Université de Montréal

Regime Crises in Africa:

A Study of Armed Forces' Behaviour

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A Study of Armed Forces' Behaviour

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Résumé

Cette thèse de doctorat vise à répondre à une question qui a été largement négligée par la littérature sur les crises des régimes autoritaires : pourquoi les forces armées tolèrent-elles ou répriment-elles les mouvements d'opposition en faveur de changements du régime ? L'hypothèse principale stipule que l'attitude conciliante ou réfractaire des forces armées dépend de la nature des mesures adoptées par le régime autoritaire afin de s'assurer de leur loyauté et prévenir des coups d'État. Lorsque ces mesures de préventions des coups d'État contribuent à créer des divisons au sein de l'armée, les factions marginalisées sont enclines à tolérer les mouvements d'opposition, si ces derniers offrent une alternative crédible au régime, en raison de leur capacité à s'unir autour d'une plate-forme commune de revendications modérées, réalistes et acceptables pour les militaires. À l'inverse, lorsque les mesures de prévention des coups d'État favorisent la cohésion interne de l'armée et son attachement au régime, les militaires adoptent une attitude répressive à l'égard des forces contestataires.

Ces hypothèses sont vérifiées à l'aide d'une analyse comparative des différentes mesures de prévention des coups d'État adoptées par les régimes autoritaires du Bénin et du Togo et de leurs impacts sur le succès, dans le premier cas, et l'échec, dans le second cas, des mouvements d'opposition dans les deux pays, au début des années 1990. Cette analyse est effectuée à l'aide de deux approches méthodologiques : le traçage de processus ainsi que la comparaison de deux études de cas.

Mots clés : Afrique Sub-Saharienne, Bénin, Coups d'État, Crises de régimes, Forces armées, Mouvements d'opposition, Préventions de coups, Relations civilo-militaires, Résilience autoritaire, Société civile, Togo.

Abstract

This Ph.D. dissertation analyzes the factors that influence armed forces' decisions to tolerate or suppress opposition movements demanding political reforms which could lead to regime change. This dissertation helps to fill a large gap in the literature as only a few scholars have attempted to explain military behaviour during regime crisis. It does so through an analysis of how anti-coup policies and opposition forces' characteristics lead to the formation of marginalized military cliques and their potential support for regime change. It theorizes that the head of state's survival strategy, specifically coup-proofing measures, influences military factions' willingness to preserve the status quo. Reliance on loyalists leads to armed forces with a powerful core loyal to the incumbent regime and willing to use repression, while the strategy of counterbalancing leads to armed forces largely unattached to the maintenance of the regime. Under these circumstances, opposition forces can foster regime defection when they offer a viable alternative to the incumbent government, if the opposition can unify around a moderate platform that provides realist demands vis-à-vis regime forces.

The main argument, on the influence of divergent coup-proofing policies on military actions, is assessed through a comparison of Benin and Togo. In each state, authoritarian regimes responded to the challenge of opposition mobilization by initiating negotiation processes. Divergences in coup-prevention techniques and credible commitment capacity of the opposition explain why the opposition campaign in the beginning of the 1990s was successful in Benin but failed in Togo. This research is based on two methods: process-tracing and the comparative method.

Keywords: Armed forces, Authoritarian resilience, Benin, Civil-military relations, Coup-proofing, Military coups, Opposition movements, Sub-Saharan Africa, Regime crises, Togo.

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List of Abbreviations

ANR	Assemblée nationale révolutionnaire
AOF	Afrique-occidentale française
APRT	Association professionnelle des revendeuses de tissu
ATLT	Association togolaise de lutte contre la torture
BGP	Bataillon de la garde présidentielle
CAR	Comité d'action pour le renouveau
CSI	Collectifs des syndicats indépendants
CDPA	Convention démocratique des peuples africains
CFA	Communauté française d'Afrique
CN	Conférence nationale des Forces Vives de la Nation (Benin)
CNDH	Commission nationale des droits de l'Homme
CNS	Conférence nationale souveraine (Togo)
CNTT	Confédération nationale des travailleurs du Togo
COD	Collectif de l'opposition démocratique
CSA-Bénin	Confédération des syndicats autonomes du Bénin
CUT	Comité de l'unité togolaise
EU	European Union
FAR	Front des associations du renouveau
FAP	Forces armées populaires
FIR	Forces d'intervention rapide
FNLT	Front national de libération du Togo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMR	Gouvernement militaire révolutionnaire
HACHEME	Haut conseil des associations & mouvements étudiants
HCR	Haut conseil de la république (Benin and Togo)
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JUVENTO	Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise
LTDH	Ligue togolaise des droits de l'Homme

MONESTO	Mouvement national des étudiants & stagiaires togolais
MTD	Mouvement togolais pour la démocratie
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officers
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PCD	Parti communiste du Dahomey
PCT	Parti communiste du Togo
PND	Parti des nationalistes du Dahomey
PRPB	Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin
PSP	Parti socialiste panafricain
PTP	Parti togolais du progrès
RDC	République Démocratique du Congo (ex-Zaïre)
RDD	Rassemblement démocratique dahoméen
RPT	Rassemblement du peuple togolais
SAC	Structural Adjustment Credit
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
UDD	Union démocratique dahoméenne
UCPN	Union des chefs et populations du Nord
UFC	Union des forces du changement
UN	United Nations
UNACOBE	Union nationale des commerçantes du Bénin
UNSTB	Union nationale des syndicats des travailleurs du Bénin
USSR	Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics
UTD	Union togolaise pour la démocratie

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Introduction

During the night of February 24, 1990, Professor Léopold Dossou (member of the elected council of Benin's *Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives*) received a visit from an officer of the Beninese Armed Forces and was informed that the army was not so sure that the Conference was to their liking (Banégas 2003, 152). The National Conference, as a meeting point for various political groups, was set to bring major political reforms to the country, and some members of Benin's authoritarian elite were not pleased with this turn of events. Military personnel hesitated between following the government's opinion and withdrawing their support from the conference, or ignoring it and supporting the reform process initiated by the Conference representatives. Some officers even wanted to use force to end the Conference. Professor Dossou had to convince them to let the reform process continue, which the army eventually did.

This dissertation sets out to explain why armed forces defend regimes or refuse to do so when autocrats are challenged by populations in Africa. Consider how the military played an important role in the crises that unfolded recently in Tunisia (2010–2011), Egypt (2011 and 2013), Burkina Faso (2014), and Burundi (2015). Sometimes autocrats could count on the support of the army and domestic attempts to initiate regime change were effectively crushed. Other times, civil society groups allied with security forces, forcing autocrats to stand down from power. In other countries, security forces replaced autocrats and put in place new authoritarian regimes. In all these scenarios, one thing should be clear:

the armed forces are deeply influential actors (Barany 2016, 16; Bunce 2003, 175; Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 217).

In this dissertation I provide a novel approach to the question of regime change, an approach that combines governmental policies towards the military and opposition coalition credibility in order to understand military behaviour during regime crises. The armed forces are not unitary actors, but rather groups of soldiers and officers – called factions or cliques – which interact within the same institution. These factions' divergent preferences explain their willingness to defend (or refuse to defend) autocratic regimes. Divergence in factional interests is the consequence of years or even decades of military policies privileging certain groups seen as more loyal or less dangerous than others. These military policies, known as coup prevention or coup-proofing techniques, are used by autocrats as a means to keep control over the army. In order to keep the military within the coalition but still prevent coups, autocrats put in place control measures which provide incentives to more 'loyal' cliques, but also marginalize potentially menacing ones (Quinlivan 1999, 132). By looking at the consequences of coup-proofing techniques, I explain why certain cliques, favoured by the regime's policies, are attached to the maintenance of the regime, while others are not, being instead marginalized by those same policies. As these governmental policies favour certain groups, sidelined factions end their support for the preservation of the status quo.

Opposition forces can in this context become allies for these 'out-of-favour' cliques looking to end their military marginalization. On the other hand, fear of retribution by the organized opposition forces, or further marginalization, might push these marginalized

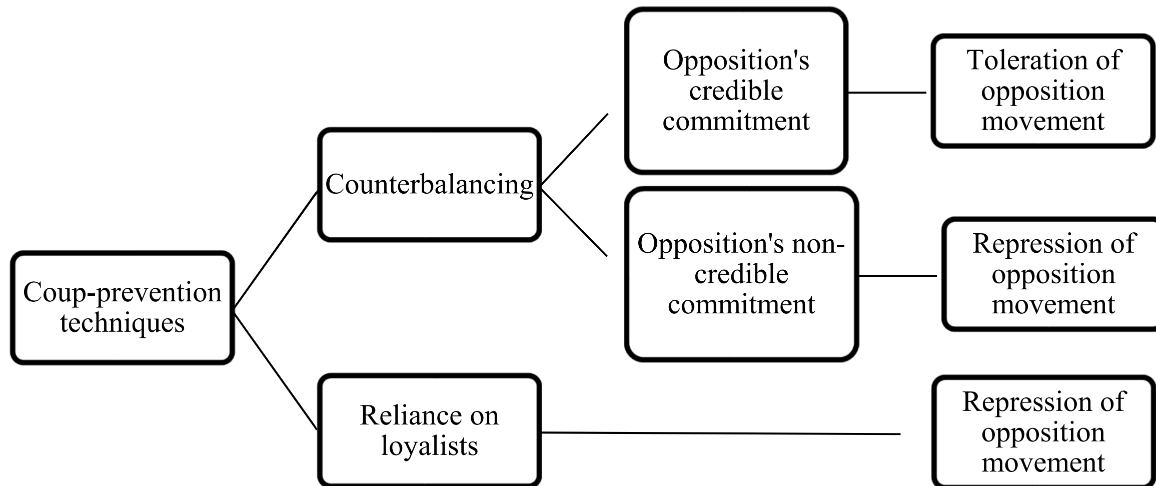
factions to support the regime. Opposition leaders must demonstrate their goodwill and their willingness to take into consideration military interests in order to alleviate these 'fears of the future' among military personnel. However, the opposition coalition has little (if any) effect when coup-proofing techniques ensure that out-of-favour cliques will be overpowered by loyalists within the military institution. Thus, my theoretical framework, represented in Figure 1, is that only a combination of counterbalancing coup-prevention techniques (which lead to the formation of important out-of-favour cliques) and a credible opposition force leads to the toleration of opposition forces' mobilization by the armed forces. All other combinations lead to the repression of the opposition coalition.

This novel argument helps us to solve many problems within the current study of military actions during regime crises. The ambiguous role played by the armed forces has puzzled researchers for decades as African armies have been both the main threats to (Lynch & Crawford 2011, 277) and one of the main proponents of (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 216) regime change on the continent. Both the presence of disgruntled officers (Anene 2000, 233; Stepan 1988, 33-44) and the preference among many to avoid conflict (Welch 1987, 196-7; Geddes 1999, 125-8) lay out a promising path to understanding military responses to regime crises, but with the caveat that non-loyalist officers would still have to be convinced that the organized political opposition forces offers a better path. Furthermore, this literature does not explain how authoritarian regimes can remain stable, even when non-loyalist military cliques are present, or why this stability is shattered during regime crises. The answer to that question can be found in the coup-prevention literature which explains how autocrats can keep factionalized armies in place over time by

maintaining a balance between military factions. This leads to the study of regime crisis ignited by popular protests that can disrupt the balance among factions put in place by coup-prevention measures. Another approach looks at the effect of civil society on military dynamics. In this perspective, military personnel defect – or desert the regime – when protesters are either so numerous that repression would be too economically and socially costly, or when protesters share social links with security forces (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 46; van de Walle 2006). This approach, while insightful, does not explain the uneven effect of civic resistance campaigns of relative size.

