owned and operated by the Egyptian Army and its profits funnel directly into off-book accounts. Neither this production nor any of the other civilian enterprises are subject to the Central Accounting Authority, meaning that “in effect, the military operates an internal market independent of state regulation or oversight.”

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328 Brooks, p 24
329 Ibid, p 27
330 Sharp (2013)
331 Brooks, p 28-29
Moreover, two technical specifications on Egypt’s foreign military aid program greatly complicate tracking and management of funds. First, Egypt is one of only two FMF recipients (Israel being the other one) that receives "early disbursement" of funds. This means that “at the beginning of the year, U.S. funds are deposited in an account at the New York Federal Reserve, and the Egyptian Armed Forces are allowed to use the interest accrued on these deposits to purchase additional equipment.” Second, “another special provision allows Cairo to "cash-flow finance" its purchases from American defense contractors….Unlike most other FMF recipients, the Egyptian government does not have to pay in advance for its expensive U.S.-contracted weapons systems; instead, it can make financial commitments that are covered by projected future FMF grants.” The two provisions combined make tracking and accounting for cash extraordinarily difficult. According to a 2006 Government Accountability Office report, even DSCA (the defense entity responsible for managing the program) could not track Egypt's FMF commitments against its disbursement requirements and available appropriations prior to 1998. When one considers the fact that it is the Defense Minister – co-titled senior military officer and head of the Egyptian armed forces – that manages this equipment slush fund, the available slop opens wide windows for exploitation and corruption. “The huge amounts of funds in circulation, with inadequate accounting supervision, virtually guarantees ‘leakage’ into private pockets.”

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333 Ibid., see also Cook (2012) p. 217-22  
334 Lutterbeck, p. 37
Even if corruption were not a problem, the massive influx of money from the U.S. merely bolsters the vast array of military businesses and the sense of corporate rights associated with membership in the military class. Where the Egyptian military under Soviet assistance was disorganized, uncohesive, and often humiliated, the robust and predictable funding from the U.S. has allowed deep corporatism to imbue the Egyptian officer class. Equipped with the most modern equipment, valuable real estate and business ventures, and a low-paid conscript enlisted corps, the military “took very good care of its officers with the wealth it accrued.”  

The FMF, EDA, and IMET funds also increase the independence of the Egyptian military from legislative oversight. The very consistency of the funding means there are few external checks on investments in weapons systems or business ventures and correspondingly few tools to rationalize policy or control spending: $1.3 billion will show up in the military’s spending account every year regardless of the opinion or interest of the legislative body or president. And because of the U.S. emphasis of military-to-military contract negotiations, how that funding is spent is almost entirely up to the military apparatus and internal chain of command. In fact, though legally allocation and procurement (particularly from foreign suppliers) is subject to parliamentary review, no such review has ever occurred. The lack of oversight is profound: though the Minister of Defense makes an annual budget presentation to the Committee on Defense, National Security and Mobilization, there is no real dialogue and any questions, much less challenging ones, are rare. Two factors influence this lack of oversight. First, public regard is so high for the armed forces that ministers are “not culturally inclined to question the

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Cook (2007), p 74
military,” placing the institution beyond reproach.\textsuperscript{337} Second, the money itself is rarely coming from state coffers: with the addition of U.S. FMAT to the military’s thriving business model, the entity is nearly self-funding. This makes oversight scrutiny unappealing and a perceived waste of time – if it isn’t Egyptian money, why examine it?

Though the role American military equipment played in increasing power through military prestige has already been discussed, high-tech weapons systems also informed the economic interests of the Egyptian armed forces. In particular, reports allege that Egyptian officers receive substantial commissions from U.S. defense contracting companies.\textsuperscript{338} As mentioned, because contracts are negotiated at the military-to-military level in the U.S. system as a way of building bridges and enhancing connectivity, defense industry commissions means Egyptian officers benefit corporately \textit{and} privately from the FMAT defense procurement process.

One of the most telling pieces of evidence of the link between U.S. FMAT and the Egyptian military’s expanded corporatism and autonomy is the reaction Egyptian officers have when U.S. aid is threatened. As will be discussed shortly, the early 2000s saw a wave of Congressional efforts to reduce, shift, pause, or cancel large elements of military aid to Egypt. Though the reasons varied, the Egyptian military engaged the proverbial full-court press to prevent the bills from being adopted, including pointing to Zionist influence, using their media arms to generate inflammatory press coverage, and even threatening both Mubarak and American congressional staff with unspecified consequences if \textit{any} portion of their aid was withheld. By 2000, the Egyptian military had come to expect U.S. FMAT as “a matter of

\textsuperscript{337} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{338} Brooks, p 29
course…indeed, the Egyptian officers regard the aid not as American generosity but rather as their money.” A similar, though more definitive, response occurred when economic reforms were proposed by Mubarak in the mid-1990s. While the overall government began an effort to privatize and accomplish structural adjustment of state resources, the military showed no inclination it was willing to privatize and in fact “declared its economics assets off-limits.”

Evidence of the increasing autonomy of Egyptian military forces as a direct result of U.S. FMAT abounds. In the late 1970s, as Sadat quietly pursued cooperation with the U.S. and peace with Israel, the Egyptian military lent its support on the sole promise of the U.S. delivering massive amounts of military aid and equipment to rebuild their aging Soviet fleet. In the mid-1980s, opposition media broke an informal taboo in asking about the positive relationship between Washington and Cairo, presenting a risk to military prestige with a strongly Arab nationalist public. A spokesman for the military “responded tersely that while ‘democracy and opposition’ were respected in Egypt, such inquiries only compromised national security.” As mentioned, the military budget and aid spending is hidden from public and parliamentary inquiry. And most dramatically, Egypt sent 35,000 troops to Saudi Arabia during the 1991 Gulf War despite strong domestic and political opposition in order to reap very specific rewards: U.S. and Arab creditors canceled $20 billion in Egyptian debt and convinced other creditor countries to forgive another $10 billion (or roughly half) of their international debt. Mubarak and the

339 Cook (2012), p 223
341 Ibid., p 23
342 Cook (2012), p 161
military establishment had determined that U.S. resources were the path to wealth and prestige; moreover, the military’s autonomy in security policy was demonstrably absolute.

The sum of this formulation of military aid is to reinforce the Egyptian military’s economic clout, shoring up their already powerful negotiating base and increasing their autonomy from civilian authorities. With one-third of the budget and nearly all of the equipment modernization stemming from the U.S., such military aid has all but cut any proverbial purse strings the civilian government had to rein in a wayward force. Indeed, even members of the regime opposition have criticized these special benefits and the military’s fiscal autonomy, asserting that there is little civilian control over the military’s budget. Because the funds are earmarked for military use only and dwarf commensurate economic aid, it is unsurprising to find enhanced versions of the pathologies S.E. Finer identifies in praetorian military structures.\(^3\) The military feels itself superior to and independent from other governmental bodies, making it loathe to relinquish decision-making power on issues of national security or military matters and likely to protect the special rights, status and privileges associated with its corporatist culture. The nature and special provisions of U.S. aid only enhance this superiority and autonomy.

Professionalization – Education and Norms Transference

U.S. military training and education emphasize the corporate and institutional aspects of professionalization. By adjusting military structures – such as the design of Egyptian air wings with the purchase of F-16 fighter planes – and imposing American doctrine from tactics to rulebooks to strategic guidance, the U.S. aid program endeavors to inculcate an enhanced

institutionalism within, in particular, the officer and senior enlisted ranks. Although Egypt remains a conscript armed force that comprises less than 1% of the overall society, 12.3% of military age men will be conscripted each year and serve two to three years in uniform.\textsuperscript{344}

Conscripts are exposed to a military lifestyle, live apart from society in religious and ethnically integrated units, are adequately compensated, and are indoctrinated with a sense of civic identity and loyalty to the state.\textsuperscript{345} Conscripts are given both military and vocational training intended to be convertible into marketable skills once they transition back to civilian life. The U.S. educational programs specifically suggest inculcating a corporate spirit among the officer and senior enlisted leadership in order to institutionalize values of discipline and honor amongst the conscripted force. Extending Lutterbeck’s typology, this enhanced institutionalization would make the Egyptian military more, rather than less vulnerable to popular uprising. True to prediction, at the outset of protests in January 2011, Egyptian armed forces declared the demands of the protestors “legitimate” and promised to “not use force against the Egyptian people.”\textsuperscript{346}

This enhanced sense of institutionalization further underscores the loyalty of the Egyptian armed forces to themselves and the people, rather than any specific civilian oversight.

It is also possible that U.S. military FMAT is changing the beliefs of the Egyptian officer corps, just not in the way intended. The primary target of American doctrinal and professional education and training (via IMET funds or in-country training programs) is the rising mid-grade officer class. The logic is that these individuals are malleable and will ultimately rise to the top ranks with favorable impressions of the United States and, ideally, a better respect for human

\textsuperscript{344} Gotowicki, p. 3  
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{346} Lutterbeck, p. 37
rights and democratic virtues. IMET “facilitates the development of important professional and personal relationships, which have proven to provide U.S. access and influence in a critical sector of society that often plays a pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments.”

By grouping talented American officers with their foreign counterparts, these programs seek to build bonds that may be leveraged as each officer rises in authority.

The demonstrable impact of U.S. PME programs can find no better exemplar than Defense Minister Field Marshal Abdel al-Halim Abu Ghazala. Wildly popular with both the Egyptian military and the people for his charisma, and equally popular with the American government for his pro-U.S. views, Ghazala was a prime contender for Mubarak’s seat. Though he never actually made a play for the presidency, rumors abounded that Ghazala believed he was presidential material, particularly after his return from U.S. PME. Though he saw Ghazal as a threat, Mubarak was unable to sideline the minister precisely because of his American and domestic popularity. His opportunity came in the late 1980s when Ghazala fell out of favor with his U.S. influencers for transferring U.S. military technology to Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Though such transfers occurred multiple times with American approval, this transfer did not have Washington’s support and Mubarak fired the field marshal in 1989. Ghazala’s support was so strong that, in firing him, Mubarak actually had to specify that he was not doing it to prevent an attempted coup.

However, the entire incident highlights the impact of U.S. PME, not only in feeding their delusions of grandeur of the individual officer, but on the whole system of military leadership.

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347 Department of State, 2013.
348 Cook (2012), p 158
349 Ibid., 158-9
350 Brooks, p 61
The Ghazala incident reportedly demonstrates Mubarak’s distrust of U.S.-educated officers and his resort to “a colourless command” echelon characterized by politically safe choices: weak leaders and lacklustre strategists.\(^\text{351}\) Though the officer corps benefits from U.S. education, an equal and opposite backlash to that very education slows down their promotion timelines and potentially excludes them from top positions. Ghazala’s successors, General Yusif Abu Taleb and Field Marshal Tantawi were both described as quiet technocrats with none of the charisma or self-aggrandizing aspirations of their predecessor.

