Military westernization and state repression in the post-Cold War era

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ABSTRACT

The waves of unrest that have shaken the Arab world since December 2010 have highlighted significant differences in the readiness of the military to intervene in political unrest by forcefully suppressing dissent. We suggest that in the post-Cold War period, this readiness is inversely associated with the level of military westernization, which is a product of the acquisition of arms from western countries. We identify two mechanisms linking the acquisition of arms from western countries to less repressive responses: dependence and conditionality; and a longer-term diffusion of ideologies regarding the proper form of civil-military relations. Empirical support for our hypothesis is found in an analysis of 2523 cases of government response to political unrest in 138 countries in the 1996–2005 period. We find that military westernization mitigates state repression in general, with more pronounced effects in the poorest countries. However, we also identify substantial differences between the pre- and post-9/11 periods.

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1. Introduction

The waves of demonstrations, uprisings and revolts that have shaken the Arab world since December 2010[1] have highlighted significant differences in the readiness of the military to intervene in political unrest. In particular, one can contrast the military's refusal to take sides in the initial uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, thereby allowing citizens to overrun the governments' internal security forces, with its more forceful attempts to suppress dissent in Libya and Syria, resulting in civil war. These distinct paths confirm that in a context of widespread political unrest, as represented in the Arab Spring, and with the collapse of the police and parallel security forces (e.g. presidential guards), the military's decision about whether to become part of the state's repressive apparatus is a primary determinant of how events unfold (Andrzejewski, 1954:71; Lutterbeck, 2013).

This observation raises two related questions. Why does the military choose to defend an existing government in one state but not in another? And where the military does choose to become part of the state's repressive apparatus, how far will it go to defend an existing government from popular political unrest?

Our central argument in this paper, which is specific to the post-Cold War era, is that senior military leaders' decision to defend an existing government by suppressing dissent is inversely correlated with the level of military westernization. This claim, tantamount to saying that military westernization can have a positive political impact, lies in obvious tension with a more critical literature that spotlights the dark history of western collaboration with human rights violators. Much of that literature—for example, on the School of the Americas—anticipates critiques of the more recent "Global War on Terror"

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[1] For reasons of efficacy in this paper we refer to these events as the "Arab Spring".

(GWOT) (e.g., Chomsky and Herman, 1979; Grimmett and Sullivan, 2001; McCoy, 2005; Nelson-Pallmeyer, 1997). Yet, as we argue below, the end of the Cold War transformed the context in which military ideas were transmitted, making possible a more positive effect. This was especially true prior to September, 2001.

Our initial argument builds on Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1964) and Barany (2012), in that we conceive of military westernization as being constituted by two discrete types of professionalization. One is narrowly technical and centers on soldiers' abilities and skill-sets, and the general military division of labor, bureaucracy, and technology. The other, more politically profound, centers on civil-military relations as formulated in the literature on democracy and state repression (Henderson, 1991; Davenport, 2007; Davenport and Inman, 2012). It involves an ideological shift in which military leaders come to believe in the separation of political and military roles and spheres of authority within the state, or at least behave as if they believe in that separation.

Complementing each of these arguments is the body of literature on the effect of international relations on the outcome of revolutions (Skocpol, 1979, 1994), the impact of ties with the West on regimes' democratization (Levitsky and Way, 2010; Whitehead, 2001), and in particular how post-Cold War ties between the West and variably called "illiberal democracies" or "competitive authoritarian" regimes have affected the outcome of non-violent revolution (Ritter, 2015). Our arguments also intersect with those of Nepstad (2011: 10), who emphasizes both the importance of "regime strategy" and "undermining the state's sanctioning power" (on the latter point, also see Schock, 2004). We point to a particular way in which military westernization can change both of these dimensions, over and above any effect of citizens nonviolently subverting a regime.

This is our main contribution in this paper. Rather than treat the acquisition of certain types of western military hardware as a product of military westernization, we flip the causal direction, arguing that the acquisition of certain types of military hardware from western countries helps *drive* military westernization. In our account, two mechanisms are at play. First, the acquisition of this hardware allows states that supply it a measure of influence on states that acquire it, particularly where, as detailed below, the hardware is central and irreplaceable in anticipated military operations. This is analogous to the influence that arises from economic dependence (Hirschman, 1980) or "second-generation" conditionality in overseas development aid (Stokke, 1995). It means that in the post-Cold War era, leaders of a country that is dependent on the West for core and complex military equipment have a more limited ability to use the military in order to violently suppress popular dissent than their less western-oriented counterparts.

Second, the acquisition of complex military hardware facilitates the diffusion of western ideologies regarding the role of the military in the state, and regarding when, how and against whom state-sponsored military activity can legitimately be used. This is a longer-term, cultural influence. It is reminiscent of both microsociological mechanisms that underlie theories of world polity (Boli and Thomas, 1997; Meyer, 1980; Meyer et al., 1997a), institutionalized diffusion (Colyvas and Jonsson, 2011) and of liberal vs. realist debates about "complex interdependence," (Keohane and Nye, 1987), that is, how asymmetries in power and dependence across discrete dimensions generate less predictable patterns of influence and cooperation. It, too, suggests that the dampening effect of military westernization on repressive tendencies is not only a product of rhetorical commitment to Western political ideals. Rather, military westernization actually brings about an ideological shift in which military leaders come to believe in the separation of political and military roles and spheres of authority within the state.

We now fill out this argument, clarifying the mechanisms through which the sale of sophisticated weapon systems affects dependence and the diffusion of ideas about the military's role in domestic politics. Military westernization is framed as a particular case where those sellers are from leading liberal democracies. Initial empirical support for our hypothesis regarding the mitigating effect of military westernization in the post-Cold War era on state repression is sought in a description of pre-2011 military ties in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, four countries at the heart of the "Arab Spring". More comprehensive empirical tests are then specified using a sample of 2523 cases of political unrest in 138 countries in the 1996–2005 period. Results confirm that net of national income, prior political traditions, and *past* levels of political violence, militarily westernized countries respond less violently to political unrest, and these effects are more pronounced in poorest countries. We also document significant differences in the strength of these effects after the initiation of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the US-led initiative that followed the 9/11 attacks. Overall, therefore, our analysis raises or, more accurately, revives questions about the liberalizing potential of certain types of military-to-military contact, while specifying a new mechanism for minimizing the bloodiest instances of repression: the sale or transfer of complex military hardware by western countries.

2. Arms sales and the diffusion of ideas about military-state relations

2.1. Arms sales and buyers' dependency

World system and world polity theories have revealed the deep connections among states and institutions across the globe, highlighting both hierarchical relations between core and periphery, but also actors' codependence and receptiveness to outside influence throughout coercion, diffusion, modeling, and coordination (Boli and Thomas, 1997; Dobbin et al., 2007; Elkins and Simmons, 2005; Halliday and Osinsky, 2006; Meyer, 1980). The role of the military in this global system has not been neglected. The military has been identified as an agent of socialization and change (Biddle and Long, 2004; Gheciu, 2005; Janowitz, 1964; Mann, 1986; McNeill, 1982; Tilly, 1992). Likewise, the political stand of the military has proved to be a crucial factor in civil-military relations (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1964; Kamrava, 2000; Ritter, 2012).

A key metanarrative across many of these studies is that the military is not an isolated entity. On the contrary, since the vast majority of countries lack the technical ability or political will to build and maintain significant military-industrial capacity, most militaries are inherently and necessarily dependent on outsiders for complex weapon systems.[2] As the complexity of these systems increases, states are progressively pulled into the orbit of either the US or Russia – the dominant purveyors of military technology today – or toward other leading secondary arms exporters like Germany, France, the UK and China (SIPRI, 2010). This dependence is also affected by a unique characteristic of arms markets. During the Cold War, sharing weapons systems and technologies played a central role in fostering and buttressing global alliances, especially on the collision lines between spheres of superpower influence (Pierre, 1981). Though geopolitical tensions are more diffuse today, the situation is structurally similar. Since particular types of weapon systems can change the regional balance of power, arms-supplying states worry about whether arms can be used against their own interests, or against the interests of important strategic allies. For this reason they sometimes withhold the most advanced technologies from allies (Cohen, 1978: 89; Ofir, 2001).[3] Likewise, arms-acquiring states worry about not only the price and quality of the technology, but also about the long-term reliability of the supplier as a provider of important secondary services like training and spare parts. The central point here is that buyers do not acquire military equipment in an open market, especially where they are seeking technologically advanced equipment. Rather, their military acquisitions take place in a complex web of interdependent relationships between states, each of which has a discrete set of local and geopolitical needs, interests, and aspirations.

We envisage the strength of the dependency generated by arms procurement as being a product of three elements, all of which must exist in order to allow a supplier maximum influence over a client's military.