By taking a more dynamic view of military actions, I take into consideration how institutional dynamics and relationships within the military and with other actors help shape the army's actions. In doing so, I refine existing theories in four ways: first, I address a gap in the literature on military factionalism and regime resilience by explaining why certain factions have certain preferences regarding regime change. Second, by putting characteristics of the military and of the organized opposition forces into a single model, I explain why the mobilization of civil society has variable effects on military decisions during regime crises. Next, I integrate the autocrats as an important part of this interactive model. Finally, I draw attention to the opposition coalition's capacity to make credible commitments, rather than the opposition forces' size, as an important determinant of opposition coalition influence on military behaviour.

Figure 1: Summary of Hypotheses



I use the comparative method to assess the validity of my argument. Comparing cases is ideal in identification of causal relationships as any similarities between the two cases can be eliminated as potential explanation for the varied outcome (George & Bennett 2005, 159). Bratton and van de Walle's study identified thirteen cases of military intervention in countries going through political transitions where the military either facilitated or blocked the transitional process (1997, 211). I selected one case from each category: Benin – a case where the army intervened in favour of regime change – and Togo – a case where the army intervened to defend the existing regime. These two countries are neighbouring states that share many resemblances in terms of political history (such as failed civilian governments), military coups, and the ignition of regime crises around the end of the Cold War. However, only in Benin did the regime crisis led to regime change. A key difference, which is at the root of my study, is that military representatives in Benin publicly declared their support for regime change, while in Togo the armed forces

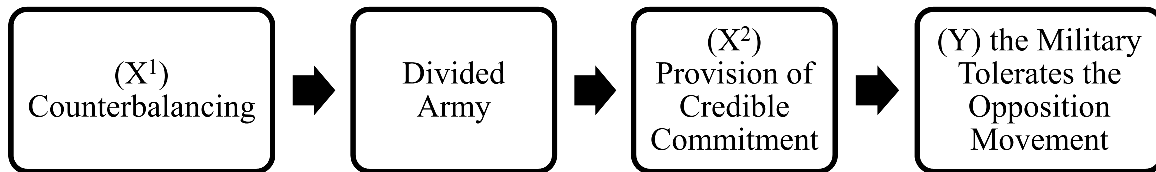
repressed the opposition to the ruling regime.[1] I argue that Togo built an army of loyalists that was not vulnerable to defection; in contrast, Benin's army used counterbalancing tactics and so could be incited to defect when the opposition coalition demonstrated its credibility.

I also use a method called process-tracing, allowing me to identify every link in the relations between the independent – coup-prevention techniques and the opposition coalition's credible commitment level – and dependent variables – the military's reaction to popular mobilization (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 176). Such a method allows me to demonstrate that the relationship I identified in the two selected cases is neither due to case-selection nor due to another more important variable. I built afterwards two causal paths, represented in Figure 2, that link the specific combination of independent and dependent variables in both cases.

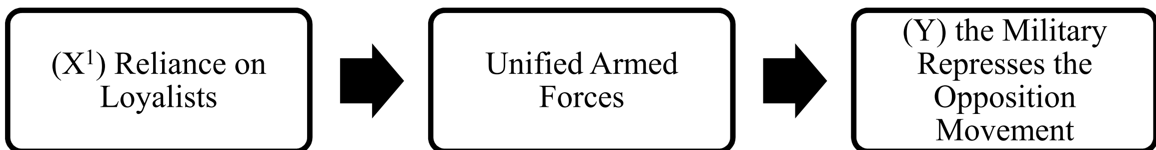
[1] Benin and Togo have other differences in terms of economic features and influence of their main foreign patron – France. I assess these explanatory factors in regards to military behaviour in Chapter 6.

Figure 2: Benin and Togo causal paths

Benin's causal path



Togo's causal path



I found that in Benin, the government of President Mathieu Kérékou implemented a policy of counterbalancing, a policy meant to reinforce existing factional rivalries within the armed forces, in order to limit the power of potential military rivals. The Beninese government reinforced existing paramilitary forces and created new ones while also diversifying military training and recruitment policies in order to (a) create new military factions and (b) reduce the power of his would-be military rivals. This strategy was effective until the regime was challenged by a force outside of the army, namely a coalition of civilian opponents. Decades of counterbalancing meant that President Kérékou could not rely on the military to end the civic resistance campaign as marginalized officers had a high chance of defecting if called upon to protect his government. President Kérékou was pushed to accept the holding of a National Conference through which opposition forces implemented their own agenda of reform. Thanks to their credible promises to respect military autonomy and integrate military representatives into the reform process, the organized opposition forces managed to sway the military to their side.

In Togo, President Gnassingbé Eyadéma implemented a policy of ethnic stacking in the military wherein those who shared his ethnicity as a Kabye – particularly those from Eyadéma's village of Pya – were favoured in military recruitment and promotion policies. Non-Kabyes were either purged or pushed to minor roles within the army. When the Togolese regime was challenged by a coalition of opposition groups, the military loyalists were more than willing to use force to end the protests. Radical opposition groups' denunciations of military human rights abuses and calls for major security reforms demonstrated the opposition coalition's low credible commitment and consequently pushed a majority of Non-Kabye officers to side with the military loyalists. In the end, President Eyadéma used the armed forces to regain his political predominance.

This dissertation's results shed some new light on important questions raised in the civil-military relations and regime resilience literature. First, reduction of military prerogatives is not a necessary prerequisite to regime change and the establishment of civilian regimes. Instead, the provision of promises, a crucial part of pact-making, is necessary for regime change in countries where the armed forces are important actors. However, the provision of guarantees to the military in regards to their corporate interests is not always so straightforward, as certain circumstances – particularly dynamics within the opposition movement and coup-proofing itself – can preclude the provisions of those guarantees. Finally, I demonstrate that military behaviour during regime crises might not be so unpredictable as past research suggests, as long-term trends of marginalization/favoritism – a consequence of the implementation of coup-prevention policies – can help us predict their actions.

This dissertation is organized as follows. I begin the first chapter entitled "The Armed Forces' Role in Regime Crises" by defining my dissertation's main concepts. I then look at literature on military coups in order to understand the formation of military factions. In African states, the weakness of civilian institutions and the military propensity to intervene has led to factionalism in the armed forces. These factions' political preferences, in regards to regime change or the maintenance of the status quo, is linked to their access to economic resources. The uneven access to state benefits is a consequence of the implementation of anti-coup measures by autocratic governments. However, out-of-favour factions can ally themselves with civilian opponents of the regime if the latter groups demonstrate that they will respect military interests.

I elaborate this theory and methodology in the second chapter, "Explaining Military Behaviour during Regime Crises." I clarify my own theory of military actions during regime crises. I explain my methodology which combines the comparative method and process-tracing. I then describe the selection of Benin and Togo as my case-studies by paying attention to their similarities and differences. Afterwards, I explain how I gathered data using the methods of document analysis and semi-directed interviews.

I analyze the causes and evolution of regime crises in my two selected cases in my third chapter, "Regime Crises in Benin and Togo." I give necessary background to the cases in order to contextualize my analysis of military policies, opposition characteristics, and military behaviour in Chapters 4 and 5. I explain how economic crises and international factors weakened both authoritarian regimes and gave the necessary space for opposition forces to mobilize and challenge both regimes' political hegemony. Opposition

mobilization pushed both regimes to implement measures of political liberalization in order to appease popular demands. As these attempts failed, both regimes conceded to holding national meetings to discuss political and economic reforms. A well-prepared opposition movement in Benin used this period to pave the way for regime change. In contrast, Togo's opposition forces were plagued by infighting and more radical elements attempted to deny any political access to the old elite. In the end, Benin's transition period ended with an open and fair electoral process while Togo's regime crisis ended with a military coup that saw the authoritarian elite gain back its political influence.

In the fourth chapter, "Counterbalancing the Power of President Kérékou's Rivals in Benin's Army," I analyze the factors that explain why the Beninese armed forces as an institution publicly endorsed regime change in February 1990. I argue that when President Mathieu Kérékou became both head of state and head of the armed forces in 1972, he put in place a series of measures which created new military factions by integrating new social groups, diversifying the training programs and creating new security institutions such as the presidential guard and the people's militia. Afterwards, he used frequent position shuffles in order to keep in check the power of the strongest factions. While such measures prevented marginalized cliques from staging successful coups, it crippled President Kérékou's control over the military. When a popular movement rose in 1989 in reaction to the government's austerity measures, the lack of control over the military – combined with an increasing number of protests – pushed the regime to make political concessions and ultimately to announce a National Conference where political and economic reforms would be negotiated. Before and during the conference, moderate opposition leaders controlled

the opposition tactics and proposed various concessions to military officials to convince the army to back their demands for the establishment of a new political regime. Ultimately, even President Mathieu Kérékou embraced regime change.

In the fifth chapter, "Ethnic Stacking and Military-Opposition Clashes in Togo," I explore the evolution of Togo's civil-military relations which led to the military decision to launch a low-level terror campaign against regime opponents in the Fall of 1991. Unlike President Kérékou, Togo's military autocrat – President Gnassingbé Eyadéma – purged the army of his potential rivals and their supporters. He also favoured his own ethnic group – the Kabyes – through recruitment and promotion procedures. Progressively, a group of close supporters, either from his family or from his own village, occupied all crucial command positions. When the pro-democracy movement mobilized in late 1990, President Eyadéma's loyalists attempted to crush it. By 1993, President Eyadéma had used his control over the military to quell the opposition coalition and regain control over the country's political institutions.

In the final chapter, "Conclusion," I look at previous explanations of military actions in both cases in order to demonstrate why such explanations point to important considerations but do not fundamentally challenge my conclusions, namely sustained economic downturn and pressure from the foreign patron, France. I analyse how my results provide answers to debates about pacted transition versus military prerogatives, the importance of certain circumstances (an opposition movement is relatively unified and armed forces factionalized) in the provision of credible commitment and the unpredictability of military behaviour during regime crises. Finally, I look at the

unforeseen results of my study and how these results hint at future research in civil-military relations.

Chapter 1: The Armed Forces' Role in Regime Crises

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature concerned with the role of the armed forces during regime crises. Previous works argued that military factions that are ill-treated by the regime are more likely to favour regime change. Additionally, the literature on coup-prevention measures explains why and how certain military factions are both marginalized and prevented from rebelling. However, this literature fails to explain why these out-of-favour factions defect during regime crises. My approach diverges from this literature by arguing that in order to understand military behaviour during regime crises, it is necessary to study not only the distribution of power among military factions, as a consequence of coup-proofing, but also the opposition forces' ability to disrupt the balance of power among military factions by provision of certain guarantees designed to marginalize factions and thus convince them to defect.

In order to understand the army's behaviour, I first define core concepts that are used in this dissertation. Second, I analyze the literature on military coups and intervention of the military during regime crises in order to understand the political importance of the military and the importance of military factions. Third, I look at the literature linking factionalism to military behaviour. Fourth, I turn to the coup-prevention methods used to manage factionalism. In the last section, I analyze the potential link between military behaviour and the forces of opposition.