In targeting professionalization programs at the mid-grade officer level, U.S. training and education has created a segment of the military dissatisfied with both superior officers and civilian elites, and set them up for a rise to future power. Leaked embassy cables detailing interviews with Egyptian academics and military analysts indicate unrest amongst the officer class. “Officers refer to [Defense Minister and General] Tantawi as ‘Mubarak's poodle,’ he said, and complain that ‘this incompetent Defense Minister’ who reached his position only because of unwavering loyalty to Mubarak is ‘running the military into the ground.’” They profess frustration at a “culture of blind obedience [that] pervades the MOD where the sole criteria for promotion is loyalty, and that the MOD leadership does not hesitate to fire officers it perceives as being ‘too competent’ and who therefore potentially pose a threat to the regime.”\(^\text{352}\) This contrasts sharply to pre-1980s commentary indicating high-satisfaction within the Nasserist junior officer ranks.

\(^{351}\) Ibid, p 48
The rising frustration of mid-level officers since 1979 could be due to a number of causes. One scenario suggests a decline in derivative benefits awarded by the regime. However, President Mubarak made immense efforts to woo the military officer corps, establishing subsidized housing, schools and resorts, and increasing officer pay and benefits over the ensuing decades, all from the auspices of U.S. military aid. Another explanation points to declining social prestige after the removal of an imminent threat with the Camp David Accords. This explanation also lacks weight, as Middle East scholars indicate the enmity between Israel and Egypt is deep-seated and remains unsoothed by the 1979 treaty. Moreover, the Egyptian military saw only rising popularity since the nadir after their 1967 trouncing by Israel. This suggests the possible impact of rising professionalization and competence at the tactical and operational level, facilitated by U.S. training programs and equipment, as fueling a desire for meritocratic promotion systems and autonomy from civilian oversight at sub-political levels. These young officers have “embraced the American way of war and the military effectiveness it offers – but they can’t get it with their leadership, civilian or military.” Young officers chafe at the idea of loyalty tests where “U.S. trained officers … are expected to remain silent when commanded by less competent, less well-trained senior officers.” Without the historical ethos that binds the military into a subordinate role, these officers’ quest for autonomy and competence may have empowered the removal of the civilian masters that hamper their rise in military capability.

354 Martini, p. 6
355 Interview with senior Pentagon official and dignitary in the American Embassy to Cairo, Washington D.C. November 18, 2013.
356 Brooks, p 48
Finally, the sheer scope of education and training provided to the Egyptian military cannot be overlooked. U.S. military funding allowed literally thousands of Egyptian officers (6,600 since 1995 alone, with over 600 continuing to attend classes every year) to visit the United States and take courses at schools such as the Army War College and the National Defense University, exposing them to U.S. military and political ideas. As the previous chapters have demonstrated, the curriculum is not adjusted for foreign officers, and takes zero account of their military cultural backgrounds or existing strains of praetorianism. The following account of Egyptian exchange officers at NDU is worth reading in its entirety:

People who have met the Egyptian officers in Washington say the exchange programs are immensely beneficial. Gawdat Bahgat, who has taught seminars for the officers at the National Defense University’s Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, described taking the officers to Mount Vernon, Virginia, for a visit last year. During a tour of the estate, the officers learned about George Washington’s life and also discovered that he had chosen to give up his power—voluntarily. “I cannot forget the expressions on their faces. They could not believe it,” he told me, speaking on the phone from Cairo, where he was meeting with government officials and others. “They asked, ‘Why?’ and we said, ‘It’s the American way.’”

It is possible that the officers’ understanding of George Washington might have been solely in his role as president and their surprise reflected a nuanced understanding of the novelty of any leader to step down in the late 18th century era of monarchies. However, it is more likely that they saw in Washington a context that mirrored their own history: the former general assuming the role of head of state. The incredulity of the Egyptian officers at this foundational American ideal – transfer of power – demonstrates the utter mismatch of American and Egyptian

358 Daily beast; https://www.thedailybeast.com/egyptian-military-us-funded-democracy-crushers
concepts of professionalism, each stemming from specific and unique backgrounds. The Egyptian history of praetorianism and military power, autocracy and coup are a wildly different foundation than the United States “embedded democracy” model, which rests on cultural values like the rule of law, political participation, and civilian control.

Even General al-Sisi articulated this sentiment in his Army War College essay: articulating the differences between Western and Middle Eastern democracies, he cited religious, economic, educational, and even praetorian differences that he saw as incompatible with the U.S. form of democratic rule. For example, he identifies El Kalafa, an idealized religious governance under the Prophet Mohammed, as being as foundational to Muslim democracy as the U.S. ideals of “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.” He highlights the American separation of church and state as incompatible with the Muslim culture; economic and educational differences as significantly divergent; and even asks if “America [is] ready to accept Middle Eastern democracies in their own form that may or may not be sympathetic to Western interests.”

Simply because there are fundamental gaps between the cultural norms and background of American officers and foreign ones isn’t to say that the NDU education is wasted. Al-Sisi used U.S.-appropriate language in his essay, ironically identifying “police forces and military forces [that] are loyal to the ruling party….security forces that need to develop a culture of commitment to a nation rather than a ruling party” as a major impediment to future

360 Ibid., p 4
361 Though he acknowledges that the United States was founded on Judeo-Christian values and that “in the early years, religion was important and shaped the values of the American nation.” This, he imagines could be similar to the role of Islam in Middle Eastern democracies. Ibid, p 5
362 Ibid., p 2
democracy.\textsuperscript{363} Certainly, this statement, in addition to the increased restraint during the Arab Spring uprisings and the language selected to explain both the SCAF’s intervention in ending Mubarak’s reign and then ousting democratically elected President Morsi indicate an understanding of the principles of appropriate civil-military relations for a democratic society. However, the fact that the democratic leader was ousted at all – by the man quoted above, no less – suggests that they have not taken deep root.

It is plausible that, through FMAT, the Egyptian military has learned to maintain the veneer of subordination in the military’s role in Egypt. After the coup, the SCAF promised a swift return to democratically elected governance. It appointed a civilian as interim president, and the constitutional review committee – responsible for determining the future governing hierarchy for Egypt – was comprised of both civilians and military members. However, all members of this committee were appointed by the civilian approved by the military, indicating a potential for biased results. Despite this stacking the deck, consternation developed over two particular amendments: the first yields approval of the selection of Minister of Defense to the military (SCAF) itself, and the second continues to permit prosecution of civilians in military courts for offenses that “insult” the armed forces.\textsuperscript{364} These are not paper tigers: the Minister of Defense is ostensibly the oversight of the very military that approves him, and although the provision of military tribunals has been present in every Egyptian constitution, as of 2015 more than 7,000 bloggers, journalists and protesters had been tried in closed military courts since the revolution alone.\textsuperscript{365} These amendments join other constitutional provisions—such as an

\textsuperscript{363} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{365} Martini, p. 4
institutional majority of military members on the National Defense Council (article 197) and requirement for the defense minister to be a military member (article 195)—in cementing a military veto over any issues of national security or foreign policy. Thus, while the military has ostensibly stepped back from the constitutional process and outright governance, perhaps to appease the United States and retain the necessary aid, it remains deeply embroiled in political determinations and seeks to retain its veto power over civilian leadership.

U.S. professionalization also encouraged the secular mindset of the Egyptian military that may have led to discomfort with Islamist rule, in two specific ways. First, it reinforced a fundamental dichotomy in Egyptian military training that has existed since the 1950s. Since nearly all Egyptian Army recruits were Muslim, and many were educated in traditional Islamic schools, they faced a tension between the fundamentalism of Islam and the modernizing outlook of their military academies. The military leaned toward modernization and, hence, tended to reject Islam as a model for institutional development. The American military system made the choice even easier: high-tech Western equipment and training could empower them to extraordinary military and economic capability, where the puritanism of Islam would only hold them back. Second, the U.S. constantly and consistently espouses a secular mindset in education and training. Personal religious ideals are discussed with extreme rarity, and never in American PME classrooms for fear of offending foreign or domestic sensibilities. Asked if he thought religion played a role in the American military, a Saudi officer looked confused. “When and where you go to war, yes; but inside your military, no – you are all heathens.” Thus, U.S.

367 Interview, NDU, 2015. The officer chuckled at calling us heathens; it was clearly not meant as a slight, perhaps even underscoring how much he assumed that secular sentiment was desired or required in the U.S. military.
military aid strengthened the secular ethic of the military through professionalization, and Islamist rule rapidly became a least-desired scenario.

Finally, as critics of Huntington’s tautology note, merely increasing the competence and professional mindset of Egyptian military members does not automatically change their predisposition to civilian control. Rather, increased competence may simply be increased competence – it may not necessarily result in an increasingly apolitical military, but may in fact simply augment the capability of the military enterprise to engage in political action. Further, implementing the structures and doctrine of objective control onto a force that does not already enjoy the bedrock democratic principle of civilian control is invitation for disaster: where autonomy is given, the force is likely to exploit it; where it is not, they are likely to rail against the civilian masters denying them appropriate military effectiveness. The U.S.-Egyptian case elucidates well the dilemma in the U.S. FMAT enterprise’s wholesale acceptance of Huntington’s principles of civil-military relations, as their application to non-American populations by U.S. forces may cause more harm than good.

U.S. Government Perceptions

In general, measuring the impact of U.S. foreign military aid in output other than dollars spent and equipment purchased is a daunting task. In 2006, a GAO report lambasted the Departments of State and Defense for their inability to set goals, track progress or generally assess the impact of over $73 billion in aid issued to Egypt since 1948. It reads, in part:

Officials and many experts assert that the FMF program to Egypt supports U.S. foreign policy and security goals; however, State and DoD do not assess how the program specifically contributes to these goals….DoD has not determined how it
will measure progress in achieving key goals such as interoperability and modernizing Egypt's military.\textsuperscript{368}

Currently, the DoD’s Defense Security Cooperation Agency is responsible for conducting evaluations and assessments. These assessments often focus on the tactical productivity of FMAT, however, rather than overall strategic cooperation or less tangible norms transfer. For example, as mentioned, U.S. Central Command, the responsible military authority, defines modernization as “the ratio of U.S.-to-Soviet equipment in Egypt's inventory and does not include other potentially relevant factors, such as readiness or military capabilities.”\textsuperscript{369} Per Dr. Dafna Rand, “there is no comprehensive, universally-applicable metric that allows U.S. foreign policymakers to assess objectively the changing quality of military to military (or civilian) relations between the U.S. and the recipient MENA state.”\textsuperscript{370} Similarly, there are no measures that attempt to track the impact of education and training programs, or progress towards military professionalization and subordination to civilian control.\textsuperscript{371}

This leaves researchers to draw conclusions from the perceptions of senior military officials on the efficacy of aid programs and events developing on the ground. For their part, American officials generally paint a rosy picture of Egyptian professionalization and development: for example, Admiral William Fallon, former Commander of U.S. Central Command, testified to Congress that “FMF significantly contributes to the modernization and


\textsuperscript{369} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{371} This, in itself, represents a colossal failure of U.S. military assistance.
interoperability of the Egyptian Armed Forces…. The prospects for positive change in Egyptian governance are enhanced by our close interaction on regional security matters.” 372 One wonders if this positive assessment of the “soft” impact of U.S. FMAT is based partly on the fact that hard assessments of military effectiveness point to unequivocal failure – human, bureaucratic, and political nature all demand some result for the scale of investment, and the intangibles of democratization are fuzzy, difficult to refute absent actual military coup, and largely in the eye of the beholder.