The first element is the *centrality of the combat system in anticipated military operations*. This refers to the significance of the combat system for the user's military doctrine and/or needs. For example, tanks and APCs are central military platforms in an army whose core strategy involves armed maneuvering; naval military platforms can be as essential for military strategies structured around naval dominance.

The second element is the overall *prevalence of a given weapon system in the armed forces*. This refers to the extent to which a particular equipment domain is dominated by a single combat system. For example, an air force in which 10% of its fighter aircraft are US-made will be less dependent on the US and will have less contact with US suppliers and trainers than an air force in which 70% of fighter aircraft are US-made.

The third element is the *low level of replaceability of combat systems*. This refers to the difficulty of substituting one supplier of military material with another. An army that needs ammunition, spare parts, logistical services or upgrades will find it costly or difficult to get from anyone other than the original supplier or one of the supplier's close allies. The more technologically advanced the system, the more difficult it will be. In the long-run, substituting one high-end system for another is possible. But it is costly, and in times of war, it can also lead to considerable military weakness.[4]

2.1.1. Two types of influence arising from arms trades

More sophisticated equipment also leads to greater dependency on the seller for the basic logistics of weapon systems, ammunition, replacement parts and upgrades. Two types of influence associated with this dependency accrue to the arms supplier.

The first is reminiscent of neocolonial social control. We refer to it as a <u>coercive</u> influence. High-intensity conflicts, in particular, lead to the rapid erosion of combat aircraft, tanks and artillery. The irreplaceability of these systems in the short-run means that there is total dependence on that supplier in the strategic domains associated with those weapon systems. By threatening to withhold spare parts or ammunition, an arms supplier can therefore place the very existence of a regime into question, particularly when a country is struggling to sustain its fighting systems during war.[5]

The other influence is a microsocial parallel to Nye's (2004) "soft power," and is also suggestive of mechanisms that underlie theories of world polity (Meyer et al., 1997b). Depicted visually in Fig. 1, it refers to the relationship between increasingly complex weapon systems (right-side axis), opportunities for collaboration (left-side axis), and overall levels of <u>interpersonal interaction</u>.[6] That is, even the sale of small arms may generate some military coordination. But sophisticated weapons create a wider array of opportunities for interaction. With every purchase of a complex weapons system, instructors, operators, advisers, and other experts are employed to closely chaperone and guide recipients. Occasionally, the message is overt and presented in civil-military relations training programs (IMET, 2001). From the buyer's perspective, this helps ensure that a local soldier's mistake will not spoil valuable equipment, and that the system's tactical effectiveness is maximized. From

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[2] As describe in the next section, our study focuses on complex military equipment which requires strong industries, funding, technological knowledge and not small arm.

[3] Saudi Arabia and Japan, both US allies, were only allowed to purchase the F-15 jet fighters with reduced capability.

[4] One example is Iran's shift from American support to self-support after the 1979 revolution, and its subsequent reduction in military capability.

[5] Note that this type of influence can have positive geopolitical consequences. For example, the high dependence of both the Israeli and the Egyptian armies on American technology and arms has reduced the chances of conflict, since neither side would be able to "win" without either considerable U.S. logistical support or going through a radical reequipping revolution by changing the main supplier of military hardware. Joint dependence on the US in this case therefore cements a formal, albeit "cold," peace agreement.

[6] This phenomenon is not restricted to the military and arms sale since there are obviously ties between engineers, educators, and other professionals. Our argument here is that special characteristics of the military mean that none of these other connections are as effective. First, the military is a massive unitary system with a single chain of command. Second, it has the monopoly over its occupation within a given state. Those two characteristics differentiate the military from other economic and cultural players through which other types of interpersonal connection can occur.
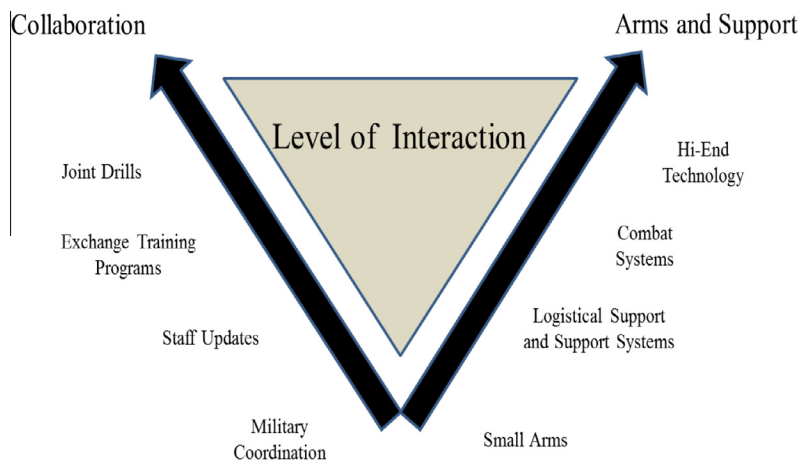
Fig. 1. Military westernization and levels of interaction.

the seller's perspective, improving performance levels may enhance sales in other areas too. For similar reasons, suppliers also tend to provide maintenance services for complex weapon systems, at least to buyers that do not possess the technology or human capital to maintain those military systems on their own.

In some cases, the social interaction that accompanies these purchases can be institutionalized, especially where they are large or are made across different types of military systems. For example, in 1979 the US established its Office of Military Cooperation (OMC) in Egypt with the goal of facilitating "the modernization and training of the Egyptian Armed Forces and to coordinate all aspects of military cooperation between the US" (Pleasant, 1998).[7] One recent product of this cooperation is Egypt's building of Abrams M1A2 battle tanks for its own domestic use, in collaboration with US sponsors (Gotowicki, 2005). Beyond this institutionalized relationship there can also be *ad hoc* or scheduled joint drills between the militaries of the buyer and supplier.

The Egypt case also points to the wide interface between the buyer's and seller's political, military and economic institutions that this close support and guidance can generate. Here, too, there is a crucial microsociological component that allows us to differentiate the interactional patterns in a military setting from those in political or economic settings, as depicted in Fig. 2. In the latter, interaction is concentrated among political and military elites (Fig. 2, left panel): "Our assistance comes with lectures on human rights and civil-military relations" (White, 2014). In military settings, in contrast, a high level of dependence of one military on another entails officer-exchange or officer-training programs, generating considerable contacts at the intermediate levels. As the size and frequency of joint drills increases, so too does interaction at lower ranks, inverting the normal hierarchy (Fig. 2, right panel).

This intensive interpersonal interaction at the middle and low ranks stems directly from the nature of modern weapon systems. Instructors work closely with trainees, junior commanders explain methods to their peers, and experts teach local technicians. Brooks (2013), writing about the Tunisian military, asserts that these military-to-military relations and associated exercises have a long pedigree and are one of the Tunisian military's most significant assets. Likewise, a US army field manual on "Security Force Assistance" shows that considerable care is shown in choosing personable and "culturally astute" instructors whose natural interactional skills, augmented by training, maximize their effectiveness (FM 3-07.1, 2009).[8]

Herein lies the microsociological roots of this type of influence. The intended goal of these interactions may be to communicate a narrow set of technical skills. Some of these may be directly related to coping with civil unrest. For example, contemporary western armies adopt a gradual spectrum of responses that start with non-lethal weapons and advance increasingly to lethal (Schtultz, 2011). It may be in such settings that those ideas diffuse to the recipient armies and set the ground rules for dealing with civil unrest according to western doctrine. But even where narrow technical training has nothing to with the military's political role or responses to civil unrest, it is hard to imagine that a wider array of ideas about professional standards, from matters of general military doctrine and strategy to professionalization and ideal civilian-military relationship, do not also diffuse. Sometimes this could be through general modeling, providing passive exposure to new ideas about military roles. Other times, this wider set of ideas is an integral part of the program. The US Army's International Military Education and

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[7] Equivalent points could be made about Soviet-Syrian relations, but these are outside the scope of this paper.