1.1: Definition of concepts

In this section I set the scene for this analysis as I explain the context of regime crisis and present the important actors. I define regime crisis as a period when "the political institutions of the country are insufficient to contain the political activities of the various domestic groups and political powers, and the political institutions are contested by certain forces within the state" (Marks 1992, 398; Przeworski 1986, 50). While there are multiple potential sources for regime crises, I centre this dissertation on regime crises that have been instigated by the increasing mobilization of social groups not contained in the regime's ruling coalition.[2]

This focus of this dissertation is on the security services, including both armed forces and paramilitary forces. The armed forces are defined as "all those organizations that have the authority to use, or order the use of force, or the threat of force, to protect the state and its citizens, as well as those structures that are responsible for their management and oversight" (Bruneau & Matei 2008, 913). While the armed forces' functions may vary greatly from one state to another, all share a number of minimal functions, namely (a) fight and be prepared to fight external wars and (b) fight and be prepared to fight internal wars or insurgencies (Bruneau & Matei 2008, 917). The armed forces can have more functions in certain societies, such as economic administration, peacekeeping, or humanitarian

[2] It should be noted, however, that economic and international factors can play a crucial role in an opposition force's decision to mobilize and demand regime change.

missions; as long as the basic functions are still met, such organizations are considered part of the armed forces.

Outside of the armed forces, another important militarized actor is the paramilitary. These units exist outside of the normal command structure of the military as they are often created to back the regime against less reliable security forces. Most paramilitary forces are armed units which have been created solely to defend the regime, mostly against its domestic foes, and not the territorial integrity of the state (Quinlivan 1999, 141). Paramilitary forces include security forces such as presidential guards, gendarmeries, armed youth wings and militias.[3] They have five normal functions: (i) the monitoring of the army, (ii) the defence of the head of state, (iii) the prevention of coups, (iv) providing a counterweight to the armed forces, and (v) taking responsibility for internal security, such as the repression of the opposition (Brooks 1998, 36).

Another important group in this analysis is the authoritarian elite. Security force personnel interact with members of the authoritarian regime on a regular basis and the latter groups' decisions can influence the day-to-day affairs of the military. A member of the authoritarian elite is any individual who has any kind of privileged position within an authoritarian regime, be it from the bureaucracy, the military, or any governmental institution. These members are thus highly privileged in terms of access to state resources

[3] The police forces serve different purposes than paramilitary units. While the aim of the gendarmerie is usually to enact civilian police duties, they have been regularly used by African leaders as paramilitary units, particularly as a counterweight to the armed forces (Horowitz 1985, 545).

compared to the rest of the population (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 86; O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 15-6).

Finally, I explore the characteristics of the opposition as I study military behaviour in times of regime crisis instigated by the mobilization of opposition forces. I define as opposition forces any organized groups (civil society groups, political parties) seeking regime change. These groups must either have the necessary strength by themselves or in a coalition to force the government to react (van de Walle 2006, 85). These groups might have been part of the regime at some point, but at the outset of the crisis are outsiders who do not receive material benefits from the regime (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 86).

1.2: The military as kingmakers, and the birth of factionalism

In this section I define the basic political problems of military management in Sub-Saharan Africa in the second half of the 20th century. In doing so, I present the near-veto power of the military and the high degree of factionalism of African armies as the general context of the theoretical problems that I analyze in the following sections. By the 1970s, almost two thirds of the states in Africa witnessed military coups and the establishment of military or military-sanctioned governments (Harberson 1987, 1). This trend was not unique to Africa, as all around the developing world military hierarchies established new regimes in the decades that followed the Second World War. What is unique to Africa is that this military involvement in political affairs has never declined (McGowan 2003, 345; Lynch & Crawford 2011, 277).

The armed forces play a similarly important role during regime crises as during military coups. Security forces' loyalty is at the centre of existing regimes' ability to deflect or end challenges by adversaries (Alagappa 2002, 53; Acemoğlu & Robinson 2006, 1; Belkin & Schofer 2003, 2). In her analysis of the political transitions in Benin and Togo, Seely concludes that the preferences of the armed forces were quite influential on the ultimate outcome of regime crises (Seely 2001). Villalon and VonDoepp acknowledge that the armed forces have played a key role in many regime crises on the African continent (Villalón & VonDoepp 2005, 38-9; 54-6). Sub-Saharan Africa is not exceptional in this matter as military forces have held near-veto power in countries across Latin America, Southern Europe, East Asia, North Africa and the Middle East (Barany 2011; Bunce 2003, 175; Lee 2015).

Still, the army does not always intervene to quell demands for regime change. The armed forces intervened in thirteen regime crises in Sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1990s. Such interventions were pro-regime change in seven cases – Benin, Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali and South Africa – and pro-status quo in six cases – Cameroon, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo and Zaire (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 215). Bratton and van de Walle conclude that in all seven cases of military action in favour of regime change, these military actions led to the establishment of new governments. In fact, the authors conclude: "As went the army, so went the transition" (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 217). Researchers analyzing military involvement in other contexts have come to similar conclusions as Barany, who states that "support from a preponderance of the armed

forces is surely a necessary condition for revolutionary success" (2011, 24) while Bunce argues that "the military […] can make or break regimes" (2003, 175).

In order to understand military decisions to either reinforce standing regimes or be a catalyst for regime change, it is necessary to understand the source of the military's political predominance and that predominance's effects on the army's internal rivalries. The remainder of this section highlights how the military became a preponderant actor in African politics and how increasing military power caused frictions among military groups which later became fully fledged factional rivalries. First, I analyze the sources of military coups, which can be categorized in two groups: military motivation and military opportunity. As a result of the increasing coup-prone nature of African armies, the military of a clear majority of African states became increasingly factional. As I argue in the following section, military factionalism has a critical influence on the military behaviour vis-à-vis standing political regimes.

1.2.1: Military motivation, prerogatives and professionalism

The first military coups in Sub-Saharan Africa were direct results of attempts by civilian leaders to transgress military autonomy and get involved in the normal functioning of the armed forces (Horowitz 1985, 461; Emizet 2000). However, colonial powers never truly created a military sphere autonomous from civilian affairs (Horowitz 1985, 487). To make the situation worse, military recruitment in these colonial years was often based on ethnicity; certain groups – in particular ethnic groups that were the biggest threat to European hegemony – were ignored in the recruitment of security personnel (Ray 2013;

Horowitz 1985, 446; Harkness 2016; Enloe 1980). European administrations argued that certain groups were more fit for military service than others (Ray 2013, 562). In reality, members of groups which were less likely to rebel, or were more loyal to the European administration, were disproportionally selected (Decalo 1998, 52-3). As the composition of the armed forces often defines the perceived interest of the institution as a whole, this ethnic imbalance affected the role of the armed forces and its relationship to civilian authorities in many African countries (Nordlinger 1977, 79). The composition of the army – linked to specific ethnic/sectarian groups – affected the entire perception of the military institution's role which became aligned with the interests of these groups (Ray 2013; Zirker, Danopoulos & Simpson 2008; Nordlinger 1977, 79; Horowitz 1985, 455). Specifically, this led to the increased politicization of ethnicity and to porous borders between military and civilian affairs, and thus to no specific sense of military autonomy (Ngoma 2006, 100-1; N'Diaye 2000, 246).

There were few, if any, external threats to the various colonies; for the most part, the armies' main mission was to quell domestic resistance and prevent any rebellion (Bangoura 1992, 44; Horowitz 1985, 487). After independence, the military elites often continued with their mission of domestic control, legitimizing a guardianship role for the armed forces in times of domestic strife (Herbst 1990, 123). With time, both civilian and military elites relied on the army as the main defender of their regimes (Chazan, Mortimer, Ravenhill & Rothchild 1988; Acemoglu, Ticchi & Vindigni 2010, 1).

In terms of political intervention, military actions would thus be caused by the motivation of the army, due to the autonomy and specialization of the institution and its

composition. According to Stepan, armed forces that play an important role in areas outside of security – economic, political, provision of social welfare – tend to refuse a return to civilian rule and will instead favour the maintenance of military regimes or civilian regimes friendly to military interests (1988, 122). Most of the armed forces in Africa had high political prerogatives and a low sense of professionalism; this led to predatory attitudes and a desire to use the political arena as a means for the accumulation of wealth and military promotions. This generalization is in line with Bratton and van de Walle's conclusion that militaries with legacies of political involvement were prone to intervene against opposition movements demanding the establishment of democratic regimes (1997, 215). Furthermore, attempts by political leaders to modify the internal workings of the armed forces led to military coups in the majority of cases (Harkness 2016, 12-3). While the works previously mentioned provide valuable insights into military motivations to launch coups, it is equally clear that governments can sometimes prevent coups and that social forces may help regulate whether officers could or could not act on their motivations to launch coups.

1.2.2: Military opportunity: the weakness of civilian institutions

In post-colonial states, the former metropolitan powers did not – with few exceptions – build the political institutions necessary to mediate between the interests of groups in often very divided societies (Huntington 1968, 196; Lefever 1970, 173). The political institutions were often crippled by group rivalries and – in the case of the newly established civilian administrations – did not possess the resources or infrastructure to foster social and economic development throughout the country (Jenkins & Kposowa 1992; Kpessa, Béland & Lecours 2011). This led to regional imbalances in development, as

regions with more access to government resources developed at a more rapid pace (Johnson 1962, 400). Moreover, elections became the means to gain political hegemony as the holding of political offices meant the control of the distribution of the new states' limited resources (Horowitz 1985, 481). Military officers often decided to take power in an effort to solve the various societal ills as competition over power became violent (Huntington 1968, 203). The armed forces presented themselves the guardians of national interests (Coleman 1962, 396). The army – as the most-organized group of society – would act to defend its interests where institutions were too weak to constrain them.[4]

The weakness of civilian institutions meant that, in post-independence Africa, the armed forces took on larger roles and thus increased their own political prerogatives, playing a guardian-like role. In general, according to Alfred Stepan, an increase in political prerogatives means the military has a more vested interest in the status quo and opposes regime change as such would result in a reduction of its greater political role (Stepan 1988, 122). Further, in many post-colonial states, the army has often been invited into the political arena by political leaders and parties who use the armed forces to achieve a monopoly over state resources (Chazan *& al.* 1988; Horowitz 1985, 468). The failures of civilian elites to promote the modernization of the new African states – alongside uneven access to its resources – meant that segments of the population welcomed military intervention and that there was no true civilian authority to oppose the military's predatory practices (Clark 2006).

[4] The military role was – and still is – so critical in the development of African states and the maintenance of the political regimes that Houngnikpo stated that African societies should be conceptualized as military societies rather than civilian ones (2000).

1.2.3: Factionalism as a direct result of political intervention

Much of the previous discussion was about the military's interest, but political intervention itself generally makes it more likely that factions will emerge in the armed forces. Therefore, it would be hard to consider the military a unified actor. Military sociologists argue that in general terms, rank-and-file soldiers and officers feel that their prime loyalty goes to their units or a smaller segment of the army and not to the institution as a whole (King 2006, 1-3; Belkin & Schofer 2005, 154). Furthermore, there are often minor rivalries based on differences in terms of identity, training, unit assignment, ideology, etc. (Thiriot 2000, 188; 2008, 21). These rivalries do not affect the functioning of the army as long as the respect of the hierarchy and a sense of unity remains (Finer 1975, 6). However, these enmities are heightened by the armed forces' participation in political affairs as friction over the political agenda starts to rise (Decalo 1990, 237).