Degree of engagement is also commonly cited as an effect of U.S. foreign military aid. The $1 million annual allotment in IMET funds approximately 500 Egyptian military officers to study each year at U.S. professional military institutes such as the Naval War College and National Defense University. In fact, both the current President and former head of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, and his chief of staff, Sedky Sobhi, are graduates of the US Army War College in Pennsylvania.373 General al-Sisi’s initial appointment as defense minister by ousted President Morsi was greeted with relief in Washington: Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta emphasized the fact that he “has trained and spent a lot of time in the United States” by way of credentialing al-Sisi’s commitment to peace and rule of law.374

Although training occurs both on the ground in Egypt and in the U.S., educational programs funded by IMET theoretically teach foreign officers concepts such as the proper role of

the military in society. David Lamm, the deputy director of the National Defense University’s Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, and who in 1983, as a young captain, went to Egypt to train an airborne brigade in 1983, argues “this relationship with the U.S. may have had a mitigating effect on the response of the Egyptian military” in dealing with the 2011 popular uprisings.\(^{375}\) Indeed, senior U.S. officials were “literally high-fiving” in self-congratulation when General Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, then head of the Egyptian high command, responsibly oversaw the mostly bloodless ousting of President Mubarak.\(^{376}\) The official American military perspective of the response to the Arab Spring is best summarized by the 2013 U.S. Central Command Posture Statement:

> Under immense pressure both internally and externally, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in Egypt oversaw the transition and transferred power to an elected government. Egyptian military leaders did not attempt to protect the old regime from its accountability to the people or seize power for themselves. Moreover, they demonstrated restraint and steady performance through difficult transition milestones including the appointment of new military leadership and the political upheaval following President Morsi’s December constitutional decree. First and foremost, the military sees itself as the upholder of Egypt’s sovereignty and national security. It has maintained its professionalism and validated our longstanding investment in strong military ties, sustaining the trust of the Egyptian people through a most tumultuous period.\(^{377}\)

The statement, ironically issued mere weeks before the SCAF, led by the U.S. Army War College-educated al-Sisi, staged the armed overthrow of the democratic president, and Egypt was convulsed by a level of violence unprecedented in its post-colonial history: twin massacres at Rabea al-Adaweya and Nahda squares. Both were raids on pro-democracy, pro-Morsi protesters

\(^{375}\) Interview with David Lamm, Deputy Director Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Washington DC, 20 November 2013.

\(^{376}\) Dafna Rand. Personal interview.

\(^{377}\) 2013 US Central Command Posture Statement, delivered by USMC General James N. Mattis, Commander USCENTCOM, before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 5\(^{th}\), 2013.

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which Sisi personally presided over as minister of defense, general commander of the armed
forces, chair of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces, and deputy prime minister for security
affairs.

However warm the military-diplomatic feeling about the democratization of the Egyptian
armed forces, at the Congressional level numerous attempts have been made to cut, reorder, scale
back, or stop Egyptian military aid. Such efforts have had a variety of motivations, but the most
common is the failure of both the military and political apparatus to achieve desired democratic
norms. These efforts tend to come in flurries driven by either events in Egypt – for example, in
1986, President Mubarak called on the military to put down riots by in Cairo, sparked by the
protests of 15,000-20,000 police conscripts\textsuperscript{378}, the Central Protection Force (CPF), who were
angry with their low pay and poor working conditions – or events in the United States, such as
post-9/11 frustration that Egypt wasn’t doing more to crack down on its porous Gaza border.
Though not always a good measure, the frequency and consistency of these Congressional efforts
demonstrates that not all Americans were convinced of Egypt’s democratization.

One such series of proposed changes began in 2005 with the Lantos Amendment which
sought to shift $325 million from military support to economic aid.\textsuperscript{379} After vociferous lobbying
by Cairo calling the change a Zionist attack, the measure failed. Over the next two years, both
Republicans and Democrats sponsored a series of efforts – the Pitts amendment, Smith
amendment, and Obey amendment – to cut or constrain Egyptian military aid.\textsuperscript{380} Some were
defeated in committee; some in the legislature; and some were simply never signed into law.

\textsuperscript{378} The unrest required the deployment of roughly one quarter of the Egyptian Army and significant air support
from combat helicopters. Brooks, p 18
\textsuperscript{379} Cook (2012), p 222
\textsuperscript{380} Ibid., 223-226 and 334
Finally, responding to brutal human rights abuses by security forces, Congress found success in an amendment put forth by Congresswoman Nita Lowey of New York. P.L. 110-161, the FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, contained Section 690, which withheld the obligation of $100 million in FMAT until the Secretary of State certifies, among other things, that Egypt has taken concrete steps to “adopt and implement judicial reforms that protect the independence of the judiciary; review criminal procedures and train police leadership in modern policing to curb police abuses; and detect and destroy the smuggling network and tunnels that lead from Egypt to Gaza.” Prior to its passage, Cairo protested vociferously that this would undermine bi-lateral relations and set-back the military; Congressional response indicated that was exactly the point. The Obama Administration ultimately waived the temporary suspension of aid citing national security grounds.

**The Egyptian Revolution and Military Coup**

One of the core elements that makes the Egyptian case interesting is the apparent dichotomy of action beginning with the Arab Spring of 2011 and culminating with a military intervention and unseating of the first freely democratically elected leader in Egyptian history. Initially, the Egyptian military’s refusal to quash protests cheered American observers and seemed to vindicate the decades of cooperation and education. The coup a scant two years later abruptly silenced the self-congratulatory messaging of the U.S. FMAT community.

Recall that the last actual military coup in Egypt occurred in 1952, before the onset of any type of military aid and in an era of decolonization Be’erí describes as “the continuous

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381 P.L. 110-161, FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Section 690.
interference and ascendance of army officers in the political life of their countries is the most specific feature of Arab history in this era.\textsuperscript{382} Though Egypt was by no accounts a democracy in the intervening years, unlike its neighboring nations it did go over 60 years without another military coup; and over the last 30 of those years, the military received the U.S recipe of professionalization with its embedded norms of democratic freedoms, rule of law, and liberal values. Though a deeper look is required, the 2013 coup itself is a powerful indicator that the U.S. professionalization program \textit{at a minimum} did not institute the values it intended, and very likely exacerbated an interventionist form of praetorianism that had not been seen in over 60 years.

The complex relationship between the people, the autocracy, and the military in Egypt make it difficult to disentangle appropriate civil-military behavior during the Arab Spring. For example, for the same reasons that the military sided with protestors against President Sadat over food subsidies when ordered to quell dissent, they similarly joined the revolutionaries during the Arab Spring, vowing to “ensure a peaceful transition of authority within a free and democratic system that allows an elected civilian authority to take charge of governing the country.”\textsuperscript{383} In refusing Mubarak’s orders to quell the protests they bucked civilian control but upheld the lessons of American professionalization with respect to human rights, all while supporting the people to which they are loyal and the nationalist reputation that conferred their authority and legitimacy. Similarly, in deposing President Morsi and suspending the constitution, General al-Sisi claimed that it was performing an act of “public service” in response to the people’s

\textsuperscript{382} Eliezer Be’eri (1969) \textit{Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society} (Israel University Press: Jerusalem, 1969), p 69
\textsuperscript{383} Martini
demands for a secular, transparent and functioning government.\footnote{Hauslohner, Abigail (2013) “Egyptian Military Ousts Morsi, Suspends Constitution.” \textit{Washington Post}, July 3, 2013.} Clearly, this was the supreme act of military insubordination – a coup d’etat – and yet it was justified using the language of Western civil-military relations.\footnote{We must be careful not to trumpet the impact of U.S. human rights education too loudly. A month after taking power, al-Sisi ordered raids on camps of pro-Morsi protesters that were described by Human Rights Watch as “one of the world’s largest killings of demonstrators in a single day in recent history.” Between 800 and 1,000 civilians dies, and nearly 4,000 were injured. Al-Sisi’s government declared a month-long state of emergency to quell follow-on protests.}

The dynamics of the revolution itself were fairly straight-forward. Wedded, as always, to its narrative of guarantor of national defense and regional stability, protector of Egyptian people, and uncorruptible source of Egypt’s national honor, Egypt’s military leadership realized early in the Tahir Square protests that the source of their legitimacy and autonomy must be protected at all costs. Before deploying troops to the edges of the square to ensure “security,” Field Marshal Tantawi told Mubarak unequivocally that the military would not fire on or otherwise quash the protestors.\footnote{Cook (2012), p 287} Not that it mattered: the military’s strategy to place themselves as saviors of the people elicited the warm welcome from the protestors that senior officers sought; however, the welcome worked both ways, and rank-and-file soldiers similarly embraced the protestors. Had an order come down to repress the crowd, there is a strong possibility that the soldiers would have mutinied.

Nevertheless, the veneer of democracy behind which the Egyptian military had quietly consolidate power protected them from the ire of the protestors. As tensions grew in the streets and it became obvious that a simple transfer of power from President Mubarak to Vice President Suleiman would not satisfy the people, the military was the dubious beneficiary of state rule.
Tantawi and the SCAF were appointed interim leaders until democratic elections could take place and immediately issued a series of communiques that dispersed the protestors and warned of dire consequences if opposition persisted. The council then rushed to finish a constitution that would guarantee their interests, hold a referendum, and finally carry out an election with six months.

If true democracy was worrisome, the result of the election was a worst case scenario for the Egyptian military. Strong strains of secularism in the institution combined with a decades-long power struggle with the Muslim Brotherhood to make Mohommad Morsi the least desirable candidate for leadership of the new government. General al-Sisi’s War College fears about a population unprepared for democracy and a religion incompatible with modernization and growth were now reality. Under Morsi, the military sought the Muslim Brotherhood’s promise that it would constitutionally guarantee autonomy for the military and protection from civilian oversight on key traditional prerogatives including allowing the military to choose the defense minister and enshrining the military veto through three different councils (National Security Council, Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, and National Defense Council) that are comprised of a majority of military officers and have ultimate authority over the defense budget.  

Little is known about the year of Morsi’s rule and the exact cause or impetus for the coup plot to begin. Rumor inside the Pentagon suggests that the Egyptian armed forces took then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dempsey at his word when he told his old War College classmate, al-Sisi to “give it a year.” Indeed, almost a year to the day from Morsi’s

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387 Sharp (2013)
election and inauguration and after he refused to share power with military leaders, al-Sisi led a military coalition to remove Morsi from power, declare martial law, and suspend the constitution. The Obama Administration, concerned about Morsi as an Islamist leader in a key allied state within a volatile region, refused to call the action a coup and suspend military aid as the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act requires. Eleven months of internal unrest involving a crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, massacres of pro-Morsi protestors by police and military units, arrests and imprisonment of opposition leaders, journalists, and protesters, and ultimately the drafting of a new and decidedly pro-military constitution followed. In 2014, al-Sisi ran almost unopposed for the position of president and won; in 2018, he won again with 97% of the vote reminiscent of the sham elections that characterized his former military predecessors.