[8] Although clear status differences between the interactants reflect their respective roles as teacher and student, especially as professional western armies are typically more selective on educational characteristics than their equivalents in developing countries, increasing levels of education and military professionalization in general reduce that gap. In Egypt, for example, the adult illiteracy rate in 1986 was 49.6% (El-Din, 2000). That same year a New York Times article cited in Picard (1990) reported that 1985 conscripts to the Egyptian army were 66% high school graduates, 14% university graduates, and 20% vocational school graduates. This clearly signals the increasing quality of soldiers relative to the population as a whole, as one would expect from an increasingly professional army. The increasing educational attainment also has implications for expected types of interaction between trainers and trainees. It suggests more active and cooperative learning styles, with more opportunities for informal exchanges than would occur if the differences in education between foreign trainers and local trainees were very large.
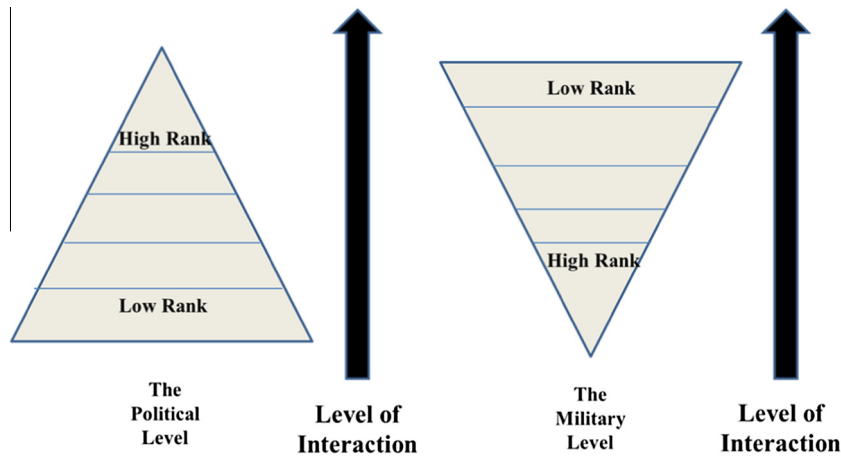
Fig. 2. Intensity of interaction across political and military sectors.

Training (IMET) course handbook includes a program that emphasizes civil-military issues. Among its course offerings are "Civil Military Operations, Democratic Sustainment" (IMET, 2001). Likewise, the U.S. Security Force Assistance Field Manual explicitly states: "These programs help to strengthen foreign militaries through training for the proper functioning of a civilian-controlled, apolitical, professional military" (FM 3-07.1, 2009).

The additional effect of this microsociological dimension is profound. It suggests that not only do senior officer-corp trainees assimilate formal military doctrine or more general ideas about the military's role in politics while undergoing advanced training in foreign sponsors' military institutions, as has long been argued (Eisenstadt and Pollack, 2001; O'Loughlin et al., 1998).[9] Crucially, the nature of modern weapon systems means that a similar diffusion occurs when lower ranks—especially junior officers and NCOs—are exposed to foreign military advisors.

2.2. The military's political power: a mediating factor

An important mediating factor between these two types of influence—the coercive and microsocial—and a military elite's decision about whether or not to defend an existing regime is the extent to which military institutions have non-military roles.

One of these roles is participation in domestic politics. The military's ability to influence a national budget—whether to purchase expensive equipment or improve the lifestyle of army personnel—reflects its political power, especially in relatively poor countries.

Another of these roles is economic. In several Middle-Eastern countries, the military is a leading economic actor. In the name of self-sufficiency the Egyptian military runs "day care centers and beach resorts ... its divisions make television sets, jeeps, washing machines ... as well as bottled water under a brand reportedly named after a general's daughter, Safi" (Kirkpatrick, 2011; Gotowicki, 2005).[10]

These two types of non-military roles are related to a broader discussion over the role of the military in civil-military relations. Although the military is a domestic political actor in most political systems (Caforio, 2003; Huntington, 1957) there is clear differentiation across states in the extent of the role (Kamrava, 2000). This yields three main models for the military. At one end of the continuum is the dominant western model: the military as a professional and apolitical servant of the state. This professionalization—which refers both to the skill-set of soldiers and, more profoundly, to the separation of political and military roles—is the result of a process that largely occurred between the 16th and 18th centuries in western European sociopolitical settings. It placed clear limitations on overt military participation in the political arena (Huntington, 1957; Parker, 1996).

At the other end of the continuum is the domination of the state by the military elite. Here, there are high levels of overlap between military and political authority – whether embodied in a single person or family/clan – and no single institution within the state can limit the army's authority.

Occupying an intermediate area between these two is the can be generally referred to as the Turkish (Ataturkian-Kemalist) model as "guardian of the state". Here the army is more professional in that it is external to the main state apparatus. Yet it also sees itself as the guardian of the political order and status quo, intervening in domestic politics when it deems it necessary to protect the state from the whims of political leaders.[11]

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[9] As depicted by Eisenstadt and Pollack, this mechanism is not exclusive to western armies. During the Cold War, spheres of influence expanded in line with military's role as a vessel for political and ideological conversion. Regional powers such as Nasser's Egypt used similar methods.

[10] There is a similar phenomenon in Iran. The Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' economic enterprise started as mini-banks for veteran of the Iran–Iraq war. Today it is a powerful conglomerate running civil industries and private companies via the Iranian stock exchange (Harris, 2013).

[11] Important to mention that since the army purge that took place in the last couple of years it seems that Turkey has abandoned the Ataturkian model and moved toward a more fully professional western model.

We argue that the military's place on this continuum profoundly affects the ability of an arms supplier to exert political influence. In particular, the more dominant the military is in local politics, the higher the political influence that accrues to an arms supplier through the sale of complex military hardware that scores high on strategic centrality, prevalence, and irreplaceability. This has clear implications for understanding the relationship between the acquisition of complex military hardware, dependence on the arms seller, and the latter's subsequent influence on political outcomes through the military elite. It suggests that the longer a country will have been within the western military fold, or closely connected to it, the more likely it would be for the military to have adopted – or moved toward – a more western role as an apolitical professional servant of the state.

Although this movement entails a significant transformation in political and military structures, it has occurred in two of the four countries in which there were significant uprisings during the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Egypt. In the Tunisian case, the shift toward a more apolitical and professional military can be seen in the contrast between, on one hand, the military's suppression of civil unrest in 1978 and 1984 (Ware, 1985), and on the other, its refusal to suppress dissent in 2011 and subsequent withdrawal to their barracks. In the Egyptian case it can be seen in the contrast between, on one hand, its response to the 1977 "Bread" riots and 1986 "Conscription" riots, and on the other, its readiness to allow the overthrow of Mubarak—one of their own—in 2011, as well as their refusal to hold on to power through the short-lived SCAF (Supreme Council of the Armed Forces). Of course, the recent summer 2013 military takeover in Egypt and suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest political party, has implied readiness to move toward a more political role. Although this has led to criticism from the US, it is in synch with the less westernized "guardian of the state" model in which the military's goal is to protect the integrity of the state from dangers emanating outside *and inside* its borders. In either case, even with the recent, mild shift toward a more politicized role in Egypt, the gradual depoliticization that occurred in Tunisia and Egypt in the decades leading up to the Arab Spring mark them as significantly different from the Libyan and Syrian cases, where the military provided not only the occasional civil unrest suppression but acted as the police and public affairs intelligence services, interrogating and torturing political dissidents.

2.3. Summary

Using the sale or supply of complex military hardware to influence politics is a privilege of only a few technologically advanced actors in the contemporary global system: the primary actors have long been the US and Russia. Where any arms supplier has a monopoly on the provision of this hardware to a given country that score high on *strategic centrality*, *prevalence*, and *irreplaceability*, that supplier can affect a buyer's political and military choices through outright military dependence or, in the longer-term, through cumulative effects of interpersonal interaction. That influence is heightened where the military is a dominant player in local politics. As discussed below in relation to the Arab Spring, since the end of the Cold War, where that dependence is on the West, it limits the ability of unelected political elites to use the military in order to violently suppress popular dissent. This loss in autonomy is one of the costs of being militarily linked to the West, the main source of an emerging consensus about the fundamental right to political dissent.

The reduced autonomy to suppress dissent in countries that are militarily dependent on the West contrasts with the relative freedom of military action that countries with more intensive military dependence on non-western suppliers—primarily Russia—are able to maintain. Here there is an opposing consensus, with illiberal states providing diplomatic back-up for each other, often by emphasizing principles of non-intervention and sovereignty, each of which is intended to legitimize the rights of given rulers of the state to use military force in order to suppress internal dissent.

3. The Arab Spring

As an initial qualitative test of these ideas, especially the idea that the source of complex military hardware tells us something about the readiness of the military to intervene in political unrest, we focus on events associated with the Arab Spring in four countries in which the waves of demonstrations and uprisings were particularly strong: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria.[12] Since the events comprising the Arab Spring are in the public record, we do not go over them in detail here. Rather, we emphasize a few characteristics of the uprisings across the four countries, including the role of the army, then detail their relationship to arms sales and military collaborations.

3.1. The uprising

Our comments are summarized in Table 1. First, everyone from the Tunisian government to domestic and foreign pundits was surprised by the intensity of the demonstrations that followed Muhammed Bouazizi's self-immolation on December 18, 2010, and by the fact that they spread so quickly, first within Tunisia, and then beyond ("Date of first demonstration" in Table 1 documents this rolling wave of demonstrations across the four countries).