Coups often emerge in the first place from factionalism within the army when certain military officers can ally themselves with civilian leaders in order to take over the state's institutions (Luckham 1994, 35-9). Various officers, influenced by domestic political groups and foreign patrons, see that a given political agenda can help them gather support to gain power within the military hierarchy (Luckham 1994, 40). This is particularly true if there is an uneven distribution of resources among the officers and a disruption of the promotion procedures for ideological or clientelist reasons (Snyder 1992, 382). The first wave of coups in newly independent African states led to the rupture of military unity and a new wave of coups by officers who felt that military-political alliances were the easiest road for promotions (Janowitz 1977, 124).

Political intervention disrupts the rules guiding promotions and respect for hierarchy (Harberson 1987, 13). A successful coup is almost certainly a guarantee that other coups will ensue in the future as other factions of officers desire to use the same means to quickly go up ranks within the army (Kalu 2000). Coup-plotters can also act in response to other grievances, such as policy failures or the perceived privileged position of rivals. The very stability of military regimes is therefore affected as groups of officers and soldiers, relying on their previous networks, start to plan coups and counter-coups.

Cycles of coups and counter-coups reinforce rivalries within the armed forces, leading to a reduction in military effectiveness and the relative control of the high command across the entire institution (Welch 1987, 186). Officers who desire to act against standing governments become uncertain if their fellow officers will follow or oppose them. As I argue in the following sections, the factional nature of African armies influenced both their actions – conceptualized as coordination games – and provided an opportunity for standing autocrats to diminish the relative power of the army through the implementation of security policies which played military factions one against the other.

1.3: Factionalism, preferences and military actions

In the last section, I analyzed the historical consequences of military preponderance in African states and on the armies themselves. The factional nature of armies has an important influence on their actions (Barany 2016, 22). For example, certain authors explain military pull-out through the desire of military officers with an interest in the unity of the army to avoid intramilitary fighting (Alagappa 2002, 52-3; Thiriot 2000, 188;

Geddes 1999, 121; Welch 1987, 196-7), while other authors instead explain the military abandonment of regimes through domination by military softliners (cliques who favour civilian rule) over the armed forces (Anene 2000, 233; Stepan 1988, 33-44). Fundamentally, both parts of this literature suggest that militaries dominated by loyalists will hold firm while more factionalized armies are more likely to abandon an existing regime in the context of a regime crisis. While factionalism and factional preferences are an important part of the equation, it is still necessary to explain why some factions are more likely to defect when civilian groups mobilize for regime change.

What factions are influential during regime crises? Following Schmitter and O'Donnell's seminal work, members of the authoritarian coalition, including military officers, have been qualified as softliners – those who favour the opening of the regime – and hardliners – those opposed to any concessions (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 15-7). For instance, in Brazil, regime openers were officers from the middle echelons of the hierarchy who managed to gain predominance over more senior officers and members of alternative security institutions (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 19). Based on his analysis of the role of the military in the democratization processes in Ghana and Nigeria, Anene concluded that the armed forces are often divided in two camps, military democrats and military autocrats (2000, 233). A similar division between supporters and opponents of autocracy applies to the analysis of the democratic transition in Indonesia, where two military factions, the Islamists and the secular-nationalists, took different stands on the opening of the political regime (Chandra & Kammen 2002).

Military factions' preferences arise specifically from the authoritarian regime's political dynamics. Authoritarian leaders can reduce the likelihood of regime defection by creating institutions that mediate conflicts or by evenly distributing benefits (Brownlee 2007, 2; Way 2005, 237). According to Brownlee, elite defections and regime transition would be, in this perspective, the result of failure of structures to prevent the rise of deep divisions within the ruling coalitions as certain factions would be angry at what they perceive as preferential treatment of their rivals (2007, 37). Bratton and van de Walle argue that pro-status quo and pro-regime change factions among the military arose in African regimes because of "struggles over coveted offices, rents, and graft. The factions within the military that resisted transferring power […] usually perceived political change as leading to a loss of privilege" (1997, 216). Stepan finds that the regular armed forces' decision to favour political liberalization was a direct result of the increasing power of rival paramilitary forces (1988, 33-44). Ramasy finds that, in Madagascar, factions that resented the standing government's actions were directly or indirectly behind most leadership changes in the country (2010, 25). In Portugal, the 1974 political transition was initiated by a group of young officers who felt threatened by the government's decision to allow draftees in the officer corps (Maxwell 1986, 109; Bruneau 1974). Lee goes even further, and argues that

> favoured military officers, under the authoritarian leaders' patronage, enjoy preferential access to offices and spoils. Out-of-favour military officers, on the other hand, are left to languish in the political wilderness. When military officers are excluded from economic and political opportunities, they are more likely to defect from the incumbent authoritarian regime (Lee 2009, 645).

Rival military factions defend either the status quo or are open to political liberalization depending on the privileges provided to them by the incumbent regimes. The marginalized factions would favour the political opening of the regime, not so much because of their own ideological preferences, but rather because the status quo is not profitable to them on an individual basis.

Does this mean that military loyalty is dependent on economic incentives and would thus be vulnerable to economic downturns? Haggard and Kaufmann argue as much:

> Economic downturns affect the loyalty of the political-military elite by reducing the ability of the government to deliver material benefits. Like any other component of the public sector, military establishments are threatened by adjustment measures, particularly budget cuts (1997, 268).

This explanation does have some similarity with Bratton and van de Walle's argument that political transitions are initiated when those outside of the incumbent regime's clientelist networks overpower those inside (1997, 269). It is true that regimes that are economically better off can more easily accommodate military interests, or as Brooks puts it, "service the military constituency" (1998, 24). In fact, economic downturns are periods of danger for standing autocrats who fear that ambitious military officers may use such periods as an opportunity to stage a coup with the help of embittered military cliques.

Still, economic incentives are not the only explanation for the military's behaviour, as armed forces in certain countries have passed through periods of economic downturns without abandoning the standing government (Wood 2001, 878-81; Lowenberg 1997, 67). Even regime members who do not receive state resources for a period of time sometimes stay loyal in the hope that they will be welcomed back into the regime's inner circle in the

future (Svolik 2013, 79-80). As my analysis in the next section suggests, certain authoritarian regimes have secured the military's support and loyalty through other means than the provision of economic incentives, such as creating social distance between the military and the rest of society. By stacking the army with loyalists, an authoritarian leader can build a bond of trust that helps to convince officers that a return to good times will bring a return to rewards, while creating distance with the rest of society may convince wavering officers that the alternative to the existing regime would be worse.

While factions may arise for a variety of reasons, they are reinforced by uneven access to the resources provided by the current leadership. Furthermore, the analysis of factionalism is critical to the study of military defection. However, this literature does not explain why factionalism does not lead to defection before a regime crisis from below even begins. The coup-proofing literature, which I analyze in the next section, shows that it is possible for a regime to survive despite having out-of-favour cliques by keeping them counterbalanced and mistrustful. In other words, factionalism alone cannot explain defection during regime crises. The characteristics of regime crises themselves need to be part of the explanation.

1.4: Coup-proofing measures, intramilitary rivalries, and military preferences

From the authoritarian elite's point of view, the army is a double-edged sword: while a strong military is required to keep the regime in place, its edge in coercive tools means that it has an even greater capacity to stage a coup (Acemoglu, Ticchi & Vindigni 2010, 2; Geddes 2009, 1). Moreover, coup prevention becomes all the more important in regimes that have previously had a coup. Accommodation of military interests is not so

much a burden if the armed forces remain a united hierarchical institution, as senior officers can provide reasonable guarantees of their subalterns' obedience (Geddes 2009, 3-4). When a regime is installed by a coup, there is a rapid disruption of the military hierarchy and intensified factionalism (Luckham 1994; Finer 1975). As senior officers cannot guarantee the full co-operation of their fellow officers, authoritarian leaders face the possibility that segments of the armed forces could stage a coup at any time. This problem is aggravated by the very nature of coup-plotting, which is secretive and hard to identify (Roessler 2011, 308). The question then becomes how to prevent coups.

A first solution to the problems of military factions' plotting of coups is the reinvigoration of civilian control over the military as an institution. Following the first wave of post-World War II military coups, researchers argued that the best way to remedy the propensity of military officers to stage coups was to foster a sense of military autonomy and specialization away from civilian affairs – also known as professionalism (Huntington 1957, 80). This requires severance of the links between political elites and military elites, the acceptance of civilian supremacy over the definition of the military's sphere of action, as well as a clear definition of the military's functions (Feaver 1999, 234). Moreover, the creation of strong political institutions might stabilize oppositional societal forces and prevent responses by members of the military (Huntington 1968, 196). Alternatively, civilian institutions can be conceptualized as a protection against military coups. For Finer, military praetorianism can be contained by strong civilian institutions (1975, 98).

Not all specialists agree that military autonomy leads to a reduction in the number of coups. Rather, for these authors military autonomy would create a sense of superiority

and distinctiveness which gives to military personnel a sense of guardianship over national interests (Janowitz 1977, 103). Finer believes that professionalism means that the army has specific corporate interests and a sense of distinctiveness from the rest of society, which could push it to intervene politically to defend these interests and their privileges (1975, 41). Furthermore, this strategy has some major drawbacks for authoritarian leaders: first, professionalization takes time, and the authoritarian leadership might be, and often is, vulnerable in the short term to coup attempts. Second, military professionals can become powerful rivals to military leaders as a hierarchical army entails that the high command has strong powers which they could use against the state leadership (Emizet 2000, 211). Third, the army could become politically neutral and thus could not be used as a tool against political adversaries of the dictatorship; as authoritarian leaders rely heavily on the army to stabilize their regime and quell opposition, a politically neutral army would not be in their best interest (Acemoglu, Ticchi & Vindigni 2010, 2; N'Diaye 2000, 251).

In any case, the concept of military professionalism is not the most appropriate tool in this dissertation as only a few African leaders inherited armies that could be qualified as minimally professional. If African autocrats did not professionalize their armies, often having little (if any) interest in doing so, how did they assure their control over the armed forces? Rather than setting up professional armies, African autocrats used coup-proofing to control their armed forces.

Coup-prevention techniques have become a new line of research in recent years, due to their importance as a tool of authoritarian resilience. Coup-proofing can be defined as attempts at "[e]nsuring political control over the military [through] depriving it of both

the means and the motives to challenge the regime" (Brooks 1998, 19). Coup-proofing measures vary greatly but they all share common effects that, while reducing the likelihood of a coup, also reduce the combat effectiveness of the military institution and exacerbate military grievances with the authoritarian leadership (Quinlivan 1999, 133; Rwengabo 2013, 533). Coup-proofing techniques can be divided into two larger groups: the creation of and/or reliance on loyalist elements, and counterbalancing (Pilster & Böhmelt 2011, 5-6). All these strategies have an impact on the presence, and relative strength, of privileged and out-of-favour officers.

1.4.1: Reliance on loyalist elements

Authoritarian leaders, facing challenges from within their authoritarian coalition – including from the military – can give out benefits and punishment to selected individuals (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson & Morrow 2003, 78-80; Svolik 2013, 79-80; Geddes 1999, 121-2; Brownlee 2007, 32-7). A very simple individual strategy is to buy off top officers by offering them political offices, executive roles in state corporations, large pensions, higher salaries, etc. (N'Diaye 2002, 623).[5] McLauchlin defines this strategy of individual incentives as cultivating "a loyalty based on selective favoritism and leaving a feeling that reform would ruin them" (2010, 337). In other words, authoritarian leaders can attempt to create loyal officers by providing them with incentives to defend the incumbent regimes. The main problem with this strategy is that, as McLauchlin observes, individual preferences are hard to predict and providing high offices and material incentives to

[5] Also referred to by Brooks as "servicing the military constituency" (1998, 24).

potential rivals would, at the same time, increase the power of these potential rivals (2010, 333). Furthermore, the provision of material incentives depends on the autocrat's relative access to revenues and thus is vulnerable to economic downturns and economic sanctions.