Ironically, through it all, the U.S. PME apparatus continued to express confidence in al-Sisi because of his attendance at Army War College. Retired Colonel Stephen Gerras, a War College instructor has only positive things to say about al-Sisi. On the coup, Gerras said, he assumes al-Sisi “really thought he was representing the will of the people…. He would think he was doing the right thing.”

And as for how Gen. al-Sisi will conduct himself, Gerras expressed optimism on the basis that the War College emphasizes “the ethical application of military power…. Hopefully our international fellows leave knowing, at least on the international stage, what is considered appropriate conduct.” Outside observers are less sanguine: Sarah Yerkes, a fellow at Carnegie’s Endowment for International Peace observed: "No one believes

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he is a democrat. Rather, many Egyptians are happy to sacrifice democracy if it means greater economic performance, stability, and security.\textsuperscript{389}

Summary

The Egyptian case is nuanced and complex. Indeed, U.S. aid may have been neither necessary nor sufficient to generate the eventual coup: deep-seated socio-cultural predispositions, fear of Islamism, and peculiar personalities all played a role in the evolution of Egypt’s praetorian civil-military relations that led to the July 2013 coup d’etat. However, this research does indicate that U.S. FMAT, far from preventing this coup, may have actually increased its likelihood by enhancing the prestige, autonomy, and corporateness of the Egyptian military establishment. Though it did not enhance military effectiveness as predicted, the totality of the U.S. professionalization facilitated increasing independence and power for the Egyptian military without any of the attendant norms of democratic subordination or liberal values. In sum, the role of U.S. military aid points to an overall empowerment of praetorian civil-military relations over the desired U.S.-style professionalization that leads to military subordination and civilian control. Ironically, this possibility is only just getting traction within the halls of American PME: after all, one month after Egypt’s coup d’etat, an August 1, 2013 announcement for the Pentagon’s new Center for Civil-Military Relations identified Egypt as only a “potential” customer for “training of foreign troops or education of officials.”\textsuperscript{390}


The Gambia: U.S. Foreign Military Aid and Training as the “Spark”

If the case of Egypt demonstrates how a long-standing military aid relationship enhanced and empowered corporateness, capability, autonomy in the Egyptian military, building up the “kindling” which combined with existing cultural tendencies to quash Islamism in the military coup of 2013, then the case of the Gambia demonstrates that U.S. FMAT can also be the “spark” that sets a coup in motion. The Gambian history of coups undoubtedly increased expectations that such action was a feasible and just way to take power, but in this case the actual education of the 2014 coup ringleader, Lieutenant Colonel Lamin Sannah, at National Defense University in Washington DC appears to have been the precipitating inspiration to seize power and redress grievances.

History

The small West African nation of the Gambia has seen more than its fair share of military coup attempts in its relatively short history of self-rule. Long a British colony, the Gambia achieved independence as a constitutional monarchy through peaceful agreement on February 18, 1965. The Queen of England remained the head-of-state for over five years, until a referendum shifted the Gambia to a republic within the Commonwealth with then Prime Minister Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara at the helm. At the time, the Gambia was celebrated as a strong new democracy: an earlier failed referendum for self-rule received international attention its adherence to civil rights, free and fair voting, and secret balloting.391

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The Gambia is the smallest African nation at just 1.9 million people with an Army of just 1900 soldiers; at the time of its first successful coup, the officer corps was just 50 men and the NCO corps just over 1,000. Despite that, the Gambia’s first coup attempt occurred in 1981, led by a non-military leftist dissident, Kukoi Samba Sanyang and a rag-tag group of only a dozen rebels. One week of violence in the streets led to an estimated 1500 dead, and the coup was put down by neighboring Senegalese forces. President Jawara was re-elected five times before a second coup attempt in July 1994 unseated him from power.

The 1994 coup was led by four junior army officers, the most notable of which was Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh. Enlisting in the Gambian National Gendarmerie in 1984, Jammeh worked his way up to Sergeant in the Military Police and was commissioned as an officer in 1989. He, along with his fellow coup plotters, attended U.S. military education and training programs, the last of which was the Military Police Officers Basic Course at Fort McClellan from September 1993 to January 1994. Less than six months later, on July 22, 1994, Jammeh took power in a largely bloodless coup, and quickly established the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) with himself at its head. The coup came as a complete surprise to much of the government and military. Much of the Gambian military forces were preparing for a combined exercise with Marines from the USS Lamour County in port; reportedly, Jammeh and his three conspirators came up with the idea only a week beforehand and took charge of the statehouse when no one was there. Followers also claimed control over the Army

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393 There is little in the records of Yahya Jammeh’s performance in the United States, why he was selected, or what he learned. We are left to speculate at the coincidence that his return from the United States was only a short five months before his successful coup attempt.
394 Sarr (2007)
headquarters and central radio station, and the coup was complete; Jawara abdicated and fled aboard the U.S. naval vessel and his supporters disappeared into Senegal or made their way to Europe. The AFPRC ruled for two years, banning opposition party activity, and ultimately announced a return to democratic rule via elections in August 1996 in which Jammeh was the victor in a landslide. Of course, on election day, “soldiers at polling stations directed people how to vote, while the leading opposition candidate hid in the Senegalese Embassy, fearing assassination.”\(^{395}\)

Democracy in the Gambia under President Jammeh contracted noticeably over his 22-year rule. Calling himself “Excellency Sheikh Professor Doctor President” and a “dictator of development and progress,” Jammeh ruled through fear and oppression that exploited ethnic divisions, economic exploitation, superstition, and a bizarre belief in witchcraft.\(^{396}\) He jailed, tortured, and killed thousands of critics, armed police forces with assault rifles and rock-propelled grenades (who inevitably used them on peaceful protestors\(^{397}\)), funded intelligence agencies to spy on his own people and para-military groups to assassinate regime opponents and protect his personal interests, and threatened to behead gay Gambians. His popularity was based on his investment in basic infrastructure – roads and schools – and his habit of throwing money to crowds as his motorcade plowed over people.

\(^{395}\) [https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/03/lets-take-back-our-country/426852/]

\(^{396}\) For example, Jammeh reportedly “exorcised” an entire village by force-feeding them hallucinogenic potions; he also claimed to have made his own herbal cure for HIV, and believed his touch could heal ankle sprains. [https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/18/gambia-crisis-everything-need-know-battle-remove-president-yahya/]

\(^{397}\) The first such incident occurred in April 2000, when a group of student protestors gathered to seek justice for the rape of a teenage girl. Police opened fire on the group, killing at least 14 people.
President Jammeh was re-elected three times before the attempted coup of 2014 which is the focus of this case study. In the intervening years, Jammeh charged former heads of the Navy and Army with plotting to overthrow him in 2006 and rounded up another group of senior military officials and businessmen in 2010 on similar charges. There were additional unsuccessful coups or coup plots launched in 1994, 1995, 2000, and 2009. How real these plots were is still debated: Jammeh, understandably, feared losing in the barracks more than the ballot box and vacillated between shrewdly undercutting potential foes with accusations (such as his original three comrades, two of whom died in prison) and paranoid fears of threats from his heavily armed military and police forces. Nevertheless, the Gambian population was inundated with claims and prosecutions of alleged coup plotters. It is with this background that we approach the coup attempt of 2014.

The Gambian Armed Forces and U.S. Military Aid

The Gambian Army (as the entire military is called) consists of three arms – the infantry, the national guard, and the navy. All fall under the authority of the Department of State for Defence as well as the decision-making and advisory body of the Armed Forces Council, over which the President presides as the constitutionally-appointed Commander-in-Chief. There is no military conscription. The Gambian Constitution defines the roles of the force as follows: “to preserve and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of The Gambia,” “to aid the civil authorities, at their request, in emergencies and in cases of national disasters,” and “to engage, at the request of the civil authorities, in productive activities, such as agriculture, engineering,

398 Yet another military intervention occurred in 2017, when President Jammeh finally lost his election but refused to step down from power.
health and education for the development of The Gambia.” The Gambia spends approximately 1% of GDP on its military budget and avails itself of U.S. FMAT programs.

The tiny Gambian military was, for almost 100 years, lead by foreign officers: the British, Senegalese, and Nigerians each took turns running the country and its small force. The Senegalese were the most respected: Lt Col Sarr recalls that on their departure, “it seemed as if the Gambia Army lost its meaning, its little pride, and above all, its financial incentive.” The British officers who resumed leadership after Senegalese troops departed treated the Gambia national army (GNA) like a cadet force: any issues of importance or doubt had to be handled by a British officer; all training, exercises, and operational plans were designed and managed by the British; and the GNA “had no books, reference, or reading materials to show us what to do in the absences of the [British] officers.” In 1990, a failed combat mission to Liberia under the auspices of ECOWAS lowered the GNA’s morale further, as the Gambian military had never even trained on their own, much less entered into a combat mission; two casualties in the first month crushed the timid force.

Jammeh’s 1994 coup in fact coincided with the “Gambianization” of the military – the former leader of the Army, Lt Col Sarr links the 1994 coup to “the Gambian military being exclusively taken over by the Gambian soldiers at last.” One of Huntington’s “breakthrough” coups, in which junior officers and NCOs take power, causing internal ripples through senior

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401 Sarr, p 121-2
402 Ibid.
403 Ibid., p 14
military leadership, Jammeh’s coup by junior lieutenants who had never seen combat set a foundation for praetorian inclinations that had relatively little existence prior. As Huntington predicts, infighting and favor-currying occurs immediately in the wake of a breakthrough coup because senior officers, often out-numbered but nevertheless more entitled and experienced than the coup perpetrators, align themselves either for or against the new, junior leadership. Jammeh facilitated this process with bizarre cycles of imprisonment, release, promotion, retirement, rehire, and prosecution for senior military officers; those that opposed him were imprisoned and tortured, while those that were neutral were forced to curry favor in order to avoid his erratic but life-altering whims. Jammeh continued this throughout his reign; in this sense, the political praetorianism in the GNA came not from autonomy, corporateness, or elitism, but rather from the mandate that individual officers continually demonstrate personal and professional allegiance to Jammeh and his cronies.

According to the U.S. State Department, U.S. military assistance to the Gambia is limited to training and education programs. The U.S. is not and has not been the Gambia’s only military aid partner: due to its long ties to the United Kingdom, the Gambian Army also historically received technical assistance from the UK, as well as small amounts of equipment from China, Turkey, and Nigeria. After the 1994 coup that empowered Yahya Jammeh, much of this aid was temporarily suspended, but U.S. training and education resumed in 1996 with the appearance of democratic elections. FMAT funding resumed in 2003, with two officers trained at U.S. institutions at a cost of $50,000. Between 2005 and 2007, the Gambia received between

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405 In fiscal year 2007, the Gambia also became eligible to receive up to $100,000 in Excess Defense Articles (EDA) on a grant basis under Section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act on the condition it be used to support participation in peacekeeping operations.
$100,000 and $200,000 per year to sponsor education and training opportunities for Gambian soldiers. That equates to 2-5 students per year, or slightly more than 1% of the armed forces in a five-year span. By fiscal year 2011, that number had grown to 163 servicemembers, or 8.6% of the Gambian armed forces each year. Given the size of the Gambian officer coups, nearly every officer has attended one or more training or education courses in the United States: the author of the memoir of Jammeh’s coup visited Fort Benning (infantry officer basic course), Fort Harrison, and National Defense University programs across his career.406

The primary vehicles for this FMAT were traditional IMET programs and the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP), though some small amount each year was also spent on sending Gambian officers to regional centers for conferences or educational programs. Training and education were spread across ranks and military specialties, ranging from basic training to senior level PME, general education to specialty courses. Tables 17 and 18 below reflect the numbers – dollar figures and individuals trained – for FY12 and FY13 and shows the breadth of programming for U.S. FMAT.