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[12] Yemen is the fifth Arab republic in which the Arab Spring has led to the overthrow of a long-term autocrat. We do not consider it here since Yemen does not fit the military dependency criteria and lacks two central elements. The state is less developed as a source of internal authority and the army suffers from both low cohesiveness and weapon system's maintenance.

Second, as noted by Anderson (2011), the pattern of the protests varied substantially across these countries. The demonstrations in Tunisia "spiraled toward the capital" from peripheral towns and rural areas "finding common cause with a once powerful but much repressed labor movement." In Egypt, the uprisings were initiated and then coordinated by young cosmopolitan urban residents in all the major cities. In Libya, "armed rebels in the eastern provinces ignited the protests [in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city], revealing the tribal and regional cleavages that have beset the country for decades." A similar phenomenon could be seen in Syria, though unlike in Libya, the initial demonstrations occurred in peripheral town and small cities, the spiral of violence was much slower, and the uprisings eventually revealed sectarian religious rather than tribal schisms.

Third, even with these differences in patterns of protest, there was at least one important commonality. All the autocrats challenged by the uprisings had either personally been in power for decades (from Ben Ali's 23 years in Tunisia to Qaddafi's 41 years in Libya) or ran a family-regime that had been in power for decades (the Assads in Syria).

Fourth, another difference: the uprisings lasted less than a month in Tunisia and Egypt, several months in Libya, and have spawned an ongoing and bloody civil war in Syria. This, in fact, is one of the more surprising aspects of the Arab Spring. A considerable scholarly literature has documented the high degree of overlap between military and political elites in these four countries and others in the Arab world (e.g., Bellin, 2004; Campbell, 2009; Hurewitz, 1969; Picard, 1990). Yet even after their long tenure in office, Ben Ali and Mubarak were unable to use the military to quell the uprisings. Table 1 also makes it clear that this inability was not because they shied away from using force: even in relatively peaceful Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions there were 223 and 846 estimated civilian casualties, caused mostly by *non*-military security forces like the police. This is far from bloodless, but it is orders of magnitude below the casualty counts in Libya (tens of thousands) or Syria (into six figures).

Most profoundly for our analysis, one of the key differences across these four uprisings was the role of the army. Here we provide a more specific account by country. The actual trigger for President Ben Ali's flight from Tunisia on January 14, 2011, less than a month after the initial demonstration, was the army command's refusal to give the order to open fire on demonstrators after they had overrun the police and presidential guard (Barany, 2011). During the chaotic days that followed—absent a government and credible police forces—the army continued to play a politically neutral role, while also protecting property from looters and people from the older security forces (Kirkpatrick, 2011). Finally, notwithstanding some skepticism (e.g., Rieff, 2011) the army facilitated free elections under the interim President Mebazaa before returning to the barracks. Each of these decisions by the army command was consistent with its role as an apolitical professional army.

In Egypt, as in Tunisia, the military was also mobilized and deployed during the initial stages of the uprising. However, unlike other Egyptian "security forces"—blamed for almost all the 846 deaths during the 3-week uprising (BBC, 2011)—it refused to take sides in almost all instances,[13] as evoked in iconic photos of demonstrators and soldiers exchanging flowers, and praying and laughing together. After Mubarak's government fell and the military took control through the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), events took a slightly different turn. During some demonstrations, the military stood aside, allowing angry crowds to freely target symbols of stigmatized outsiders (e.g., the Israeli embassy), or groups themselves (e.g., Coptic Christians). On the other hand, relative to Tunisia there was a long duration between SCAF's assumption of temporary power and elections. This was compounded by highly publicized instances of soldiers' violence (e.g., against women). Together, these two fed popular suspicion that "the military is stealing our revolution" (Chick, 2011) and led to a wave of anti-army demonstrations in November 2011. In summary, the Egyptian army command gave a slightly different impression than its Tunisian counterpart. Although military force was rarely used against crowds, decisions about the protection of property and people were more arbitrary. And Egyptian military leaders were demonstrably less willing to eschew politics by turning the reins of power over to civilians and returning soldiers to their barracks. Subsequent events—culminating in the military's ouster of President Morsi in July 2013—have underscored this readiness to intervene in domestic politics in order to guard the state from what military leaders consider damaging excesses of political leaders, as per the "guardian-of-the-state" model described above.

In Libya and Syria, events have transpired in a completely different way. The military in each of these countries was (Libya) and has been (Syria) instrumental in attempting to suppress the uprisings. This occurred after a rapid escalation of violence in Libya and a much more gradual one in Syria. In the Libyan case, in particular, it was accompanied by the defection of a considerable numbers of soldiers and some senior officers to the rebel side, or out of the country entirely (e.g., Libyan fighter pilots reported in Reuters, 2011). In the Syrian case, there were early reports of Syrian soldiers being killed for resisting orders to fire on demonstrators/rebels (Black, 2011; Marsh, 2011; Navai, 2011). In both countries, the internal balance of power cultivated over decades by the Assad and Qaddafi regimes had favored units recruited from areas, tribes (Libya), or religious traditions (Syria) associated with the ruling family and their allies.[14] In the Libyan case, only international intervention by a NATO Coalition—authorized by the UN Security Council and supported by the Arab League—was able to foil the victory of Qaddafi's favored groups. Events in Syria are still unfolding. Syria's geopolitical allies (Russia, Iran and China) have effectively blocked any international military intervention against the regime. Russian military equipment and Iranian

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[13] The most notable exception occurred in April 9, 2011, when soldiers disobeyed orders, eliciting a harsh local response (Beaumont, 2011).

[14] In Libya these units were the Revolutionary Guard Corps, Khamis Brigade and certain paramilitary police forces. They were recruited from tribes allied with Qaddafi and benefited from better equipment, training and status. In Syria, the equivalent units were the Defense Companies (Saraya ad-Difa) until the mid-1980s, then the Air Force Intelligence Directorate more recently. In each country, these units served as the regime's ultimate instrument for quelling internal dissent.

Table 1
General characteristics of the uprisings.

	Tunisia	Egypt	Libya	Syria
Date of first demonstration[a]	18-Dec-10	25-Jan-11	17-Feb-11	15-Mar-11
Location of first demonstration	Peripheral town	Cairo & other cities	Second city	Peripheral town
Duration of uprising (days)[b]	27	17	183	>1000
President	Zine El Abidine Ben Ali	Hosni Mubarak	Muammar Qaddafi	Bashar al-Assad
Duration of presidency (yrs)	23	30	41	11 (40)[c]
Widespread violence early	No	No	Yes	No
Number of deaths[d]	223	846	27,000	150,000
Army suppresses uprising	No	No	Yes	Yes

[a] Date of first significant protest (e.g., in Libya, Benghazi on 17 February, rather than Bayda on 14 January; in Syria, Daraa on March 6, not the uneventful Day of Rage, February 4).
[b] Calculated from date of 1st protest to ousting (Tunisia, Egypt) or death (Libya) of ruler.
[c] Parenthesised number includes the 29 years that Bashar's father, Hafez al-Assad was President.
[d] These are generally accepted estimates in mainstream media (e.g., Reuters) for deaths which occurred during the uprising and its immediate aftermath. A minor caveat is that the estimates include an unknown number of civilians killed by other civilians (e.g., sectarian violence; settling of scores under cover of uprising).

personnel have streamed into Syria as part of the attempt to frustrate intervention and assist the survivability of the regime (Wong, 2012; Gordon and Schmitt, 2013), alongside fighters from client movements (most notably Hizballah in Lebanon). Furthermore, the elite units of the Syrian army are predominantly recruited from religious minorities (Alawi, Shia, Druze, Christians, Yazidis) wary of persecution that they expect to follow Sunni political supremacy, so have strong incentive to quell the uprising.[15]

3.2. Military westernization

The behavior of the military elite in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria after Arab Spring demonstrations began is strongly associated with two empirical indicators of military westernization. The primary indicator is the origin of three types of complex military hardware—combat aircraft, armored personnel carriers (APCs), and tanks.[16] Given these countries' military needs, these three types of equipment score high on strategic centrality, prevalence, and irreplaceability. A secondary indicator is confirmed military maneuvers with foreign forces in the years preceding the Arab Spring. This indexes the intensity of contact with foreign military personnel of a given geopolitical affiliation over and above contact associated with arms purchases.