One solution to the individual preference problem is instead to create or use group identification in order to secure the loyalty of certain groups (Brooks 1998, 32). The essence of this strategy is, as Quinlivan states, "the reinforcement of one group's power over the other national groups" (1999, 135). Group identification is not only used in promotion procedures, but also as a criterion for military recruitment (Horowitz 1985, 551-3). This is particularly important in countries where there are already ethnic/sectarian/regional tensions and where the regime feels that certain groups cannot be trusted (Barany 2016, 25). In the African context, ethnic identity was commonly used as a proxy for group loyalty/disloyalty by authoritarian leaders who appointed to key positions officers from ethnic groups perceived as more loyal (N'Diaye 2002, 623; 2000, 254; Rwengabo 2013, 541; Emizet 2000, 213).[6] When strategies of reliance on loyalists take on an ethnic nature, there is a process of ethnic stacking in the army. Ethnic stacking is when one ethnic group is favoured over other groups in terms of military recruitment and promotions.[7]

As certain groups are advantaged by the regime, others are penalized; officers from unreliable groups can be pushed to peripheral positions (Quinlivan 1999, 133). If the marginalization of unreliable officers is an insufficient guarantee, authoritarian leaders can

[6] It should be noted that this strategy is quite similar to the selective recruitment techniques used by European powers (Ray 2013).
[7] McLauchlin refers to this concept as 'ethnic preference' (2010, 338).

purge unreliable officers from the army, on an individual or group basis (Brooks 1998, 35). This purging process can lead to see-saw coups as groups who feel left out or marginalized might plan or proceed with counter-coups in order to redress what they see as an unfair advantage for their rivals (McLauchlin 2010, 339; Horowitz 1985, 481-5). If such coups fail, the result is often the ethnic narrowing of the armed forces as individual soldiers and officers from groups associated with the coup plotters are removed from the army.[8]

As the remaining groups' presence in the army is then solely due to their identity and comes with large privileges, these members of the armed forces become invested in the maintenance of the status quo. As Brooks mentions, "individuals with personal ties to the regime have the most to gain from supporting it, and the most to lose should it fall" (1998, 34). Thus, loyalist armies are dominated by groups who have vested interests in the preservation of the standing regime as their domination of the armed forces depends on the autocrat's policies.

1.4.2: Counterbalancing

While the best plan for an autocrat, according to Horowitz, is to homogenize the army so that the army is solely composed of loyalists, this strategy is not always possible as autocrats in multiethnic states might still need the support of more than one group to stay in power (1985, 554). Furthermore, autocrats might not have a sufficiently important loyalist group within the army to rely on; or unreliable groups within the army may still

[8] In some cases, when a single ethnic group is sufficiently large to occupy all the strategic positions within the army, and is loyal enough, the process of ethnic attrition can lead to the complete domination of a single group over the entire armed forces.

hold enough power to prevent a major purge. In these cases, autocrats can foster divisions within the armed forces in order to create a situation in which every faction, by its lack of trust in other groups, holds the others in check (Belkin & Schofer 2005, 144).

Counterbalancing strategies are based on the problems of coordination among factions. Coordination games are one of the models in rationalist theory where the ability of a given actor to reach its favoured outcome is largely dependent on the compliance of other actors (Morrow 1994, 221-2; Tsebelis 1990, 61-2). The conclusion of such games, as Geddes has mentioned, is that "no dominant strategy exists, since the best outcome for either player always depends on what the other does" (1999, 126). In a military perspective, soldiers tend to place a lot of value on the effectiveness and cohesion of the military institution as a whole alongside their political preferences (Ramasy 2010, 25; Maxwell 1986, 109; Honna 2003, 2-4). Officers will often want to avoid splitting the armed forces by supporting a regime that others oppose. Moreover, a faction that initiates a coup attempt and loses is likely to be punished. Singh has argued that "even if [an officer] is willing to take the chance and support a side that might lose, he will be constrained by the fear that a coup attempt might degenerate into a fratricidal conflict" (2014, 23). In short, officers face a coordination game: when other officers support a regime that they oppose, they may choose to support that regime, coordinating with other officers, in order to avoid punishment and maintain the unity of the military. Thus there are two equilibria in such a confrontation among factions, either they all cooperate in a coup or all refuse to launch a coup (Tsebelis 1990, 64). Therefore, unless officers are able to coordinate with others to plot a coup, they are unlikely to initiate it. Autocrats using counterbalancing techniques are

aware of this coordination problem and foster divisions in order make this problem quite unsurmountable.

A common strategy used to create such coordination problems is to shuffle the command structure so that no officer is in the military high command for a long period of time (Brooks 1998, 9; Bethke 2011, 2). As the officers are constantly switched from one office to the other, they do not have time to build large networks and keep the loyalty of their subordinates (Bethke 2011). Svolik notes two alternative explanations for command shuffles: (1) to prevent the autocrat's administrators – civilian or military – from building their own independent power-base and (2) demonstrating to everyone that the autocrat is independent from his subalterns and that he is the centre of power (Svolik 2013, 79-80). In the larger context of counterbalancing strategies, command shuffles allow autocrats to play military factions against one another, by appointing members of less threatening factions to top positions, rotate them out once they become too powerful, and to increase military rivalries by pushing military cliques to rival against one another for appointments.

A second way to enhance military rivalries is to create paramilitary forces. Alongside the normal command structure, parallel organizations can also be created in an effort to limit the monopoly on coercive means (Feaver 1999, 225; Barany 2016, 28). This might take the form of anti-insurgency units under the control of another ministry, militias, or presidential guards (Brooks 1998, 36-8; Powell 2012, 20-1). In fact, Barany concludes that "the presence of such units [elite units like presidential guards] is a signal that rulers distrust they army and want to counterbalance it with a more reliable force" (Barany 2016, 27). Appointments in such organizations are based on loyalty more than merit. Creating

such structures serves three purposes: first, by creating an alternative security force loyal to the leadership, it increases the potential cost of staging coups. Second, such organizations can help monitor activities, in particular coup planning, in the regular armed forces. Finally, these paramilitary organizations divert equipment and budgets away from the regular army, therefore reducing its coercive capacity (Quinlivan 1999, 141; Brooks 1998, 36).

Another strategy, related to the previous one, is to give similar mandates to various security branches or organizations (Quinlivan 1999, 149). The purpose here is to reduce the power of one singular security branch, and thus its capacity to coerce the regime, and to foster heightened rivalries among the competing organizations (Belkin & Schofer 2005, 144). Other strategies are possible but they all work towards the same goal: to make it impossible for a single military faction to control the armed forces. In summary, there are two main purposes for counterbalancing strategies: (i) reduce the ability of any faction to stage a coup, and (ii) erect barriers to co-operation among military factions to limit their ability to unite and topple the regime. This explains why disgruntled factions of officers do not rebel all the time as they are very likely to be defeated and suffer the consequences of being on the losing side.

1.4.3: The effect of survival strategies on the military's internal workings

While the reliance on loyalists and the division of the armed forces are different logics of coup-proofing, they do have some similar effects on military institutions. Any coup-proofing technique is linked to a reduction in military effectiveness, both against

external and domestic threats, as effectiveness is sacrificed in order to assure loyalty or to increase division among security personnel (Pilster & Böhmelt 2011, 9; Talmadge 2015). In this sense, coup-proofing might reduce the military's coercive capacity and therefore its ability to quell rebellions and popular protests (Thyne & Powell 2016, 13).

This leads us to a third, larger, effect of survival strategies. As such survival techniques cause an uneven distribution of benefits, certain branches or factions of the army become marginalized by the leadership's policy (N'Diaye 2002, 631-2). In his analysis of democratization dynamics in Brazil, Stepan concluded that the regular officers' decision to support liberalization was caused by the empowerment of paramilitary forces (1988, 26-9). The situation was similar in the Philippines and Indonesia where officers who were not loyal to Marcos and Suharto respectively were at the forefront of the military-civilian alliances which initiated the transition from authoritarianism to democracy; these officers were the 'losers' of the military reforms and thus had little interest in defending the status quo (Lee 2009, 647).

Reliance on loyalists fosters a sense, among military personnel, that regime change would ruin them. In Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mobutu prioritized ethnic loyalists within the armed forces for years and purged the army of professional officers and potential rivals (Emizet 2000, 216; Snyder 1992, 393-4). Officers were more than willing to repress opposition movements in the late 1980s (Emizet 2000, 220). These individuals became insiders of the regime and their fate depended on the preservation of the status quo. Bratton and van de Walle state that, in general,

> [Insiders] are dependent on the survival of the incumbent regime. […] Because they face the prospect of losing all visible means of support in a political transition, they have little option but to cling to the regime and to sink or swim with it (1994, 464).

When members of loyalist armies are recruited based on ethnic criteria, regime change is even more dangerous. In such cases, regime changes increase the likelihood that a new leader would not share their ethnic identity. A new leader "may wish to emulate his or her predecessor and create his or her own ethnic army, purging the existing one and recruiting coethnics in their place" (Harkness 2016, 598). Strategies of ethnic stacking and recruitment based on identity criteria tie the fate of security forces to that of the regime, as they now fear that regime change would ultimately mean being purged from the army (McLauchlin 2010, 339).

In other words, coup-proofing measures greatly influence the military's willingness to tolerate or repress opposition movements: disgruntled military factions are willing to cooperate with opposition forces in all cases, while loyalists are opposed to regime change. The main difference is that, with reliance-on-loyalists coup-proofing policies, loyalists become the predominant group within the armed forces, sometimes to the point that non-loyalists are nearly all purged from the military ranks. In counterbalanced armies, marginalized military factions hold sufficient power to truly raise the spectre of intramilitary fighting. However, while marginalized factions might all wish for a regime change, policies of counterbalancing (i) increase suspicion towards one another and (ii) raise the coup's cost as marginalized officers have to fight off loyalists within the army and paramilitary units. In other words, out-of-favour cliques will not normally rebel as they are

aware that their chances of success are slim and they risk dire consequences if their attempted coup fails.

While the coup-proofing literature suggests that counterbalancing policies depend on maintaining a balance, this raises the question of what happens when that balance is disrupted. During certain regime crises, the equilibrium set through counterbalancing tactics is disrupted and certain factions may defect. Why would some factions rebel during certain regime crises but not during others? In the context of regime crises, I argue that opposition mobilization explains the defection of marginalized cliques. Counterbalancing strategies imply that the motivation of marginalized cliques to overthrow the regime increases but their opportunities to launch a coup also decline. In this context, regime crisis ignited by popular uprisings create new opportunities for embittered cliques to overthrow the regime, thus upsetting the balance – between motivation and opportunity to launch coups – created through coup-prevention policies (Snyder 1992, 380-2; Lee 2005, 86). Popular protests and opposition forces can influence the military's actions under certain conditions. I argue that popular mobilization signals to the less enthusiastic members of the ruling coalition that regime change would be possible and it would be a good time to defect (van de Walle 2006, 86-7). Out-of-favour officers are likely to defect from the regime if they sense that there is a good chance that popular mobilization will succeed in toppling the current government (Lee 2009, 646). Precisely how, then, are opposition mobilization and military defection linked? I argue in the next section that both are linked through the provision of guarantees, or reassurance, from the opposition in regards to military interests.