Table 17. Foreign Military Aid and Training to the Gambia, FY12-13407

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY 2012</th>
<th>FY 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Students</td>
<td>Course Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTFP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMET-I</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Centers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals:</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Military Professionalization
2. Adherence to Norms of Human Rights
3. Civilian Control of the Military

406 Sarr, p 268
Table 18. Foreign Military Aid and Training to the Gambia – In Depth, FY12-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Training Location</th>
<th>Sliding Unit</th>
<th>Sub Sliding Unit</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Program Used</th>
<th>FY12 FY13</th>
<th>FY14 FY15</th>
<th>FY16 FY17</th>
<th>FY17 FY18</th>
<th>FY18 FY19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>770,712</td>
<td>310,070</td>
<td>330,472</td>
<td>890,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>770,712</td>
<td>310,070</td>
<td>330,472</td>
<td>890,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>Washington, D.C. United States</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.39</td>
<td>770,712</td>
<td>310,070</td>
<td>330,472</td>
<td>890,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FY12-13 refers to Fiscal Year 2012-2013.
The U.S. aid relationship the Gambia was always fraught, as classified State Department cables released by Wikileaks reveal a consistent concern about Jammeh’s erratic and repressive behavior. But the Gambia’s willingness to participate in rendition as well as unspecified bilateral counterterrorism efforts kept the military aid flowing. Interestingly, the tables above specifically reflect funding for the years in which the leader of the 2014 coup attempt, Lieutenant Colonel Lamin Sanneh, attended the National Defense University as a CTFP Fellow. Ironically, the numbered list at the bottom of Table 6C indicates U.S. government foreign policy objectives for the country in question, in this case including military professionalization and civilian control of the military. How, then, did this education and training lead directly to the antithesis of civilian control a scant two years later?

Process-tracing the Gambian Coup Attempt of 2014

By all accounts, Lieutenant Colonel Lamin S. Sanneh was exactly the rising star that U.S. FMAT seeks to educate or train: “civilian and military personnel…with upward mobility, those who will have the opportunity to impact civil-military, human rights, rule of law, resource management policies in the coming years.” He had a strong career as an instructor in the Gambian Army, ultimately being appointed chief instructor of a newly opened training school. Early in his career, Sanneh was selected for the United Kingdom’s junior officer development program at Sandhurst, and later for senior officer development in Washington D.C. When he ultimately returned to the Gambia after his education at NDU, he was assigned the prestigious

position running the State Guards, the military unit charged with the personal security of President Jammeh. The high profile position came with high risks, and when Sanneh refused to summarily fire several subordinates, he was investigated, found to be of Mandinka heritage (the Gambia’s largest ethnic group and frequent target of Jammeh’s Jola-based ethnic attacks) and fired, demoted to Major, and dismissed from the Army within seven months of attaining his prestigious position. After fleeing the Gambia for Senegal under threat from internal security forces, Sanneh ultimately returned to America, where he would link up with his fellow coup plotters and plan to depose the erratic and brutal Jammeh regime. The attempt occurred on December 30, 2014. It was a failure, and four men including Lamin Sanneh were killed.\footnote{For an excellent and detailed account of the coup attempt, see Stuart A. Reid (Mar 2016) “Inside a Plot to Overthrow the President of Gambia,” The Atlantic, \url{https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/03/lets-take-back-our-country/426852/}}

What is interesting about this case is not its success or failure, but rather how Sanneh’s year at NDU profoundly influenced his decision to lead this coup attempt. Attending the College of International Security Affairs (CISA), Sanneh engaged in a core curriculum that “prepares professionals to develop and implement national and international security strategies for use in conditions of peace, crisis, and war.”\footnote{College for International Security Affairs (CISA) Course Description. Available at \url{http://cisa.ndu.edu/Academics/Master-of-Arts-in-Strategic-Security-Studies/}} The curriculum is taught in phases. Phase one is called “Foundations of Strategic Leadership” and introduces students to critical and strategic thinking tools that they can apply to “anticipate and manage complexity, uncertainty, and change.”\footnote{Ibid.} The three core courses\footnote{All course information below derived from the CISA Course catalogue, available at \url{http://cisa.ndu.edu/Portals/76/Documents/Academics/Course%20Descriptions%20for%20web%20(Fall%202014).pdf}} are:
• *Strategic Thought*, in which students examine the relationship between strategy and policy, exploring theories of warfare ranging from Sun Tsu to Kaldor. The course “seeks to equip students with conceptual tools to forge effective strategy.”

• *Geostrategy*, in which students analyze the dimensions of the current security environment. This includes examining security actors, which “include not only states, but also international organizations, armed non-state actors, and super empowered individuals and groups,” and threat dynamics, to include scarcity, state failure, democratization, and ethnic and sectarian conflict. Ultimately, the course seeks to foster the ability to create, analyze, and carry out national security strategy and policy.

• *Power, Ideology and Legitimacy*, which examines “the genesis, conceptual development and relationship between power and legitimacy, focusing particularly on how ideologies are used either to justify rule or oppose the established order.” It specifically problematizes justice and the nature of the sovereign.

Phase two of the CISA program allows the students to focus on an area of concentration and phase three allows students to take electives, participate in a capstone exercise, and complete a thesis. Sanneh’s thesis focused on drug trafficking in West Africa; his NDU draft carefully navigated Jammeh’s equities, citing pro-government news sources and avoiding mention of links to Gambian officials. Later, during his exile to the United States, he revised the thesis for journal publication and explicitly cited Jammeh as complicit in the drug trafficking trade. When asked whether he believes Sanneh’s PME experience influenced his decision-making, his thesis advisor
and faculty mentor, Jeffrey Meiser, says “absolutely.” That influence was evident in several ways.

First, Sanneh lead the attempt with U.S. military precision. This professional approach was evident at the tactical level, with intelligence gathering and recruitment, maneuver teams named Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie executing classical U.S. military assault tactics, and the use of night-vision goggles as an asset to the assault. More importantly, U.S. professionalization was evident at the strategic level: the coup plot was named the Military Strategy for Operation Gambian Freedom; a flowchart “that would not be out of place in a Pentagon Powerpoint presentation” outlined key assumptions, constraints, and restraints; and the operation’s plan was discussed in terms of the classical U.S. PME strategy strawman: ends, ways, and means.

Beyond increasing leadership and military effectiveness, Sanneh’s time at NDU appeared to have a deep normative effect on his views of his country. Taught democratic security theory, Sanneh and his foreign counterparts learned that political violence is caused by a failure to redress grievances, particularly in minority groups. Coursework emphasizes corruption and repression as antithetical to security, stability, and progress and encourages political reform pushed through civil-military cooperation. Meiser recalls that Sanneh was deeply affected and inspired by this exploration, meeting weekly to discuss his thesis and the codified U.S. approach to creating a secure and prosperous society back home. This view was seconded by an Air Force classmate, who described an energetic Sanneh as having an epiphany over the course of the

414 Phone interview with Dr. Jeffrey Meiser, University of Portland
year. Sanneh, in Meiser’s words, “drank the Kool-Aid,” a euphemism for believing in the possibility and efficacy of this aspirational goal of political reform.

In his reflection, “The Dilemma of an African Soldier,” Meiser can only speculate at the contrast Sanneh saw when, even in a prestigious position with weekly access to President Jammeh himself, he was unable to protect subordinates much less impel political reform in his home country. There are clues, however, to the profundity of his disillusionment and the degree to which he “bought” the NDU curricula. As mentioned, Sanneh revised his Masters thesis for publication by implicating Jammeh in the spread of drugs in West Africa. He referred to the coup efforts as “solving a problem” and “taking back their country.” He argued vehemently that peaceful resistance would never succeed and named his group the Gambia Freedom League. Sanneh was convinced, as O.J. Jallow, who knew many of the plotters, said, “that the military strategy is more effective than the peaceful democratic process.” And the team’s manifesto concludes that “President Jammeh, as repressive as he is incorrigible, is leading the country on an inexorable downward spiral” and therefore “the regime has lost all claim to legitimacy.”

The language echoes the elements of coursework Sanneh studied; this could mean, as in the Egyptian case, that Sanneh leveraged the language of democracy to justify a claim to power. However, neither his classmates, advisor, or fellow conspirators believe that to be true: a Gambian professor and activist remembers that “I knew him mostly for talking about democratic processes and supporting democratic initiatives.”

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416 Phone interview, 2012 Air Force CISA graduate, Washington DC, 1 December 2014
417 Jeffrey Meiser Interview
418 Reid, p 25
419 Rice (2015)
420 Ibid.
Sanneh also counted on the disillusionment and loyalty of Gambian soldiers whom he had instructed and who, he was sure, were as disenfranchised and unhappy with the state of their nation. As fellow plotter Bank Manneh relates, “he believed all these army boys were so tired of Jammeh that any day anything like this started, whether they knew about it or not, they would be happy to join the other side.”

This last element could simply be hubris in over-assuming his own popularity; alternately, it may indicate that veteran instructor Sanneh was putting together the pieces of gripes and complaints he had heard from hundreds of students which inspired him to believe reform would be welcomed. Given that the Gambian military had fewer than 100 officers and Sanneh had a significant role in training new recruits, it seems unlikely that his faith amounted to hubris. After all, there is a good chance that he personally knew every member of the officer corps.

Perhaps as importantly, Sanneh canceled the plotters’ final opportunity to arrest or kill Jammeh because the attack would occur in daylight “and risk civilian casualties among the crowds that would inevitably line up to cheer on the presidential motorcade.”

It is possible Sanneh was making a Machiavellian calculation about alienating potential support for his new government, but it is more likely that he believed in protecting innocent lives either because of his passion for righting injustices or his education in human rights. This parallels the Egypt case, and highlights an interesting tension in U.S. PME: after a history of human rights violations from FMAT graduates and an institutionalized process for vetting proposed PME attendees for criminal human rights behavior, U.S. FMAT now emphasizes human rights but still fails to teach

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421 Reid, p 23
422 Ibid, p. 17
civilians control. The tension makes the proverbial bloodless coup all the more attractive to those seeking to redress grievances and save their countries.

A final element that casts doubt on the U.S. PME system, even for U.S. servicemembers, is the composition of the coup team: three of the conspirators, though from the Gambian diaspora, served in the United States Army. One, a Captain Njaga Jagne, joined the Kentucky National Guard in 2005 and quickly deployed to Iraq in support of the surge. His brother recalls that “he loved the values of the military…responsibility, discipline, defending the helpless.”\(^{423}\) Another was a former Tennessee National Guardsman, who had met Jagne at Officer Candidate School; the third, an active duty Army soldier who had served in Afghanistan. The latter, Papa Faal, recalled looking at the plan the soldiers had crafted: “it all seemed very detailed and professional” and resembled those he had seen in his U.S. Army service.\(^{424}\) These conspirators “saw themselves as Americans, pursuing American ideals, with American guns.”\(^{425}\) The potential import of this evidence is profound: U.S. Army officers, immigrants from the Gambia but exposed to the U.S. military tradition of professionalism, whole-heartedly joined the efforts to unseat the leader of their native country using military force.