Within the theoretical frame described above, the origin of complex military equipment has high face validity as an indicator of military westernization. Since these systems are purchased infrequently, the equipment available to contemporary armies in the Middle-East—and elsewhere—is still largely determined by countries' geopolitical affiliations at the end of the Cold War. Likewise, even where countries switched affiliation from the Soviet-bloc to the west—the case with Egypt after the late 1970s—looking at the relative share of weapons that hail from western countries provides an indicator of the duration of the military's westernization. As noted above, the longer a country has been within the western military fold, the more likely it would be for the military to have adopted – or moved toward – a more western role as an apolitical professional servant of the state.

For each of these indicators we use publicly available data from the Middle-East Military Balance database, maintained by the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel-Aviv University (INSS). Regularly updated, this database documents weapons production and weapons trade to and from 21 states in the Middle-East.

Fig. 3 presents estimates of the proportion of combat aircraft, APCs, and tanks originating in western countries. As expected, the data confirm that Tunisia and Egypt are clustered on one end of the continuum—their armies' level of westernization on this parameter is either high (Egypt) or almost total (Tunisia); and Syria and Libya are on the other end of the continuum, with almost no military westernization whatsoever.

Data on confirmed joint military maneuvers between each of these four countries and any others—presented in Table 2—provides another angle on the intensity of interpersonal connections between members of these four countries' militaries and those of professional western armies. As noted above, these types of exercises are often related to arms sales.

Table 2 points to a similar general pattern as the one seen in Fig. 3. In the decade prior to the Arab Spring, Egypt, with the largest and most sophisticated military, held joint maneuvers with several European countries, several Gulf states associated with the West, and with the U.S., Tunisia, with its relatively small military, had held joint maneuvers with the U.S., Canada,

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[15] We do not mean to gloss over important differences within each of these groups. For example, Bar (2006) points to differences among Alawite clans in their position in the Syrian hierarchy. Ajami (2012) has pointed to important differences between the urban and rural Alawites, and to intermarriage between Alawite and Sunni elites. Our point here is that within the Syrian political system as a whole the Alawite are seen as a discrete community with particular political interests and influence. Likewise, we do not mean to gloss over other aspects of these countries' histories. This includes the intricacies of their military political relations with other powers and the long record of attempted coups within what are commonly considered stable military autocracies. E.g., in Syria in 1972, 1973, 1976 and 1982; and in Egypt in 1972, 1974 and 1981.
[16] "Tanks" includes Main Battle Tanks, and Light Tanks; "APCs" includes standard Armored Personnel Carriers and Infantry Fighting vehicles.
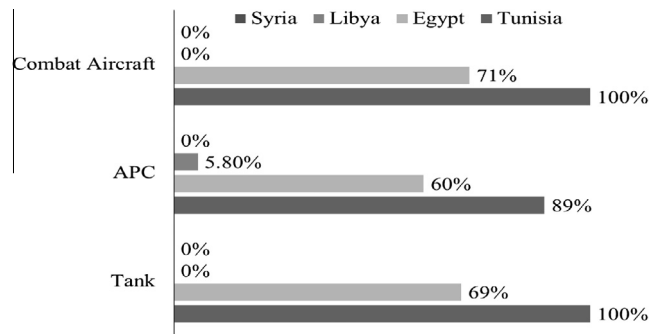
Fig. 3. Percentage of military equipment originating in western countries, by type of equipment.

several European countries and the west's other regional allies. Table 2 also hints at the emerging rapprochement between Libya and the West. A joint maneuver was held with Italian forces in 2005 and with a NATO force in 2008.[17] Syria, in contrast, is the only one of the four countries to not have held any joint military maneuvers with a western country: its most recent joint exercises were with Russia and neighboring Turkey.

The strength of these military connections is demonstrated in a different way in Table 3. It presents data on the number of military officers from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria that had participated in military training program conducted by the US Department of Defense, between 2005 and 2011. This is a prestigious program and its graduates generally form the middle rank of the military command. Table 3 confirms that the number of foreign military trainees, the number of courses they participated in and the cost of these programs are consistent with INSS data on source of sophisticated weapon systems (Fig. 2) and data on joint military maneuvers (Table 2). While the Syrian and Libyan participation in the program is almost non-existent, participation by military officers from Tunisia and Egypt is extremely high—hundreds of officers per year—pointing to an important pathway for military westernization.

4. Military responses to unrest in the post-Cold War period

To test our ideas about the effects of military westernization on the military's response to political unrest in the post-Cold War era in a more comprehensive fashion, we use a global sample of political unrest, arms buying, and other country characteristics generated from a number of different sources.

The data on political unrest are from the Social, Political and Economic Event Database (SPEED) Project. These are event data extracted from a global archive of news reports covering the 1946–2005 period. Here we restrict ourselves to the 2523 cases of political unrest that occurred in the 1996–2005 era in 138 countries. Each case is coded by country and year and includes the dependent variable in all analyses, estimated deaths arising from government action (directly or through proxy forces) in the 1996–2005 period.

Our main explanatory variables, indicators of "military westernization," are from the International Institute for Strategic Studies' (IISS) military database. They were constructed in two stages. First, we identified the main military suppliers of three types of sophisticated weapon systems—combat aircraft, tanks and APCs—to each country in the sample in 1991 and then again in 2000, taking into account both the relative age and quality of different models at the military's disposal.[18]

Second, for each of these years, we used these data to generate four dichotomous variables that identify whether or not one of these main military suppliers was: a major western country (i.e., the US, UK, France or Germany); Russia or one of the ex-Soviet republics; China; or some other democratic but secondary supplier (Brazil, India, Israel, South Africa). Since countries sometimes acquire different weapon systems from different suppliers, multiple codings were possible, allowing us to identify countries with a combination of military suppliers. In turn, we use these to differentiate two levels of military westernization. The highest level is where all three types of sophisticated weapon systems originate in the core group of western military suppliers. We refer to this as "Western only." A lower level of military westernization is where there is a mix of Western and Russian/Soviet sophisticated weapon systems.

We coded the data on military suppliers at two points in time, 1991 and 2000, for two reasons. The simpler reason is that it allows us to specify both a baseline level of military westernization at the end of the Cold War (1991), but also post-Cold

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[17] Libya's joint maneuvers with Italy preceded the purchase from Italy of AW119 and AW139 helicopters (2007 and 2009), light aircraft, border control systems, patrol boats, as well as upgrades to existing equipment (INSS, 2011).

[18] IISS data include specific models of equipment so can also be coded on how recent and operational the particular models at a military's disposal are. Our coding of main supplier takes some account of this, especially when dealing with multiple coding. For example, in terms of numbers of tanks, the Iranian military is about 2/3rds Russian and 1/3 British and American. In terms of combat aircraft, the Iranian air force is about 60% American (F4s, F5s, F14s), and rest is Russian. However, most of the western equipment was purchased during the 1970s and has not been maintained by US contractors, which affects both its operational utility, but also means that there has been limited contact between US and Iranian military personnel. Nonetheless, we code Iran as mixed since we assume that although dominant operational hardware is Russian/Soviet, certain ideas about use of force during unrest would have been adopted from western trainers, and become part of Iranian military practice, perhaps a piece of equipment physically reminding its users about those earlier contacts.

Table 2

Confirmed joint maneuvers 2002–2011. *Sources*: Middle-East Military Balance database, Institute for National Security Studies, Tel-Aviv University and United States Africa Command.

Tunisia	Egypt	Libya	Syria
2010 US	2010 U.S.	2008 NATO	2009 Russia, Turkey
2008 US	2009 France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kuwait, Netherlands, Turkey, UK, Gulf (GCC) countries	2005 Italy	
2007 US, UK, Canada, France, Netherlands, Algeria	2008 US, Germany, Kuwait, Pakistan		
2004 France, Algeria	2005/6 US, Netherlands		
2003 US, Greece	2002 US, France, UK, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Spain		

Table 3

Number of students, courses, and dollar value of Foreign Military Training for military officers from selected Arab countries, 2005–2010, by country and year. *Source*: U.S. Department of State. http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/rpt/fmtrpt/.

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Tunisia	Number of students	142	211	348	150	100	119	54
	Number of courses	n/a	116	137	127	83	81	75
	Dollar value	>3 ml[a]	>3 ml	>3 ml	>2 ml	>2 ml	>3 ml	>3 ml
Egypt	Number of students	941	723	635	530	658	811	620
	Number of courses	n/a	533	467	497	437	444	452
	Dollar value	>18 ml	>20 ml	>9 ml	>13 ml	>12 ml	>12 ml	>14 ml
Libya	Number of students	0	0	0	8	2	7	9
	Number of courses	0	0	0	6	2	2	4
	Dollar value	$0	$0	$0	$71,302	$29,163	$4380	$4380
Syria	Number of students	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
	Number of courses	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	Dollar value	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$12,145

[a] ml = million$.