1.5: Opposition forces' characteristics and military behaviour

Opposition forces, and civil society, have been portrayed as the motor of regime change, particularly towards democracy, since the 1990s (Bunce 2003, 171-2; O'Donnell 2010). Bermeo argues that the decision of the old elite to repress opposition forces is a function of the cost of repression (1997, 315). As popular mobilization raises the cost of repression, members of the authoritarian coalition start to reconsider their political allegiances. Wood concludes that popular mobilization, by reducing the revenue of the business elites, can convince the latter group to favour political reforms (2001, 885). Van de Walle argues that regime defection is the result of the relative strength of the opposition forces: authoritarian coalition members start to defect when they make the calculation that the opposition forces are likely to be victorious (2006, 84). In other words, a strong opposition should lead to elite defection.

Military personnel may also be affected by this popular mobilization effect. Chenoweth and Stephan have concluded that larger resistance movements are more likely to foster mass military defection from former regime supporters who become convinced of the likelihood of an opposition victory (2011, 58). While it is true that the increased size of opposition coalitions encourages defection, this is not the only opposition characteristic that makes defection more likely. For instance, in South Africa the armed forces used repression before the mid-1980s despite the presence of large mobilization movements that had largely increased the cost of regime maintenance (Cawthra 2003, 34). Other characteristics also influence the opposition's ability to foster military defection.

In particular, given the arguments of the literature cited in Section 1.3 (i.e. that military officers are concerned about how regime change would affect them), it is important to analyze not only the strength of the opposition but also its capacity to make credible promises to regime members. By credible commitment, I refer to an actor's ability to convince another actor that he will honor his promises even in the distant future (North & Weingast 1989, 804). Opposition forces must provide the armed forces with certain guarantees either that the opposition's demands would be not too costly for members of the armed forces, or that the military might even benefit from regime change (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 40). Such guarantees can be summarized as: limits to the scope and speed of political reforms, immunity from prosecution for past human rights abuse, and compensation for changes in military prerogatives (Barkey 1990, 171-2,76; Stepan 1988, 59; O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 25, 40; Thiriot 2008, 25-6; Welch 1987, 199). Karl also emphasizes the importance of elite bargaining, namely pacting, in processes of regime change (Karl 1990, 10). Karl adds that the military would agree to leave power if they were offered amnesty from previous abuses and guaranteed improvements for the economic situation of military personnel. In other words, the opposition forces must agree to limit their actions and offer credible guarantees to the armed forces.

Credible commitment comes into play here as it affects two critical priorities of the military: the integrity of the institution and its corporate interests (Makara 2013, 339; Nordlinger 1977, 66-9). These are important because not all military personnel can be conceptualized as loyalists or out-of-favour. Some personnel in fact are not tied to any political sides and consequently care far more about the military's corporate interests.

These military moderates, or ‘swingmen’, can reach senior ranks as they are not aligned with any of the autocrat’s political or military rivals. Consequently, lacking strong interests about one regime or another, moderate officers have relatively stronger desire to defend the military’s corporate interests and unity. Credible guarantees are thus crucial to convincing military ‘swingmen’ that the political forces demanding regime change acknowledge military interests and are even willing to accommodate them (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 25). If a sufficient number of officers join the pro-regime change camp, they will force the military to a standstill as pro-regime officers will not be able to act against the regime without risking intramilitary fighting.

While the opposition can make such guarantees, they might have an interest in breaking those promises in the future. As North and Weingast argued, “while parties may have strong incentives to strike a bargain, their incentives after the fact are not always compatible with maintaining the agreement: compliance is always a potential problem” (1989, 806). Because of this problem of compliance, actors have a disincentive in reaching agreements. This is a crucial problem for opposition forces that are trying to convince military factions to defect from the regime and join them.

Even when opposition forces are willing to accommodate the military, it is not always an easy task. For instance, efforts to appeal to the military and assure them of the goodwill of the protesters and would-be reformers failed in Burundi in 1993 and in China in 1989 (Lee 2015, 153; Uvin 1999, 261-2).[9] This problem of compliance can be solved

[9] In the Burundian case, the Tutsi-dominated army acted against the government’s wishes, because President Buyoya had spearheaded the move towards greater integration of the Hutu-dominated opposition parties.

either through political institutions that constrain the actor's actions in the future or the good reputation of the same actor (North & Weingast 1989, 806-7; Persson & Tabellini 1990, 5-6, 33). As regime outsiders, opposition leaders cannot immediately set up institutions and even formal agreements, as a form of institution themselves, do not have much strength once the opposition leaders gain power. Therefore, military elites base their decision on the degree of trust they have in the opposition's leaders. Before they take power, opposition forces can make promises in regards to the implementation of institutions, but the opposition coalition's characteristics are the basis of their discussion with the armed forces. The credibility of opposition forces' promises is often a function of opposition unity as opposition leaders must be able to assure that deals, whether formal and informal, struck with the old elite are going to be respected (Przeworski 1991, 12). Opposition leaders must, in this sense, be able to assure that opposition/military agreements will be enforced by all or nearly all opposition groups.

While opposition unity is, once again, a requirement for the successful strategy of opposition forces, there is also a need for the presence of certain individuals with social ties to the members of the armed forces as they are more likely to convince the latter of the credibility of opposition proposals (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 39). This has to do specifically with the ability of an autocratic leader to portray regime change as 'ethnic shuffles'. Regime change opens the possibility that the new leader does not share the same ethnic identity as members of the officer corps and could, thus, decide to alter the ethnic composition of the military (Harkness 2016, 598). As McLauchlin stated, "in-group soldiers anticipate that they will be purged should the out-group win" (2010, 339). The

presence of interlocutors within the opposition forces who share the military personnel's identity helps to alleviate these fears. These interlocutors can demonstrate that regime change does not equate to a future ethnic purge within the military, particularly as they can appeal to members of the military through their common social networks. Such interlocutors also demonstrate, by their sheer presence within the upper echelon of the opposition movement, that members of their ethnic group have a place in the new regime. Furthermore, the presence of members of the military personnel's ethnic group within the protest movement makes it harder for regime officials to order crackdowns on protesters as troops might refuse to shoot in crowds that could contain members of their extended families (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 47). Credible commitments require (i) that offers are made that provide assurances to officers and (ii) that these officers good reasons to believe that these promises shall be fulfilled in the future. United opposition groups and ones that share social ties with the military are thus seen as more credible as they can more easily demonstrate that they will respect their agreements.

1.6: Conclusions

The current literature pointed out important elements of my explanation on military behaviour during regime crises by highlighting the importance of the armed forces in the political evolution of African states; by moving past an abstract discussion of "professionalism" and its link to military behaviour to instead talk about factionalism and coup-proofing as important determinants of military actions; and by noting the importance of opposition assurances during regime crises.

At the same time, this same literature fails to explain how certain regimes survive despite the presence of important out-of-favour military cliques and why these factions potentially defect during regime crises instigated by civic resistance campaigns. The coup-proofing literature offers an explanation of how regimes generally survive despite the presence of factionalism. The notion of equilibrium of factions suggests that large-scale opposition can be critical to disrupting that equilibrium and provoking defection. Thus, it is important to investigate the opposition's characteristics, particularly its ability to make credible commitments. In the following chapter, I combine different elements of the literature into an overall explanation of military behaviour.

Chapter 2: Explaining Military Behaviour during Regime Crises, Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The previous chapter assessed the treatment of military decisions during periods of regime crisis. In the civil-military relations literature, the armed forces are portrayed as an institution with variation in the degree of fragmentation. Some of the relevant research has concluded that military actions were tied to military factionalism, specifically to the preferences of dominant factions. Furthermore, these factions would favour either regime change or the status quo during regime crisis based on their access to benefits from the regime. There are some clues in the literature that suggest current regimes' policies, specifically coup-proofing, influence the armed forces' interests. There are also important clues that opposition characteristics influence regime actions at critical junctures. This chapter builds on these insights as it provides a more systematic explanation of this phenomenon by looking at both coup-prevention policies and opposition characteristics, and then discusses my empirical analytic approach in the remainder of the dissertation.

In section 2.1, I put forward this dissertation's theoretical framework, specifically the research question and the two hypotheses. In section 2.2, I develop my research design, a combination of two qualitative research methods – comparative studies and process-tracing. Finally, I explain my data collection in section 2.3.

2.1: A theory of military actions during regime crisis

The purpose of my research is to identify the factors that influence armed forces' decision to tolerate or suppress pro-reform movements, emerging either from within or outside a given authoritarian regime. Specifically, the research question is: *what factors influence armed forces' decisions to tolerate or suppress opposition movements whose demands for political reform could lead to regime change?* This dissertation does not seek to assess the origin of a given regime crisis, nor does it seek to understand the decision of other members of authoritarian coalitions, such as technocrats, the business elite, or party members. While the actions of these other groups can influence the stability of authoritarian regimes, the armed forces' coercive power puts it in a privileged position compared to other actors. Specifically, the army can – if it accepts to repress regime opponents or even reformists within the ruling coalition – assure the regime's survival over extended periods (Alagappa 2002, 53). The argument developed here is that actions of military factions are influenced by two specific factors: the incumbent regime's military control measures, and the opposition forces' level of credible commitment. These two variables are explained in the following sub-sections.

2.1.1: Incumbent regimes and coup-proofing measures

In the literature on military actions during regime crises, the main explanation for military actions is linked to factionalism and the uneven distribution of resources among the officer corps (Conteh-Morgan 1994, 84). Still, the existing literature does not do a very good job of explaining why, if factions are so risky, authoritarian regimes do not constantly

launch purges against potentially dangerous cliques. The regime-toppling power of the armed forces poses a dilemma across many different regimes (Bruneau & Tollefson 2006, 1). This military edge explains in good part why so many civilian regimes have been toppled by officers who felt that the regime's policies were not in their best interest (Finer 1975, 28-35). In most cases, the officer corps is a necessary part of a successful ruling coalition (Acemoglu, Ticchi & Vindigni 2010, 49).

State leaders can, and do, take measures to defend themselves from military predation. Rather than enforce civilian supremacy and military professionalism, autocrats rely on a series of measures known as coup-proofing. These measures range from the purge of the most unreliable elements to the creation of paramilitary forces (Brooks 1998, 9). Such measures, while quite diverse, have two broader aims: they either (a) increase the power of loyalist elements; or (b) exacerbate divisions within the military institution (Pilster & Böhmelt 2011, 5-6).[10] Both measures create winners and losers within the armed forces as the normal functioning of the army, particularly in terms of promotions and the disruption of resources. In other words, coup-prevention measures create groups of officers constrained in their ability to topple the current regime and disadvantaged by the status quo. Meanwhile, however, other groups privileged through regime policies perceive that their fate is tied to the preservation of the status quo. However, the two techniques lead to different distribution of power among military factions: (a) the reliance on loyalists entails that a single group is advantaged over others; and (b) counterbalancing techniques denote

[10] Quinlivan notes Syria's military recruitment of Alawites among officers and elite soldiers as an example of reliance on loyalists (1999, 136). Belkin and Schoefer hint that Yasser Arafat's decision to split the Palestinian security forces into a large number of competing branches is a prime example of a counterbalancing strategy (2005, 140).

that no group can overpower the others within the military institution. Counterbalancing is used when a given leader cannot secure his control over the military (Brooks 1998, 34). In this context, the best alternative strategy for autocrats is to: (a) deter rival factions; and (b) divide their opponents so no one of them is strong enough to launch a coup (Belkin & Schofer 2005, 144).