As Meiser reflects on the courageous patriot he came to know in Lieutenant Colonel Sannah and the intractable dilemma the young man faced when his U.S. PME-inspired idealism ran aground on the corrupt and repressive civilian institutions of his country, he has no doubt that the absolutist and one-size-fits-all PME system is at least partially to blame. In Sanneh’s case, as in many others, he believes U.S. PME raises the expectations of idealistic officers from despotic

\(^{423}\) Rice (2015).
\(^{424}\) Ibid.
\(^{425}\) Ibid.
nations too high, pretending “that they should all return home with grand strategies to solve their nations’ problems.” The deeply Americentric FMAT education also fails to understand differences in military culture, leading Sanneh’s thesis advisor to wish he had known more about the precarious situation of Gambian soldiers so he could have better calibrated Sanneh’s expectations and offer more realistic mitigation measures instead of the highly strategic solutions enacted by agents of change on which the PME curricula thrives. Ultimately, Meiser “can’t help but wonder if simply imprinting our foreign students with the ‘American program’ is counterproductive and unethical,” perhaps inspiring students like Lamin Sanneh to the wrong action under the right ideals.

Summary

The Gambia’s history of despotic autocracy and military coup reflects a far different form of praetorianism than the Egyptian model. Instead of a powerful and strategic military operating to secure institutional interests and guard the nation against ill-informed or inappropriate civilian leadership, the Gambia National Army’s political interventions derived from the erraticism and brutality of their leader. In the tiny military force, officers had to curry favor with Jammeh and his cronies; independent thinking and apolitical, U.S.-style professionalism were a quick way to find oneself summarily fired, retired, or imprisoned. Regardless of this precarious situation, the United States proceeded to educate almost 10% of the Gambian force annually with the perpetual

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427 Ibid.
aim of democratizing and professionalizing the force through one-size-fits-all U.S.-centric education.

On the surface, it may seem that studying the impact of U.S. professionalization in a nation and military so small as the Gambia, with fewer than 100 officers and 2,000 members overall (literally half the size of a U.S. military academy), is not a worthwhile effort. However, when we consider the fact that nearly every member of the Gambian military is educated or trained at some point in U.S. schools, and imagine that if even one of them could be inspired to intervene in civilian control (no matter how despicable the leader), the Gambia’s size suddenly becomes quite alarming. In his memoir, Lt Col Sarr recalls his experience at the U.S. Army Infantry Officer Basic Course.\textsuperscript{428} In addition to rigorous training on how to lead fighting forces in all weathers and terrain, he specifically recalls the education on following a lawful order:

\begin{quote}
It was crystal clear that…orders that were illegal were not to be given or followed….The U.S. Army taught in its officer training program the obligation of all combatants to carry the responsibility of performing their leadership duties with conscience especially in hostile situations.\textsuperscript{429}
\end{quote}

Sarr goes on to lament that following these rules and ideals “landed me in a lot of trouble in the GNA.”

Clearly Sanneh’s experience was not isolated. In fact, Americans often forget how seductive the language of freedom and democracy can be, especially when delivered with the structure, confidence, and authority of the most powerful military in the world. With no personal history of rebellious or insubordinate behavior, the evidence indicates that Sanneh’s attendance at the National Defense University was the “spark” that instigated the coup attempt in 2014; it seems equally clear that the military planning, strategic understanding, and desire for democracy

\textsuperscript{428} Sarr, p 123
\textsuperscript{429} Ibid.
that imbued both Sanneh and his U.S. military co-conspirators should leave us questioning how it is possible to claim that the United States effectively teaches civilian control to any officers, including its own.

**Conclusion**

The evidence presented above seems to support my hypotheses that U.S. military aid, and in particular FMAT, can exacerbate praetorian leanings in cases where the recipient has a history of praetorianism and an understanding of professionalism that diverges widely from the American Huntingtonian ideal. In the case of Egypt, existing praetorian leanings were not enhanced by the transactional Soviet aid model, but were expanded by the U.S. system of aid as it increased autonomy, prestige, and corporateness while strengthening values of elitism and secularism. Where it did instruct in democratic ideals appeared to be only coincidental with the strategic aims of military actors, either in their pursuit of power or in masking their actions with the language of the West. In the Gambia, significant evidence exists to suggest the 2014 coup leader was not only empowered by his U.S. educational experience, but in fact inspired to effect change in his nation through a bloodless military coup.

It is possible that then Army War College student Brigadier General al-Sisi articulated this understanding best in his 2006 thesis. Speaking broadly about the differences between democracy in the West versus the Middle East, including religion, education, and praetorianism, he comments that, “what this suggests is that as democracy grows in the Middle East, it is not necessarily going to evolve upon a Western template.”430 This concept reflects a profound

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thought that has not been introduced in the American military mindset: that the U.S. program, from democratization to military professionalization, is not an effective one-size-fits-all model. The failure to account for the history and culture of the nations the United States trains, educates, and arms can undermine well-intentioned aims of increasing democratic civilian control and lead to profoundly discordant consequences.
“Acquiring competence in these sorts of topics forms the mental disposition that J. William Fulbright called “seeing the world as others see it” – an understanding that people could reasonably view their identities, interests, politics and leaders in ways that might at first seem bizarre or wrong-headed. It also provides the essential context for distinguishing smart policy-specific questions from misguided ones. Great powers should revel in small data: the granular and culture-specific knowledge that can make the critical difference between really getting a place and getting it profoundly wrong.”

Charles King

This research project endeavored to advance and prove a narrow argument about the effect of U.S. military aid on recipient nations’ civil-military relations. It began by proving that U.S. provision of military aid is different from the formulations of other governments in that it bundles traditional military aid (military equipment and funding) with education, training, doctrine, organizational adjustments, maintenance and logistical commitments, and other elements of long-term comprehensive contracting in what is termed the “total package approach.” This approach is important when we consider the U.S. view of professionalism. Wholesale adoptees of Huntington’s narrow definition that professionalism is inherently apolitical and subordinate, the U.S. military both believes and teaches that its support for liberal values, adherence to laws of war, apolitical norms, and subordination to civilian control are inextricably linked to its military effectiveness by the definition of being a professional military officer. In keeping with this philosophy, the U.S. military believes that professionalization of

foreign militaries in its own image – a one-size-fits-all model – will automatically enhance
democratic norms and support for civilian control as it increases the skills, capabilities, and
technical capacities of foreign forces. Indeed, doing so is one of the explicit intents of the U.S.
FMAT programming.

But this philosophical assumption runs aground on the execution of this ideal. In chapter
four, an in-depth curriculum review revealed that the U.S. military does not teach civil-military
relations or civilian control in any frequency or depth to its own officers, much less foreign
officers in its training and education courses. It further demonstrated that the curriculum is not
modified or adjusted for foreign officers, and assumptions about democratic origins underpin the
totality of what is taught. In chapter five, the exploration of the impact of this instruction, my
research finds that even U.S. officers often confuse the theoretical elements and implications of
objective control with the constructed version of professionalism that has become the U.S.
military identity. This confusion is masked by the deep norms and values of American
citizenship – a cultural and historical background founded on liberal ideals and rule of law
subconsciously informs (generally) correct behavior without the need to forefront why and how
civilian control works in the U.S. system. The lack of knowledge and corresponding lack of
clarity on the relationship between professionalism, military effectiveness, and civilian control
makes it impossible to teach foreign officers how to operationalize civilian control in their own
nations. Indeed, the totality of the FMAT-packaged professionalization program neglects vast
differences in history, culture, and military ethics of recipient nations.

This U.S.-centric view (and execution) of professionalization of foreign militaries may
“do no harm” to nations with similar strategic cultures, empowering their technical abilities
without undermining civilian control. However, particularly in at least two nations with autocratic governments and histories of praetorianism, U.S. professionalization via FMAT appears to military autonomy, corporateness, and elitism, all without the corresponding and country-appropriate efforts to instill, in parallel, the education and training to counter this empowerment and support democratic civilian control. The result, particularly in these nations without histories of liberal democracy and rule of law, is that U.S. professionalization empowers the military, inadvertently exacerbates praetorian instincts, and increases the propensity of military coup d’etat. At the institutional level, the Egypt case studies showcased how dedicated funding and equipping increases military autonomy from domestic government oversight; non-fungible education and training empowers and corporatizes the officer corps such that it defends its own corporate interests and ethics; and a perception of enhanced military effectiveness increases elitism and public support, and by extension, political power. At the individual level, education and training in U.S. professional military schools spends little time on democratic civil-military relations or civilian control, and instead prepares officers for both political and strategic decision-making positions. In the Gambian case, the same education inspired a would-be leader to attempt to re-establish democracy and redress grievances by deposing his elected official. In sum, the comprehensive and U.S.-centric program of professionalization of foreign militaries undermines the very results it seeks to achieve: instead of creating strong, subordinate militaries respectful of liberal democratic norms, it empowers existing praetorian pathologies and increases the propensity for military intervention.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Test Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1. U.S. intent to professionalize via FMAT increases foreign military corporateness, superiority, and autonomy, increasing the propensity for interventionism in both the institution (“kindling”) and individual (“spark”).</td>
<td><strong>Strong evidence.</strong> In Egypt, a different formula of Soviet military aid did not exacerbate (and in fact undermined) Egyptian military praetorianism. However, U.S. FMAT increased the economic, social, and political power of the Egyptian military through the type, means, consistency, and model for delivery. The U.S. increased Egyptian autonomy, corporatism, and elitism without the corresponding checks on their praetorian instincts. Over 30 years of aid, the Egyptian military grew more entrenched and more untouchable with its deft use of the language of democracy and nationalism. While the U.S. did not spark the 2013 coup, it laid the groundwork for the first Egyptian military coup in over 60 years. In the Gambia, U.S. PME specifically inspired a military officer and student to attempt to overthrow his dictatorial leader in order to reestablish democracy and redress grievances. The cooperation of U.S. military members further underscores the fragility of U.S. professionalism when it is not underpinned with embedded democratic norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2. By enhancing military effectiveness, U.S. FMAT exacerbates existing praetorianism in nations with weak civilian institutions and/or authoritarian regimes.</td>
<td><strong>No evidence.</strong> Though the theory remains valid, U.S. FMAT did not actually improve military effectiveness in Egypt and did not strongly seek to improve military effectiveness in the Gambia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3. U.S. professional military education does not adequately teach (or consciously foreground) civil-military relations or principles of civilian control in concert with other professionalization efforts, meaning military empowerment is unchecked by democratic norms.</td>
<td><strong>Strong evidence.</strong> Civil-military relations and civilian control are barely covered in core course curriculum at senior service schools; deep focus is available only in a handful of electives. I also found evidence that other coursework provides education on statecraft and policy, empowering students’ belief in their political and state leadership abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>Test Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4. U.S. professional military education teaches civilian control from a U.S.-centric view and does not account for different backgrounds and military cultures. Education can therefore can be misinterpreted, misunderstood, or misapplied.</td>
<td><strong>Strong evidence.</strong> PME is not adjusted for the unique backgrounds of foreign officers; in particular, instructors teach as if all students come from democratic nations. Statistical analysis of U.S. and foreign officer understandings of civil-military relations showed divergent sub-populations at the 95% confidence level. This indicates that the groups could be distinguished from one another simply by their answers to the questions, a clear sign that foreign officers understand civil-military education differently. Differing descriptions of “professionalism” gleaned from interviews underscore this point.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| H5. Countries with widely divergent histories from the U.S. democratic tradition (such as military coups, dictatorships, corruption) within the military and wider society will understand civil-military education differently and have divergent outcomes predicated on the unique historical constructs within their bucket of ethics. | **Strong evidence.** More research must be done to improve generalizability, but the two cases analyzed each presented a divergent bucket of military and cultural ethics that absorbed the U.S. professionalization doctrine in ways which were not intended.  
-- **Little evidence.** While evidence was presented that U.S. FMAT preferences human rights education and adherence as proof of success and both the Egyptian military and Gambian coup plotters endeavored to spare civilians from trauma, it remained unclear whether they experienced dissonance or were merely pursuing strategic ends. Further, with the uncertain adoption of civilian control and clear evidence that foreign officers intuit human rights as important, it is possible that no dissonance occurs because human rights are valued over civilian control.  
-- **Some evidence.** Both Gambia and Egypt increased their praetorian leanings and, as a direct result of U.S. military aid, intervened. Further case study research will be required to definitively prove whether this propensity is higher than other military cultures. |
| -- H5A. Militaries in autocratic regimes will experience dissonance when U.S. FMAT’s focus on human rights conflicts with models of subordination to civilian control. |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| -- H5B. Militaries with histories of or latent praetorianism will have higher propensity to intervene. |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
Why Do We Care?