War changes in levels of military westernization that occurred up to the 9/11 attacks in the US, after which geopolitical arrangements were changed (we return to this below). A more important reason for coding these data at two points in time is that where these two measures are included in the same model, they each tap into one of the two mechanisms that link the acquisition of complex military hardware from western countries with more liberal responses to unrest. Specifically, net of controls for prior type of political regime and a local history of government-initiated violence (discussed below), the measure of military westernization in 1991 is an indicator of long-term exposure to western ideologies regarding the role of the military in the state and regarding when, how and against whom state-sponsored military activity can legitimately be used. After all, it takes some time for ideas about an apolitical professionalized military to diffuse through a large enough segment of the military. In contrast, recent movement toward military westernization captured in the difference between the 1991 and 2000 indicators—stemming from a significant purchase of western combat aircraft, tanks or APCs during the 1990s—signals the more coercive short-term mechanism, rooted in western governments' decision to condition continued support on non-repressive behavior.

We supplement these arms data with World Bank data on GDP and population data from the International Programs Division of the US Census Bureau. Respectively, these allow us to differentiate the effects of military westernization in poorer and wealthier countries, and to generate population-weighted measures of GDP and deaths. Finally, we also include an average country-specific Polity score for the 1980–87 period (from Polity IV data). This is the widely used sum of two discrete scales indexing levels of democracy and autocracy. Our goal in employing both this polity variable and a count of government-initiated deaths in the prior 1986–95 period is to capture other constitutional characteristics and political behavior that may affect government suppression of political unrest over and above the effects of arms sales.

Since the dependent variable is a count with a long right tale, and tests confirm overdispersion (eliminating the option of using Poisson), all models are fit using negative binomial regression. All models also control for clustering at the country level, since news reports used to generate SPEED data provide better coverage for some countries rather than others. Statistical tests are therefore at the level of countries, rather than individual events.

4.1. The 1996–2005 period

Results of three initial models are presented in Table 4. The dependent variable is the number of people killed in any given instance of political unrest that occurred between 1996 and 2005, with the exception of 2001. Note that results are substantively identical when we include 2001, but since later models distinguish pre- and post-9/11 period, we maintain the same overall sample restriction here.

Model 1 provides a baseline. It includes variables that describe the source of combat aircraft, tanks and APCs, by 1991, the end of the Cold War. The reference group here and in all subsequent models is countries whose main combat aircraft, tanks and APCs, as of 1991, came only from the USSR or its allies. Relative to those countries, we see the expected negative effect on numbers killed during 1996–2005 unrest of having these major types of military hardware come from western countries only. The logged coefficient translates into 11.9% of the number killed in the reference group—though this is only borderline significant. Countries whose combat aircraft, tanks and APCs were from both sides in the Cold War, or from China or other countries, had no significant differences in government-initiated deaths during political unrest.

Model 1 also includes the two controls for political structure and history of political violence, respectively the average polity score and the number killed in state response to unrest during the 1986–1995 period. Here, and in all subsequent models, there is no effect of the polity score, but a consistently positive relationship between the number of people killed across the two 10-year periods.

Model 2 adds in two variables describing new arms purchasing patterns that emerged during the first decade of the post-Cold War era. Among those that became buyers of combat aircraft, tanks and APCs from Western countries, we see a sharp and significant reduction in the number of people killed in unrest (20% of those that neither became a buyer of equivalent Russian weapons or did not change their weapons-origin profile). The addition of these two variables also strengthens the main effect on "Western only," pushing it into the $p < 0.05$ range. In other words, in this models we see signs of both types of military westernization effects: those related to slower diffusion of ideas about when to use military to suppress dissent; and those related to more coercive, conditionality mechanism.

Finally, Model 3 evaluates how these effects vary with a country's wealth, inserting both a dichotomous marker of poor countries (those with less than median GDP per capita in 1991), and an interaction term between that marker and having western arms in 1991. Model 3 shows that among poor countries whose main combat aircraft, tanks and APCs in the pre-1991 era did <u>not</u> come from western countries, we see $e^{1.85}$ (6.4) more deaths than in wealthier countries. But among poor countries whose main weapon systems in the pre-1991 era <u>did</u> come from western countries, we see $e^{-3.03}$ (3.7%) the number of deaths. Equally notable, the addition of these two variables reduces the main effect on "Western only" arms—suggesting that in this sample of countries with any unrest in this period, the effect of military westernization is concentrated in poorer countries—though it does not significantly change the negative coefficient on "became a buyer of Western arms, 1991–2000."

4.2. Pre- and post-9/11

Results thus far are highly supportive of our hypothesis. Net of a country's position on the democracy/autocracy scales that constitute the summary "polity" measure, and net of the level of government-induced mortality in the 1986–1995 period, countries with western combat aircraft, tanks and APCs at the end of the Cold War had far fewer deaths in any given instance of political unrest during the 1996–2005 period than their counterparts with no western arms. This effect, which we interpret as an indicator of long-term exposure to ideas about whether and how to use the military to suppress internal dissent, was concentrated among poor countries. Likewise, countries that acquired combat aircraft, tanks and APCs from western countries during the 1990s also had considerably fewer government-induced deaths, irrespective of their sources of arms in 1991. We interpret this as mainly driven by a harder, conditionality mechanism.

Our final analysis extends this set of models to account for possible differences in the effects of military westernization before and after the 9/11 attacks on the US. The reason: in the aftermath of 9/11, the US and its NATO allies, who collectively constitute the bulk of the "Western" category used in Table 4, declared a new international military campaign against Islamist terrorism, especially Al Qaeda. There is evidence that in prosecuting this "Global War on Terrorism" (GWOT), the US and its allies have downplayed some of the demands they might have made on unsavory clients during the more unipolar 1990s, when debates about "conditionality" in international aid reached their peak. In turn, this suggests that in terms of the liberalizing potential of military westernization, the post-Cold War era can be divided into two distinct periods, at least up to 2005, beyond which our data on political unrest do not extend. Until GWOT, the US and its allies were geopolitically and economically dominant, largely able to cajole smaller and poorer countries into more liberal constitutional arrangements and multiparty political systems. The series of African democratic transitions in the 1990s is a testament to this pressure. However, as the goals of GWOT came to dominate Western strategic decisions, or at least compete with those associated with greater transparency and democracy (e.g., in the Millenium Challenge grants), the West found itself reapplying older Cold War lessons rooted in *realpolitik*. That is, it selectively ignored repressive domestic policies of strategic GWOT allies that it might have criticized more aggressively prior to 2001. For example, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan were all pressured to democratize and allow for open multiparty elections even as they were also encouraged to participate in the GWOT, including by suppressing local Islamist opposition.[19]

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[19] On paper, the more formal adoption of the Freedom Agenda in 2003 may have marked a new era, pulling countries away from the more Cold-War type of realpolitik that emerged in the post-2001 period. We tested this possibility directly by specifying a parallel set of models to those described in columns 4–6 in Table 5. We added a single dummy variable identifying years 2004 and 2005 (our unrest data do not extend beyond 2005). Although it is positive and statistically significant in model 5 (5% level) and model 6 (10% level), it does not change any of the other coefficients of interest in statistically or substantively important ways (results available from authors). In other words, the effects of GWOT on the ground were much more powerful than any countervailing effect associated with the Freedom Agenda, at least in this period.

Table 4
Negative binomial regression estimates (and standard errors) of effects of arms sales on number killed in state's response to political unrest, 1996–2000 & 2002–2005.

	(1) b/SE	(2) b/SE	(3) b/SE
Sources of weapon systems, pre-1991			
Russia/ex-Eastern Bloc only	*Reference group*		
Western only	−2.126	−2.311[*]	0.677
	(1.222)	(1.149)	(1.410)
Mixed: Russian & Western	−0.607	−0.666	0.309
	(1.116)	(1.088)	(0.778)
Other or China	0.521	−0.342	−0.415
	(1.237)	(1.103)	(1.079)
Political structure & tradition			
Average polity score, 1980–87	0.019	0.037	−0.030
	(0.070)	(0.060)	(0.069)
Number killed in state response to unrest, 1986–1995	0.007[***]	0.009[**]	0.009[***]
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Change in source of weapon systems			
Became buyer of Western weapons, 1991–2000		−1.611[*]	−1.528[*]
		(0.687)	(0.677)
Became buyer of Russian weapons, 1991–2000		−1.261	−0.588
		(1.622)	(1.252)
Macroeconomic characteristics			
Below median GDP/capita, 1991			1.852[*]
			(0.832)
"Below median GDP/capita" × "Western only"			−3.308[*]
			(1.463)
Constant	1.791	1.908	−0.320
	(1.027)	(0.999)	(0.874)
Observations	2523	2523	2523
LL	−4676.7	−4538.2	−4481.4
Chi2	26.61	36.20	49.18

[*] $p < 0.05$.
[**] $p < 0.01$.
[***] $p < 0.001$.