Part of the explanation for why leaders choose the suboptimal strategy of counterbalancing over reliance-on-loyalists has to do with the military policies such leaders were handed at independence. European control was very influential in regard to the initial composition of the armed forces (Horowitz 1985, 487-92; Ray 2013). Moreover, new leaders were constrained in their ability to reform the military by the existing composition of the military inherited from previous recruitment policies. Specifically, officers who felt threatened by reforms could react violently and launch coups against governments before they had a chance to pacify the military (Harkness 2016, 594). This is not to say that political leaders were forced to continue previous policies. In certain cases, such as Kenya, new political leaders managed over time to completely change the composition of the military (N'Diaye 2002, 628). However, in other countries where new leaders had to deal with well-entrenched factions outside of their own, it is unlikely that they could have made such an overhaul of the army so as to assure that their loyalists completely dominated the institution. In such a situation, leaders had to rely on alternative techniques that counterbalanced the power of existing military factions which could not be removed from the military. In other words, the implementation of a given leader’s preferred coup-proofing policy is greatly constrained by existing military dynamics.

However, opposition mobilization changes the relationship between marginalized factions and the incumbent government. While years and decades of rivalries prevent agreement among rival marginalized factions, the mobilization of opposition is a clear signal that marginalized cliques can all see that the regime's stability is compromised and that these embittered military factions could, in an 'alliance' with opposition forces, topple the incumbent government (van de Walle 2006, 86-7; Lee 2009, 646). Opposition mobilization is thus a signal to non-loyalists that regime change is possible, even likely. Out-of-favour factions either defect, stop defending the regime, or go so far as to launch coups in an attempt to use the regime crisis as an opportunity to act on their grievances against the government. While mobilization may raise the possibility of regime instability, it is not a guarantee that marginalized military personnel will defect, as defection still depends on credible commitment, which I discuss below. Mobilization from below has two important effects as it (a) diminishes the relative power of the current government, and (b) provides a rallying point for disgruntled cliques and thus breaks barriers created through counterbalancing policies. However, this effect is determinant only when marginalized cliques can overpower loyalists. Thus, it has no effect on military behaviour in loyalist armies.

I thus hypothesize that (X_1) *the leader's survival strategy, specifically coup-proofing measures, influences military factions' willingness to preserve the status quo*. As stated earlier, I conceptualize two larger groupings of coup proofing strategies designed to (a) increase the power of loyalist elements, or (b) exacerbate divisions within military institutions. I theorize that: (a) *reliance on loyalists leads to an armed force with a powerful*

core that is loyal to the incumbent regime, largely opposed to reforms and willing to use repression; while (b) *the strategy of* counterbalancing *leads to the creation of military cliques that favour regime change as their military rivals are tied to the regime.*

2.1.2: Opposition forces and credible commitment

While counterbalancing policies create the possibility of defection, I argue that militaries in counterbalanced armies do not automatically defect as they are in an equilibrium of mistrust. Rather, the opposition coalition provides a rallying point for marginalized officers as the former group is not involved in their intramilitary rivalries. Specifically, I argue that opposition movements' provision of credible commitments explains the variations in their abilities to instigate military defection.

Why would officers side with the opposition forces? The members of the armed forces, as participants in an authoritarian regime that opposition forces are trying to replace, have vested interests in the current administration. Military officers' main priorities are the preservation of the privileges they have acquired throughout their careers and the maintenance of military autonomy (Finer 1975, 41). Even marginalized officers can profit from large military budgets and from the privileged position the armed forces occupies during the period of authoritarian rule. Furthermore, in cases such as Togo and Zaïre some military units served as thugs for the government (Monga 1997, 166; Snyder 1992, 380-3). Such units, in their mission to preserve the regime, become involved in human rights abuses (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 29). Members of these units and even the members

of the military institutions as a whole can thus fear that any change of leadership might imply criminal prosecutions.

Given the likelihood of vested interests rallying against regime change, opposition forces must provide certain guarantees, such as: limits to the scope and speed of political reforms; immunity from prosecution for past human rights abuses; and compensation for changes in military prerogatives (Barkey 1990, 171-2,76; Thiriot 2008, 25-6; Welch 1987, 199). Simply put, opposition forces must prove their willingness to moderate their demands and offer credible guarantees to the armed forces that these demands will not be denied during the political transition. As noted earlier, I define credible guarantees as an actor's ability to convince a second actor that he or she will honor his promises, even in the distant future (North & Weingast 1989, 804).

These kinds of compromises can in turn be facilitated by the presence of interlocutors who are able to convince the various opposition groups to accept the military-opposition deals and who can likewise convince military cliques of the seriousness of the opposition's propositions (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 40; Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 39). The presence of individuals among the opposition movement who share social ties with security personnel also reinforces the movement's ability to convince the security forces of the seriousness of their promises (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 39). Similarly, the presence, within the opposition, of individuals from the same ethnic background as military personnel serves as a signal that regime change will not result in an ethnic shuffle and purge of the armed forces (Harkness 2016, 598). Cohesive structures or unifying leadership in the opposition can prevent radical groups from rising and proposing more and more drastic

measures against the military (Lawrence 2010, 99). Furthermore, unified movements can constrain groups that would embrace more violent means of regime change – groups who might, through their use of coercive tools, thus become a challenger to the military (Pearlman 2012, 24). Unified movements should thus be able to constrain groups that, by denouncing the military or embracing violence, could pose a challenge to the military.

For the reasons stated above, my second hypothesis is that, in regimes with counterbalanced militaries, (X_2) *the ability of the opposition to influence the military's behaviour is determined by the provision of credible commitment – in this case the accommodation of military interests – which is a function of the degree of unity of the opposition forces, the integration of military representatives within the opposition's political structures, and the presence of kinship ties between members of the opposition and security forces*.

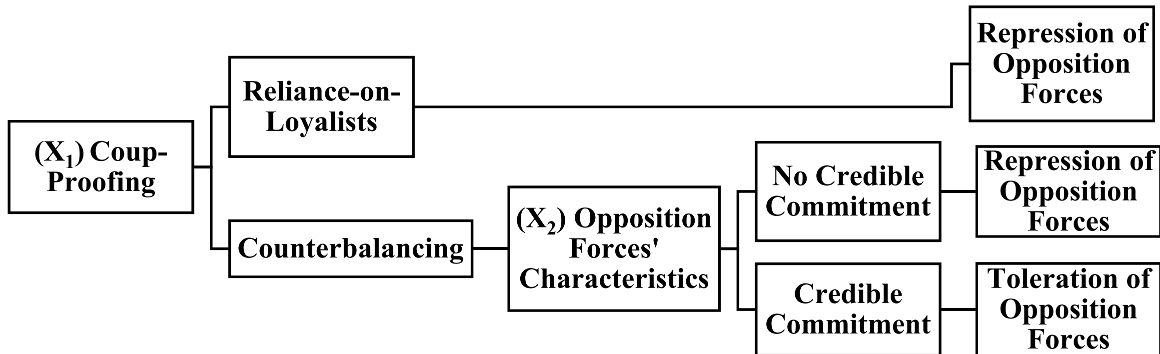
2.1.3 Summary of hypotheses and implications

In summary, this dissertation theorizes the factors which influence armed forces' decisions to tolerate or suppress opposition movements demanding political reforms which could lead to regime change. Addressing this question, I propose two hypotheses: first, that the standing leader's survival strategy (specifically coup-proofing measures) influences military factions' willingness to preserve the status quo: a strategy of reliance on loyalists within the armed forces would lead to such armed forces willing to use repression, as large segments of such loyalists perceive that their status and privileges are attached to the preservation of the incumbent regime. Second, an inverse strategy of counterbalanced, or

counterbalancing, would mean that loyalists do not dominate the armed forces. In such cases rival factions have been kept within the armed forces – factions which might come to believe that the status quo is not profitable to them. The use of a counterbalancing strategy thus opens the possibility that opposition forces might convince sufficient members of the army that regime change is not detrimental to their group interests.

Opposition characteristics do not matter in regimes with loyalist armies, as military loyalists' standing depends on the maintenance of the status quo. In other words, regime change is too much of a risk for loyalists to take. Only when out-of-favour cliques are still influential – in counterbalanced armies – is my second hypothesis relevant. In this context, the characteristics of the opposition forces influence the armed forces' willingness to tolerate the opposition's demands. The opposition must provide credible guarantees to the armed forces but these demands are only accepted if their leadership can show that the compromises will be enforced by all segments of the opposition forces. Both variables – an armed force which was the subject of counterbalancing policies, and a highly credible commitment capacity for the opposition forces – are what Mahoney refers to as individually necessary but insufficient conditions to explain regime change (2008, 418). So, to summarize: if *either* the regime relies on loyalists *or* the opposition has no credible commitment capacity, the armed forces will act to repress opposition.

Figure 3: Armed Forces' Actions in Relation to the Two Hypotheses



2.2: Research design

2.2.1: Comparative method

I draw on a case comparison in order to assess the validity of the hypotheses stated above. As Hall stated, "models of political behaviour that view outcomes as the product of long sequence of interactions among strategic actors often lend themselves less readily to testing by statistical methods" (2006, 308). Consequently, researchers have turned to small-N comparisons in order to grasp the impact of sequences of events and historical contexts. Small-N comparisons are seen as ideal for researchers who are interested in strategic interactions among various groups and, in the case of regime resilience studies, how such interactions ultimately explain the results of periods of high uncertainty (Hall 2006, 26).[11] By concentrating the analysis on a small number of cases, researchers can gather a large

[11] See, for instance Villalón & VonDoepp (2005); O'Donnell & Schmitter (1986); Gazibo (2005); Heilbrunn (1994).

amount of information on each case and grasp the effects of similarities or differences between cases (Dogan & Pelassy 1982, 129). Cases are selected in order to minimize the number of differences and find a variable, or group of variables, which would explain the variance on the dependent variable studied (Mahoney 2003, 342; Lijphart 1971, 687-8).

Such comparisons require the selection of two cases where information will be accessible and will share enough characteristics to validate the research (George & Bennett 2005, 159). Cases from the same region are potentially similar along many characteristics and thus can be chosen for such analysis (Dogan & Pelassy 1982, 130; Lijphart 1971, 688). It is, however, nearly impossible to find two perfectly identical cases; rather, such cases must have important similarities among the key variables studied in order to eliminate rival hypotheses. Still, any remaining important differences must be dealt with outside of the case-selection process; in this dissertation, I deal with these important differences by using a second method, process-tracing, in order to demonstrate the validity of my argumentation.

Considering the variables of this research, any preliminary selection required two cases where there was a regime crisis ignited or exacerbated by opposition mobilization, and where the military intervened in the process – in one case, in favour of the opposition, and in one case repressing the opposition movement.[12]

[12] A military decision to stand aside, such as in Serbia in 2000 and Ukraine in 2004, has the same result as supporting the opposition forces: the authoritarian government, deprived of its ability to use force to reinforce its dominance, is weakened and pushed to negotiate.