Ultimately, this research aims for high policy relevance. It has assessed the validity of the professionalization hypothesis that underpins the U.S. armed forces’ understanding of military aid. But as the project has discussed, the reasons for proffering and accepting aid are largely driven by geopolitical dynamics and national interest, not concern for civil-military impact. Moreover, even statistical analyses of coup propensity due to military aid show little substantive significance: in Savage and Caverley’s analysis, coup propensity doubled only to 0.08% as a result of IMET funding, leaving it still an extraordinarily unlikely probability.432 Why, then, is it important to better understand the effect of military aid on recipient civil-military relations?

Most simply, it is useful to either debunk or confirm the pervading beliefs of military members and policy-makers on the impact of their investments. Because the U.S. is unique in its goals and patterns of military aid, it is important to validate our thesis of cause-and-effect to assess whether it is effective in achieving national objectives. A gap exists in scholarly literature assessing the mechanisms for how military aid works: large-n studies indicate broad trends and comparative studies suggest every state is different, but no work offers a mid-range theory linking aid inputs to civil-military outputs. Finally, research generally concludes that democracies are good for their people and the international system: they are more stable and economically productive, less likely to go to war with one another or harbor terrorists, experience less famine and produce fewer refugees. The U.S. and international academic

community might care whether actions taken to fuel the boon of democracy may inherently subvert it.

This project does not (necessarily) seek to make a recommendation regarding the cessation of U.S. foreign military aid on the grounds of civil-military relations. As articulated earlier, the reasons for the immense investment in foreign militaries are largely geopolitical and economic, and directly benefit the United States. Thus, it may be in U.S. national interests to continue such aid regardless of the ultimate outcome on recipient civil-military relations.

Though many in the American government (and academic community) genuinely believe that fostering appropriate democratic civil-military relations in foreign nations is a worthy and peace-engendering goal, this project does not purport to override the cost-benefit analysis undergone by policy-makers in determining the appropriateness of military aid. Rather, it simply attempts to complete the picture of all possible impacts of such aid in order to facilitate a more informed decision-making process.

**Whither Foreign Military Aid and Training?**

It is safe to assume that military assistance of some sort will always be a tool of U.S. foreign policy to a greater or lesser degree, making a firm understanding of its impact a worthy goal. When I began researching this topic in 2014, not only was security cooperation not going away, the U.S. was in fact doubling down on foreign military assistance and training as a perceived lower-cost and lower-risk option for modern conflict. The United States already accounts for more than half the world’s annual arms deals. 433 In 2015, the Obama

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Administration announced plans to vastly expand military assistance programs in lines with a broader strategy to share the burden of global policing. Now a new Administration with a wildly different worldview seems skeptical of American money going to foreign nations, indifferent to long-held relationships, and skittish about military engagements with indeterminate timelines. Then candidate Donald Trump vowed to remove all troops from Afghanistan and demanded compensation from nations like Iraq for the blood and treasure spent by the American military. And as President, he would have carried through on these promises but for the intervention of a group of advisors comprised almost exclusively of military men – Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, a retired Marine Corps four-star; APNSA H.R. McMaster, an active duty Army LTG; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen Joe Dunford, USMC; and Chief of Staff and retired marine four-star John Kelly. It is no coincidence that the military advisors within the President’s circle both believed in and advocated for the use of security cooperation assistance as a means to securing peace for the United States – steeped for over a combined 150 years in the doctrine and norms of the U.S. military, each was sure that continued engagement, training, education, funding, and assistance was the best answer to any tactical or strategic dilemma we faced.

Regardless of his skepticism of military-to-military engagement and foreign military assistance, the current President is a tremendous fan of military weapons sales, delighting in announcing the sale of both existing (F-35) and occasionally imaginary (F-52) weapons platforms to a variety of foreign militaries. On December 20, 2017, the Trump Administration

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434 Author’s personal experience. Indeed, it was through concerted effort that this team walked the President back from a complete withdrawal from Afghanistan and into, bizarrely, a significant increase in force levels, in part on the basis that we could professionalize the Afghan forces with more U.S. troops.
approved the largest U.S. commercial sale of lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine since 2014, “crossing the Rubicon” on a controversial issue with the potential to escalate U.S.-Russian tensions.\textsuperscript{436} Earlier that year, it reversed restrictions on arms sales in place for Nigeria and Bahrain, and approved sales of precision-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia that the Obama administration put on hold after a series of human rights violations against rebels in Yemen raised concerns the bombs would be used against civilians. According to Security Assistance Monitor, Trump has nearly doubled the total value of U.S. arms transfer notifications from January to August 2017 than in the same period in 2016 – to the tune of roughly $48 billion more.\textsuperscript{437}

More controversially, a new program nicknamed “Buy American” has been released, which mandates U.S. military attaches and defense diplomats act “essentially as a sales force for defense contractors, actively advocating on their behalf.”\textsuperscript{438} Described by a senior administration official as a “180-degree shift” in the current approach, embassy staffers would engage aggressively with foreign counterparts to push U.S. arms.\textsuperscript{439} In concert with this change, both the Conventional Arms Transfer Policy and the International Traffic in Arms Regulations are undergoing significant rewriting to streamline the process by which U.S. defense companies obtain export licenses and approval for specific sales. Frustrated with a process that “has long


\textsuperscript{437} These figures include both direct commercial sales (DCS) and foreign military sales (FMS) like the type addressed in this project. Security Assistance Monitor – Fact Sheet. (25 Sept 2017). https://securityassistance.org/our-work/fact_sheets


\textsuperscript{439} Ibid.
focused heavily on human-rights considerations,” the efforts loosen restrictions on weapons exports, removing or downplaying many of the hurdles such as human rights records, support for democracy, and weapons monitoring agreements that ensure weapons don’t ultimately fall into the wrong hands.  

While foreign military assistance and arms sales soared under the Obama Administration, the new President is set to break records with vastly reduced oversight. Importantly, all of the deals which fall under FMS (vice direct commercial sales) are part of the Total Package Approach dictated by DSCA, and thus fall under the umbrella of my research on professionalization. With billions in additional dollars allocated across the globe and the demonstrated negative impact of such programs on military structures and control mechanisms, it seems reasonable that lessons derived from this research can and should be applied to future efforts.

Making Better Medicine – A Recipe for Improvement

Perhaps underscoring the relevance of this topic today, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy & Force Development Mara Karlin’s new book, Building Militaries in Fragile States, released in December 2017, tackles some of the very problems this project undertakes to understand. Citing cases from Vietnam to Yemen, El Salvador to Iraq, Karlin’s primary conclusion is that the time-honored U.S. tool of foreign policy, training and equipping foreign militaries, is not the panacea the community believes it to be: “in practice, American efforts to build up local security forces are an oversold halfway measure that is rarely

\footnote{Ibid.}
cheap and often falls short of the desired outcome." Many of her observations echo those in this paper. One, policymakers favor security assistance as a cheap option that stabilizes fragile states, wanting “more – more training, more equipment, more money, more quickly." Two, returns on the over $20 billion per year poured into foreign security forces are paltry. And three, problems exist both in the way the U.S. “conceives of and carries out military assistance” but that also problems often run deeper. Karlin’s primary observation can be summed up in the following paragraph:

The biggest problem with Washington’s efforts to build foreign militaries is its reluctance to weigh in on higher-order questions of mission, organizational structure, and personnel—issues that profoundly affect a military’s capacity but are often considered too sensitive to touch. Instead, both parties tend to focus exclusively on training and equipment, thus undercutting the effectiveness of U.S. assistance.

As a seasoned policy maker and academic, Karlin’s recommendation is strong: the U.S. military should more deeply involve itself in remaking foreign militaries from the ground up. Citing the U.S. elbows-deep involvement in Greece in 1946, Karlin notes:

Crucially, the United States deeply involved itself in all aspects of Greek military affairs. State Department officials even drafted the Greek government’s initial request for aid. U.S. officials worked closely with Greece to reorganize the Hellenic Army’s structure to align with the mission of defending the government against communist guerillas rather than foreign armies. And they made sure that capable military leaders were appointed to the right positions.

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442 Ibid., 112
443 Ibid., 112
444 Ibid., 113
445 Ibid.
Given my own research, the comprehensive approach depicted by the Greek case study is compelling, advocating for the process of building armies to be a political exercise that includes the mission, leadership, personal systems, and organizational structures of foreign military, not simply their training and equipment. However, I would offer the following caveats to her comprehensive approach: the U.S. military should more deeply involve itself in remaking foreign militaries from the ground up only if it can do so in the structure, capability, and mission that best suited the foreign nation. Looking again at the Greek case, architect General Van Fleet’s keystone was aligning the Hellenic military to the threat they faced, not simply building a smaller version of the United States Army in Greece. The fact that this case took place before the U.S. preoccupation with professionalization may have permitted Van Fleet to deviate from the “template for success” employed by modern assistance programs. More depth and breadth of commitment is not necessarily better if it comes with the same U.S.-centric blinders that characterize our current efforts.