In terms of the two mechanisms that link the acquisition of certain types of complex combat systems from western countries with liberal outcomes, this means that pre-GWOT we should see the same type of results as in Table 4, that is, where both long-term and recent consumers of western combat systems should have lower mortality in political unrest. In contrast, post-GWOT, we should only see a negative effect of long-term exposure, since there will not have been time for western ideas about apolitical professionalized military to diffuse.

To test this hypothesis—that is, the variability in these mechanisms in the pre-GWOT and GWOT eras—we divided our sample of political unrest by year, replicating the series of analyses reported in Table 4 on all cases of unrest in the 1996–2000 period (120 countries, 1485 cases), then separately on the 2002–2005 period (101 countries, 1038 cases). Results are presented in Table 5.

Consistent with expectations, we see both important parallels and differences across the two periods. Prior to GWOT our results largely replicate those from the complete 1996–2005 sample, but with larger point sizes. Thus we see a negative effects on the number of government-induced deaths of both long-term military westernization, and more recent purchases. In Models 1 and 2 we see a moderate negative effect on government-induced deaths even among those with mixed Western and Russian weapon systems. And in Model 3, we also see the same concentration of this effect in poorer militarily westernized countries – those most susceptible to western political pressure.

In the post-9/11 world of the GWOT, in contrast, results are quite different. Although there is a similar significant negative effect of long-term military westernization, it is more moderate: the estimates on "Western only" in Models 2 and 5 have overlapping standard errors ($2 \times SE$), but the mean predicted estimates themselves fall outside each other's boundaries. More important, the effect of more recent purchase of western weapons changes direction, implying $e^{4.456}$ (86) *more* deaths in militarily westernized countries per episode of political unrest. This remains the case when, in Model 6, the measures of GDP per capita and interaction term with "Western only" are added. Unlike in the 1996–2000 sample, these measures explain none of the variability in numbers killed. Finally, in Models 2 and 3 we see a moderate negative effect of having acquired weapons from one of the secondary military suppliers.

Table 5
Negative binomial regression estimates (and standard errors) of effects of arms sales on level of violence in state's response to political unrest, by 1996–2000 or 2002–2005 period.

	1996–2000			2002–2005		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Sources of weapon systems, pre-1991						
Russia/ex-Eastern Bloc only	*Reference group*					
Western only	−3.017[*]	−3.842[**]	2.216	−0.941[*]	−1.086[**]	−0.287
	(1.341)	(1.237)	(1.937)	(0.431)	(0.371)	(0.958)
Mixed: Russian & Western	−2.379	−2.654[*]	−1.743	0.925	1.157[*]	1.436
	(1.406)	(1.333)	(1.078)	(0.522)	(0.501)	(0.814)
Other or China	0.361	−3.720	−3.331	−0.589	−2.865[***]	−2.810[**]
	(1.299)	(2.087)	(2.316)	(1.170)	(0.858)	(0.920)
Political structure & tradition						
Average polity score, 1980–87	0.012	0.086	0.046	−0.040	−0.018	−0.036
	(0.087)	(0.077)	(0.119)	(0.046)	(0.038)	(0.045)
Number killed in state response to unrest, 1986–1995	0.008[***]	0.010[***]	0.009[***]	−0.005	−0.006	−0.006
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Change in source of weapon systems						
Became buyer of Western weapons, 1991–2000		−5.397[*]	−4.884		4.456[**]	4.437[**]
		(2.574)	(2.847)		(1.470)	(1.483)
Became buyer of Russian weapons, 1991–2000		−0.293	0.862		0.206	0.227
		(1.378)	(1.262)		(0.489)	(0.490)
Macroeconomic characteristics						
Below median GDP/capita, 1991			5.379[***]			0.423
			(0.903)			(0.802)
"Below median GDP/capita" × "Western only"			−6.638[***]			−1.047
			(1.716)			(1.158)
Constant	2.183	2.700[*]	−2.867[**]	−0.931[*]	−0.807[*]	−1.344
	(1.129)	(1.064)	(1.109)	(0.424)	(0.339)	(0.806)
Observations	1485	1485	1485	1038	1038	1038
LL	−2406.8	−2198.2	−2133.8	−710.7	−613.2	−610.0
Chi2	55.94	93.32	217.1	10.58	28.07	36.71

[*] $p < 0.05$.
[**] $p < 0.01$.
[***] $p < 0.001$.

5. Discussion

Until December 2010, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria were led by entrenched long-term autocrats. Yet across these four countries the military authorities reacted quite differently when confronted by a popular uprising. The pattern of these different military responses is consistent with the level of military westernization whether we dichotomize the countries into two more and two less westernized militaries, or whether we treat each of the four countries as representing a distinct point on the continuum of military westernization. The Tunisian army, the most westernized and professional, stood aside, unambiguously refusing to suppress dissent with live fire, but protecting property and turning executive powers over to an interim civilian President. The Egyptian army, slowly adopting a western professional model which demands that it give up its political role, largely stood aside, but with some ambivalence: it caused some civilian casualties and was also comfortable adopting a more overt political role as interim executive through the SCAF. More recently, it was instrumental in unseating another President—this time elected with popular support—though again, with the excuse that it was protecting the state from a leader it deemed unsuitable. Moving further away from military westernization: the Libyan army, with nascent connections to arms suppliers in western European countries, but still with a high degree of overlap between political and military spheres of authority, unleashed its elite units on the rebels, only to be undone by an intense NATO-led bombing campaign. Finally Syria, scoring zero on all dimensions of military westernization, felt full freedom to systematically eliminate the rebels while its major geopolitical and regional protectors—Russia, China and Iran in particular—continued to rearm it and provide international legal cover. In both the Libyan and Syrian case, Western countries had no direct and intimate channel through which they could directly influence the military.

The more comprehensive analysis of post-Cold War unrest shows that these trends extend far beyond Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. The number of deaths that result from government-initiated response to political unrest is significantly lower where the military is westernized. These differences are particularly notable in poorer settings, and were particularly strong in the pre-GWOT (1996–2000) era.

We have argued that these differential military responses to unrest are a product of two mechanisms associated with military westernization. The first, powerful but less stable, is more structural. In our models, indexed by those countries that became consumers of western arms during the 1990s, it demonstrates strong negative effect on deaths in the pre-GWOT period, and strong positive effects in the GWOT era. In other words, this structural mechanism can be used to reduce the number of deaths in government responses to political unrest, but only where western arms-supplying countries insist on it. Our data suggest that in the GWOT era they did not.

The second mechanism is much more profound. It refers to a change in military culture instigated, we argue, by intense person-to-person relations with western military professionals who actively diffuse or subtly model western ideas about what a modern professional army should be: a highly skilled, differentiated, apolitical and *gesselschaften* institution whose central task is to serve the state rather than the regime. These ideas are particularly likely to diffuse through the wide interface between the buyer's and seller's political, military and economic institutions that arise from the acquisition of complex military hardware. In particular, new military technologies arrive with instructors, and often lead to joint drills and officer training opportunities in the supplier's country. Each of these generates a series of interactions during which notions of the ideal form of a modern military are articulated.

These two mechanisms, one rooted in *realpolitik* and the other in the claim that the military should be under civilian control, represent two different types of processes, even if they often interact with, and complement, one another. In our data, which cover the 1996–2005 period, the structural mechanism, relying directly on constraints imposed by powerful outsiders, appears to have a stronger effect on whether the military plays a role in suppressing political unrest. That structural mechanism is associated with the dramatic shift after 2001 that we link to the GWOT, and that appears to outweigh any effect associated with the transmission and assimilation of more liberal ideas about the military's relationship to civilian authority. Like other modes of cultural diffusion, the latter work slowly, buffeted by the structural constraints that are associated with political need. This being said, in terms of the overall effect on military suppression of political unrest, we suspect that the regression to *realpolitik* seen in the early years of the GWOT is a clear "period" effect: a temporally-limited vacillation that does not undermine the overall trend toward a more liberalizing effect of military westernization. This underlying trend is the one charting the course for civil-military relations. Even in the early years of the GWOT, for example, there were attempts to moderate the excesses of *realpolitik* by introducing the "Freedom Agenda" in 2003—whose purpose was to reduce the risk of radicalization in countries aligned with the United States.

The explanatory model laid out here is appealing for a number of reasons. It is simple. It performs well empirically. By identifying particular types of military goods as objects that generate interaction, it adds an important microsociological layer to discussions about relationships between wealthy countries and poorer impoverished ones. It is also expands the types of institutions that can be included in the roster of "global cultural and associational processes" (Meyer et al., 1997b: 144–145) that make up world polity. There is some irony in this given the military's frequent association with illiberal policies and practices. But it also makes sense to us that certain members of the political elite in modern and modernizing states may be attracted to an apolitical professional army in the same way that they are attracted to certain types of international organizations (Boli and Thomas, 1997), environmental concerns (Meyer et al., 1997a), women's status (Berkovitch and Bradley, 1999) and authoritative scientific language and schemes (Drori et al., 2003). Even if some of the goals enshrined in these dimensions of world polity do not fully appeal to these elites, they will sign on to them as an expression of global citizenship. And this has implications for internal affairs where, within those countries, other actors emerge who are more fully committed to those ideas, including within the military itself.

The model's final appeal is its generalizability. We mentioned how co-dependence can modify the pressures that western states are able or willing to bear on their arms buyers. Yet even where there is co-dependence, there are signs that military westernization affects the military's willingness to suppress dissent. Bahrain provides a good example of this phenomenon. Briefly, Bahraini armed forces are 100% Western but Bahraini authorities repressed Arab Spring protestors with minimal complaints from western powers (Arango, 2011). At first glance this looks like an empirical failure for the model. It suggests that *realpolitik* in the GWOT era may stymie any positive influences associated with trade in arms, in this case because western governments must take into account Bahrain's strategic location, revived memories of Shi'ite insurgencies instigated by Iran at the beginning of the 1980s, and fears that the Shiite majority will pull Bahrain into Iran's orbit. Yet a closer look at events actually supports the model, albeit in a qualified way. Bahrain's military westernization can be seen in two ways in these events. First, the level of violence directed at demonstrators was much lower than in any of the four Arab republics discussed in this paper: 97 were killed between March 2011 and November 2014. In both absolute and relative terms, this is lower than in Tunisia. Second, the cause of death showed signs of western modes of repression. In particular, a higher proportion of deaths were due to excessive exposure to tear gas rather than bullet-related wounds or other trauma (BCHR, 2015). Note, too, that this was the case even with the participation of Saudi troops associated with the western-backed Peninsula Shield Force (PSF)—a joint military arm of the Gulf Cooperation Council (member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates)—that was responsible for the most violent suppression. All in all, this suggests that the professional Bahraini army acted moderately against the population, that the PSF acted only a little less moderately, and that the political elite was unwilling to give harsher orders to either its own military or to the PSF. This points to the internalization of ideas about the role of the military, ideas that are associated with western professional armies. In turn, this suggests that though co-dependence between U.S. and Arab monarchies may reduce the former's more coercive influence on the latter, it might not reduce the more microsociological dimension: the fact that officers and soldiers

in the monarchies' armies might be less willing than their counterparts in equivalent non-westernized militaries to suppress dissent with greater brutality.

6. Conclusion

In predicting the future trajectory of military westernization, we think there is an important tension between two important phenomena: on one hand, political elites learning from the experiences of their predecessors and peers; on the other, the strength of more general cultural connections through which ideas can flow, including political ideas related to the role of the military.

Regarding political elites learning from their counterparts' experiences, potential arms buyers are almost certainly more aware of the coercive and soft-power considerations embodied in particular weapons systems now than they were prior to the Arab Spring. As evidence emerged that the U.S. administrations encouraged Mubarak to leave power, editorials and press reports in the Middle-East were awash with complaints about this "betrayal" (Hamilton, 2011; Tomlinson, 2011). The message to other rulers was clear. After decades being one of the West's closest allies in the region, this was Mubarak's payback: Western powers will not unconditionally back their long-term allies and friends in the face of popular protests.

As yet, it is too early to see whether countries will choose to diversify their purchases of complex military systems in light of this perceived change in policy. Switching suppliers, as noted earlier, is costly and can jeopardize armed forces standardization and result in military inefficiency (Cohen, 1978; Taylor, 1982). But if trends are analogous to those in international aid—where, for example, African countries have embraced greater ties to China as a way to escape total dependence on Western countries (Brautigam, 2011)—we can expect some diversification, with non-western countries that over decades largely purchased military supplies from the West, increasingly looking to a resurgent Russia or China in order to avoid total dependence on the West. Indeed, there are nascent signs of this shift in the Middle East involving two countries that have long been associated with US suppliers. In February 2014, Egypt signed a $2 billion arms deal with Russia, including advanced fighter aircraft and air and coastal defense systems. And in 2013, Turkey purchased a $3 billion long-range missile defense system from China, signaling its shift away from the US-made standard for NATO countries, the Patriot missile, even at the cost of acquiring a military platform that is difficult to integrate with its existing air defense systems (Wong and Clark, 2013).

In tension with this phenomenon—resistance to military westernization—is the popular appeal of other aspects of westernization, and the alternative pathways through which ideas about civil-military relations can diffuse. It seems likely, for example, that military westernization occurs independently of arms sales through general acculturation to western ideologies that independently valorize an apolitical, professional military. If this is the case, the increasingly diverse pathways through which information and ideas can move suggest that arms sales—our focus here—may be a less important determinant of military westernization in the next 20 years than they have been since the end of the Cold War.

Finally, our analysis also has lessons for major arms suppliers. Most important, where high-end military technology binds a westernized and non-westernized military to each other, it may be a more effective agent of liberalization than we like to think. Close contact facilitates a top-down coercive mechanism: pressure and threats of sanctions from foreign elites. But by generating contact at lower levels of the hierarchy, it may also effect change from the bottom-up through a softer power: by weakening the military's political role domestically and increasing its embrace of less violent methods of suppressing dissent. Interestingly, this revives a long dormant debate about the extent to which the military—characterized by Murad (1973) as the "technical college of society"—can be an agent of positive social and democratic change. From the 1960s to the 1980s there was a strong consensus that this is not possible. The military was seen as an authoritarian institution that refuses to relinquish or share power (Batatu, 1978; Haddad, 1965; Khadduri, 1969; Perlmutter, 1981), and the role of US military aid in perpetuating the military's hold on power, especially in weak states, was particularly critiqued (Chomsky and Herman, 1979). In this vein, the central role of military westernization in recent Arab uprisings—part of a more general association between military westernization and lower mortality in political unrest in the post-Cold War period—suggests that this consensus should be revisited. In the post-Cold War era, increased dependency and complex interdependency appear to have augmented westernized militaries' roles in reining in the most repressive regimes, both through top-down coercive monopoly power and through softer diffusion of western military ideologies. That is surely one of the major lessons to be learned from post-Cold War unrest in general and the Arab Spring in particular. It also points to an important chink in the armor for autocrats contemplating the advantages of military westernization: since the end of the Cold War, the deeper the relationship between their militaries and those of western powers, the more likely—and the less bloody—their eventual fall.

Acknowledgments

Appendix A. List of countries used in analysis of repression, 1996–2001

Afghanistan	Gaza Strip	Pakistan
Albania	German Federal Rep.	Papua New Guinea
Algeria	Ghana	Paraguay
Angola	Greece	Peru
Argentina	Grenada	Philippines
Armenia	Guatemala	Poland
Australia	Guinea	Romania
Azerbaijan	Guinea-Bissau	Rwanda
Bahrain	Haiti	Saudi Arabia
Bangladesh	Honduras	Senegal
Belarus	Hong Kong	Serbia
Belgium	Hungary	Sierra Leone
Belize	India	Singapore
Benin	Indonesia	Solomon Islands
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Iran	Somalia
Brazil	Iraq	South Africa
Bulgaria	Ireland	Spain
Burkina Faso	Israel	Sri Lanka
Burundi	Italy	Sudan
Cambodia	Japan	Swaziland
Cameroon	Jordan	Syria
Canada	Kazakhstan	Taiwan
Central African Republic	Kenya	Tajikistan
Chad	Korea, North (Dem. R	Tanzania
Chile	Korea, South (Rep.)	Thailand
China	Kuwait	Togo
Colombia	Laos	Tunisia
Comoros	Lebanon	Turkey
Congo	Lesotho	Turkmenistan
Cote d'Ivoire	Liberia	Uganda
Croatia	Macedonia	Ukraine
Cuba	Madagascar	United Kingdom
Cyprus	Malaysia	Uzbekistan
Czech Republic	Mauritania	Vatican City
Djibouti	Mexico	Venezuela
East Timor	Moldova	Vietnam, Democratic
Ecuador	Morocco	West Bank
Egypt	Mozambique	Yemen
El Salvador	Myanmar	Yugoslavia
Eritrea	NA	Zaire
Ethiopia	Namibia	Zambia
Fiji	Nepal	Zimbabwe
France	Nicaragua	
Gabon	Niger	
Gambia	Nigeria	

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