Building on Karlin’s policy focus, there are several other lessons we can draw from the research presented. First and most obviously, we should endeavor to operationalize our intent to transfer democratic norms through training and education, rather than relying upon isomorphic transference or role modeling. In training, this could manifest as funding, instruction, and support by and for civilian oversight, empowering ministries of defense and teaching foreign troops with non-military business-suited defense officials. For example, one DoD official attending a conference with Latin American Generals recalled how bizarre it was to have U.S. uniformed officers telling foreign uniformed officers that civilians really ran the military – with
nary a civilian in sight.\textsuperscript{446} As another example, the U.S. Security Cooperation Office for Israel and Palestine, while technically overseen by the Consulate, is headed by a three-star General and staffed almost exclusively by military personnel. This might be less problematic if one of the newest programs undertaken by the office wasn’t a program to stand-up, train, and employ a Palestinian police force.\textsuperscript{447}

In education, in addition to an absolutely baseline requirement to increase civil-military relations education and \textit{actually teach civilian control} to both U.S. and foreign students, we should assess our foreign military curriculum to address civil-military relations in a comprehensive way, rather than tacking foreign officers onto classroom discussions designed for the American military officer. Second, a broader assessment of curriculum is warranted to ask what we are actually teaching foreign (and domestic) participants in our education programs. If it is, as my research shows, a degree in statecraft vice war, then perhaps some adjustments should be made for foreign counterparts in fragile nations: specific courses for foreign officers that provide background on the American military context or deviate from the deeply political curriculum American officers experience.

Speaking more broadly still, American servicemembers and policy makers should look to address our pervasive inability to see from perspectives other than our own. This weakness hampers our intelligence collection and analysis efforts, our strategizing and predictive capacities, our deterrence and assurance postures, our wargaming, signaling, and of course, our education and training courses. Seeing through the eyes of allies, partners, neutral nations, and enemies is a skill the United States military has yet to master on any scale, and one that is crucial.

\textsuperscript{446} Interview with Mr. Matt Cordova, 16 Sept 2015, Washington DC.
\textsuperscript{447} Conversation with U.S Army Major leading the police force program, Beaver Creek, Colorado, July 28, 2015.
to the effective professionalization of any force in its native territory. Spending time understanding the basket of ethics and values our money, equipment, and training flows into is less difficult than it seems: it simply requires a baseline understanding of the culture of the military we are building and a willingness to deviate from the “perfection” of the U.S. model. Simply taking off our U.S.-centric blinders will afford a wealth of information and increase our effectiveness not just in building military capability but mitigating the chance it will be used to undermine democratic rule.

**Future Research – An Awkward Possibility**

The next steps in this research agenda are to further unpack the education and training models employed throughout the professional military education process as they apply to foreign officers. Civilian control and the ethic of professionalism are addressed (in some small respect) from pre-commissioning (cadets) through Pinnacle (the three- and four-star general course). While foreign officers only participate in some of these levels (and War College is the senior most engagement) it would be worthwhile to delve into lower levels of education to longitudinally assess the impact on U.S. and foreign officers across their career.

Secondly, further case research is required to enable a more generalizable theory. Ideally, cases from former Soviet states (Ukraine, Estonia, Moldova) would provide a similar before-and-after testing construct without the particular flavors of Arab praetorianism or African despotism. At least one assessment of a non-coup-prone state should be accomplished, if only to validate the notion that the “glue” in democratic norms is derived from the cultural background and military culture of military members. Finally, some investigation using southeast Asian
nations – Thailand, South Korea – or Latin American countries – Colombia, Honduras – could narrow in on specific programs and formulas. For example, one question left unanswered in this research is how programs overseen by the State Department differ from those owned and operated by the Department of Defense, in direct opposition to the early intent of U.S. military assistance programs.

However, a more interesting research agenda sparked by this project would tackle the notion of professionalism closer to home. The United States military is deeply enmeshed in political affairs at every level: in addition to the Pentagon, legislative liaisons, NSC and White House staffers, think tank fellows, and executive branch exchanges are only a few of the places active duty military personnel can be assigned. Reservists and former military members further pack offices in Washington ranging from defense industry to lobbyists, bureaucrats to politicians. A typical joke heard in the Pentagon is that if everyone on Capitol Hill wore their uniform to work one day, it would look like a military coup had occurred.

Couple that observation with the deep ties of the defense department to industry (the so-called revolving door), the budget DoD commands (currently over $700 billion and climbing, a staggering 60% of all discretionary spending and greater than the next ten largest nations combined), the unquestioning support military members enjoy from the American people and much of Congress, and the increasingly wide gulf that separates a largely homogenous and self-reproducing force from a diverse population, and the United States military, far from being the

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448 Increasingly, the military is a family business, with over 25% of recruits reporting a parent who served and a staggering 80% coming from a family where at least one parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, or cousin has served in the military. These statistics are often cited when discussing the ever-expanding gap between the All-Volunteer Force and the rest of the nation. Thompson, Mark (10 Mar 2016). “Here’s Why the U.S. Military is a Family Business.” Time. [http://time.com/4254696/military-family](http://time.com/4254696/military-family)
bastion of democratic civil-military norms, begins to exhibit many of the characteristics of a praetorian infiltrator force. My personal experience at the highest levels of the Joint Staff exposed me to the extraordinary disdain some senior military officers feel toward their Office of the Secretary of Defense (civilian) oversight, members – both elected and staff – of the Congressional Armed Services Committees, and other policy makers within the executive branch. This personal experience is visible to a similar degree in many of the comments made by Gen(Ret) Kelly that American military members are superior to average Americans and deserving of deference. Meanwhile, social media is blurring the lines between a servicemember’s ability to be partisan in their private life and non-partisan (or apolitical) in their public duties, with a as yet unseen corruption effect on the professionalism of the force.\textsuperscript{449} And the current Administration has so fetishized military members as to place them in extraordinary positions of control, to the celebration of portions of the country who fear their elected leader more than a “benign junta” of military officers.\textsuperscript{450}

While the sum of this picture is disturbing, it is even more so in light of the research presented in this project. What purportedly protects the United States from a praetorian military is the military’s own commitment to professionalism, defined in those classical Huntingtonian terms of humility and subordination to civilian control. Perhaps one of the reasons the American military is losing its grip on subordination is the same reason our professionalization programs


can be toxic to foreign officers: it teaches senior leaders to be statesmen who believe they could do better than elected politicians, enhances corporateness and institutional self-interest, all without reaffirming the foundational principles of democratic civil-military relations.

More research on this trajectory remains to be accomplished, but the need to do so is pressing. The future of the United States as icon of a strong professional force that poses no threat to its democratic regime is cloudy – and the post mortem on whatever results from this trend may well reveal that we drifted unknowingly toward praetorianism while trying to teach others the benefit of democratic civilian control.
APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM (SAMPLE)

Informed Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to an interview. The information gathered in this interview may be used as part of my research on the U.S. Foreign Military Assistance Program and Professional Military Education. I am interested in how your experience informs your view of the US and civil-military relations. In this interview, I will ask you to answer questions relevant to your experience. The interview is expected to last one to two hours.

If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you have the right to terminate the interview. Your anonymity will be respected and held to the highest standard. If particularities of your interview appear in written format (whether it’s for publication or a presentation), no personally identifying information will be disclosed. Your responses will be kept confidential and your name will not be linked to any responses you give.

I use a tape recorder in all interviews to ensure that I don't inaccurately quote you. When tape recorders are used, individual transcripts will be given to the participant upon request. However, if you request that I discontinue use of the tape recorder, your wishes will be respected.

There is no direct benefit to you anticipated from your participation in my research.

If you have any questions regarding the current research, please contact me, Miriam Krieger, directly. You can contact me at mk1361@georgetown.edu or 303-829-0775.

If for any reason you do not wish to have the content of your interview used in my analysis, please let me know. If you consent to let me use your responses in my analysis, please sign on the line below.

Thank you for your participation.

Signature: _______________________________________________ Date: _____________
## APPENDIX B: SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dissertation</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
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</table>

1. Are you male or female?
   - Female
   - Male

2. What is your age?
   - 18-20
   - 21-29
   - 30-39
   - 40-49
   - 50-59
   - 60 or older

3. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
   - Less than high school degree
   - High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
   - Some college but no degree
   - Associate degree
   - Bachelor degree
   - Graduate degree
4. Which of the following best describes your current rank?

- General Officer Equivalent
- Commander - Colonel Equivalent
- Field Grade Officer - Major Equivalent
- Company Grade Officer - Captain Equivalent
- Enlisted
- Other (please specify)

5. In which branch (or branches) of the United States military have you served? (Check all that apply)

- Army
- Marine Corps
- Navy
- Air Force
- Coast Guard

I serve in a different military service:

6. Are you a Foreign Military Student?

- Yes
- No

7. Which school are you attending?

- The Eisenhower School (ICAF)
- National War College (NWC)
- Information Resources Management College (IRMC)
- College of International Security Affairs (CISA)
- Other
Dissertation
Course Curriculum

8. During my studies, I've taken courses in:

- [ ] Leadership
- [ ] Strategy
- [ ] Regional Area Studies
- [ ] Foreign Policy
- [ ] Civil-Military Relations
- [ ] Economics or Acquisitions
- [ ] Law of Armed Conflict
- [ ] Civilian-Control of the Military
- [ ] Cyber
- [ ] WMD
- [ ] US National Security

9. My coursework emphasizes:

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<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Above all</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Foreign Policy</td>
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10. Class discussion emphasizes:

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<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Above all</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
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11. My experience prepared me to be:

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<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Above all</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A better military leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>A better strategist</td>
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<tr>
<td>A better foreign policy adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>A better leader for my country</td>
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<tr>
<td>A better security adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>A better political adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better able to serve my political leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better able to serve the people of my nation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. How much do you know about the theories of US Civil-Military Relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nothing at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>I am very familiar</th>
<th>I am an expert</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

13. How much did your coursework help you to understand general principles of civil-military relations?

- [ ] A great deal of help
- [ ] A lot of help
- [ ] A moderate amount of help
- [ ] A little help
- [ ] Not any help at all

14. How important are the following aspects of US Civil-Military Relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military being representative of the people</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Some Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism of the Military Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principle of Civilian Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military adherence to Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military adherence to the Laws of Armed Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congressional Budget Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chain of Command with Commander-in-Chief at the top</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
15. How much did your coursework help you to understand principles of civilian control of the military?

- A great deal of help
- A lot of help
- A moderate amount of help
- A little help
- Not any help at all

16. How much do you know about the practice of US Civil-Military Relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nothing at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>I am very familiar</th>
<th>I am an expert</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

17. How much did your coursework help you to understand principles of US civil-military relations?

- A great deal of help
- A lot of help
- A moderate amount of help
- A little help
- Not any help at all

18. Do you think the United States could ever be in danger of having a coup d'etat?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Other (please specify)
19. How much do you know about Civil-Military Relations in your country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowing About Civil-Military Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. How important are the following aspects of your country's Civil-Military Relations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Some Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military being representative of the people</td>
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<td>Professionalism of the Military Officer</td>
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<td>Principle of Civilian Control</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Would US-style civil-military relations work in your country?

- Yes
- No

Other (please specify)

22. If you answered "No," why not? What doesn't fit or would need to change?


23. Do you think your country could ever be in danger of having a coup d'état?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Other (please specify)
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