Bratton and van de Walle identified thirteen cases in Africa of military intervention between 1989 and 1994 in countries going through political transitions: Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo. and Zaïre (1997, 211). In seven of these cases, military action was in support of regime change, while in the six remaining cases the army crushed demands for regime change. I selected one case from each category: Benin – a case of military intervention in favour of regime change – and Togo – a case of military intervention in favour of the standing regime. Both cases have been, furthermore, used as comparisons by many researchers who attempted to understand differences in their political transition process (Seely 2005; Heilbrunn 1993; Nwajiaku 1994; Houngnikpo 2000).

2.2.1.1: Similarities and differences between Benin and Togo

In comparisons, there is a logic of elimination as independent variables present in both cases are eliminated as they do not explain the "variance in the outcome (dependent variable)" (George & Bennett 2005, 156). I elaborate on these similarities that I control for before I look at key differences and explain how I deal with the rival hypotheses they might suggest. These similarities did play an important role in the evolution of both states, but cannot explain the divergent outcome studied in this dissertation. In Chapter 3, which gives the background to the two cases, I will explore the similarities and differences between them in greater detail, starting with the similarities.

Benin and Togo are two neighbouring states in West Africa. They have a similar population size (10 million inhabitants in Benin and 7.5 million inhabitants in Togo), and

overall level of development (in nominal GDP per capita in US dollars, Benin stands at $745 and Togo at $610). Both countries experienced large-scale opposition movements against authoritarian regimes in the late 1980s and early 1990s which resulted in National Conferences. These National Conferences had very different outcomes, resulting in regime change in Benin but not in Togo.

Both states were challenged by important ethno-regional divisions. In Benin, two centralized kingdoms dominated the southern part of the country. Togo's southern groups were not organized in unified kingdoms as Ewe and Mina tribes were only loosely politically associated. Diverse groups had settled the north of both countries, mostly as they fled slave kingdoms and regional empires (Heilbrunn 1994, 58-9). In both territories, European development projects favoured southern regions with little (if any) infrastructure being built in northern territories prior to independence. This uneven development greatly affected the economic opportunities of northern populations (Decalo 1973b, 451; 1973a, 63). By independence in 1960, both countries faced regional tensions as northern groups felt marginalized vis-à-vis dominant southern groups, particularly the Fon in Benin and the Ewe in Togo. The key difference, as I argue below, was that in Togo, northerners dominated the military, thus allowing them a path to dominance.

Both states had similar regime structures at the time of their respective crises. Both states had leaders who initially came from military ranks. These military strongmen, after they removed their most important civilian and military rivals, set upon building single-

party regimes.[13] In Benin, the *Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin* (PRPB) was established as the sole legal party of the country in 1975. In Togo, the *Rassemblement du peuple togolais* (RPT) became the sole legal political party in 1969. Furthermore, Benin and Togo's societies were reorganized as official associations took the place of all independent groups (Heilbrunn 1993, 283-4).

However, Benin and Togo clearly differed in regards to military behaviour during their regime crises, as Togo's armed forces stopped the reform process while their Beninese counterparts did not (Houngnikpo 2000). While Seely's analysis focused on bargaining among domestic and international actors, Gisselquist, in her review of Seely's research, concluded that:

> a rereading of the data presented in Seely's detailed study highlights an additional explanation, […] namely the position of the army. Although both the Beninese and Togolese armies were relatively 'strong' actors, according to Seely, the Togolese army was firmly in favour of maintaining the status quo, while the Beninese army was more open to reform, that is, open to a change in government, in the period just prior to Benin's National Conference (2008, 804; Seely 2001, 79. 137).

This variation is at the center of my dissertation as I want to explain this divergence in military behaviour.

Second, there were differences in the military recruitment policies of both countries. Before independence, Benin and Togo were both under the control of French administrators as Benin was part of the colonial network known as *Afrique-occidentale française* (AOF) while Togo was a United Nations Trusteeship administered by France

[13] In the period between independence and the end of the Cold War Benin had more attempted coups [8] than did Togo [2] (Powell & Thyne 2011).

(Banégas 1995; Decalo 1996, 72-3). French recruitment practices were not the same in both countries. In Togo there was a ban on direct recruitment of security personnel, whereas recruitment offices in Dahomey (Benin's name prior to 1975) recruited Northerners – particularly Kabyes – into the colonial forces. This difference set the stage for the variation in military coup-prevention policies that I analyze in Chapters 4 and 5.

There were deep differences between the opposition movements in each state. Benin's opposition forces were more unified compared to their Togolese counterparts (Heilbrunn 1993, 298). Each movement looked differently upon the possibility of integrating regime representatives into new transitional institutions. In Benin there was a willingness among the opposition leadership to integrate regime representatives into the transitionary institutions, while in Togo there was a clear attempt to push all regime dignitaries and their allies out of the political sphere (Seely 2005, 358). In Benin, therefore, I expect the opposition to have had a much greater ability to make credible commitments which, again, I argue is important to military defection.

There are other differences between the cases. France was the main foreign patron of both regimes but historically had favoured Togo. When Benin's government adopted a Marxist-Leninist ideology, there developed an important rift in relations between Benin and France. In contrast, the RPT regime was pro-Western and seen as an anti-communist bulwark in the region. Western countries, particularly France, helped the Togolese regime throughout the Cold War. Thus, French favoritism could have reinforced the RPT hold on its own army as they provided resources to keep the military loyal and insulated the Togolese regime from international pressure.

Fifth, there were differences in the economic resources available to the regimes during the regime crises. Both regimes faced economic crisis by the end of the 1980s and had implemented austerity measures in order to secure financial aid. However, thanks to its phosphate industry, the RPT government could secure loans – in exchange for the implementation of Structural Adjustments – that enabled the regime to maintain parts of its patronage networks and its security budgets. In other words, the Togolese regime had more funds to use to keep the military under its control than did its Beninese counterpart, a relevant factor because there is a strong possibility that military personnel will defect when they are unpaid.

I cannot reject out of hand the possibility that the last two differences point to alternative explanations for the outcomes. In Chapter 6, I analyze how differences in the relationship of each state to their main foreign patron, as well as differences in the availability of economic resources influenced military behaviour. In that chapter I also conclude that while the economic situation did influence the ignition of the regime crises and the two governments' ability to contain military grievances, it did not determine the military responses during these crises, as coup-prevention techniques influenced the strength of the one group (loyalists) who would back the regime no matter what – even when their wages were not paid on time over extended periods. In other words, coup-prevention techniques shaped a regime's relative vulnerability to economic downturns. Also, while France had been historically on better terms with the Togolese regime, the situation had been reversed in the years preceding the regime crisis as the Socialist government of François Mitterrand after 1981 had been more sympathetic to Benin's

Marxist-Leninist regime. Since independence France provided aid to both regimes, which helped to pay for military expenditures, and also pressured both regimes to democratize. French pressures towards regime reform/change were thus relatively equal between the two regimes.

2.2.2: Process-tracing

The comparative method has some flaws. The identification of differences in the combination of some variables does not necessarily indicate causation, as deviations on the studied variable can be caused by a third unidentified variable (known as spurious relation) or be caused purely by a conjectural situation, or solely be the result of a selection bias (Mahoney 2003, 363; George & Bennett 2005, 158; Geddes 1990). In order to compensate for these weaknesses, the comparison can be supplemented with additional research methods, such as regression analysis, fuzzy-sets, or process-tracing (George & Bennett 2005, 158).[14] Here, I combine the comparative method with process tracing.

Process tracing is a technique by which the researcher attempts to "[identify all] steps in a causal process leading to the outcome of a given dependent variable of a particular case in a particular historical context" (Vennesson 2008, 231). Such a methodological design is particularly useful as a complement to a cross-case comparison as it is difficult to eliminate the possibility of a spurious relationship by comparing a small number of cases (Mahoney 2003, 364; Hall 2006, 314). As potential causal mechanisms

[14] For examples of such combination of methods, see Dunning (2008); Chenoweth & Stephan (2011); Collier & Collier (1991).

are tested using process tracing, the researcher can validate the potential relationship that a cross-case comparison identifies (George & Bennett 2005, 215).

I use one of the three types of process-tracing conceptualized by Beach and Petersen, namely Theory-Testing Process-Tracing. The ultimate goal of this method is to test the validity of a hypothesized link between the independent and the dependent variables. In theory-testing process-tracing, we know both about the independent and the dependent variables and we already have some knowledge of a plausible causal mechanism through observable events or through existing theories (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 14). In the two cases studied here, we know the behaviour of the military – they sided with the opposition in Benin and with the regime in Togo. We are also aware of differences in military policies and opposition characteristics in the two countries. For instance, previous studies have noted that Togo's armed forces were dominated by Kabyes, while Benin's armed forces were highly divided ethnically (Toulabor 2005, 4; Levitsky & Way 2010, 292). Past work also noted how the relative unity of opposition differed between the two cases (Seely 2005; Heilbrunn 1993). The existing literature was used to develop an argument explaining the link between coup-prevention techniques, opposition characteristics, and military actions during regime crises. Process-tracing allows the linkage of these observations to coherent explanation as I integrate into the predicted causal chain the two independent variables (coup-prevention techniques and opposition characteristics) and the outcome (military actions during regime crises).

In order to test the validity of my argument, I develop causal mechanisms linking all three variables together. Causal mechanism are "a set of interacting parts – an assembly

of elements producing an effect not inherent in any one of them" (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 29). Each part – referred to as 'n' in the two causal mechanisms below – is necessary to explain the validity of the overall mechanism (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 30). All mechanisms are linked as they are triggered by the previous event in the process and activate the next event. This requires us to understand every step linking the potential variables in order to fully explain the relationship in which X contributes to producing the outcome of interest Y. This implies that, for a relationship to be confirmed, all elements in the causal chain must be: (a) identified; and (b) tested independently. Therefore, evidence must be gathered to demonstrate the presence or absence of the observable manifestation of each mechanism (Hall 2006, 28). If any element of the chain is not confirmed, then the entire causal chain is rejected (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 30).

In building a plausible causal mechanism using theory-testing process-tracing, a researcher must conceptualize the causal mechanism between the independent and dependent variables based on existing theories. While process tracing usually applies to case studies, in this case it is applied to a binary comparison. Therefore, I built two different causal mechanisms – one that explains military tolerance of the opposition and one that explains military repression of the opposition.

For my first causal mechanism, I link (X_1) armies subjected to counterbalancing techniques and (X_2) the provision of credible commitment by opposition forces to (Y) the armed forces' toleration of opposition mobilization. There should be (n_1) many out-of-favour military cliques in counterbalanced armies as the goal of counterbalancing is to foster divisions in order to prevent any coordinated actions against the regime (Pilster &

Böhmelt 2011, 5). Second, (X_2) the opposition forces must then provide some credible guarantees to military personnel that their interests, both individual and corporate, will be respected by any new political regime (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986, 40). The provision of credible commitment is defined both by offers of reforms that accommodate military interests and the belief among military personnel that opposition leaders will respect these promises. The provision of these guarantees should convince marginalized officers and soldiers to side with the opposition, leading to (Y) the toleration of opposition mobilization, as either a clear majority of officers side with the opposition or the army is paralyzed by the divisions between pro-opposition and pro-regime cliques and thus remains neutral in order to avoid intramilitary fighting (Geddes 1999, 126).

My second causal mechanism links (X_1) the creation of a loyalist army to (Y) the repression of opposition movement by military personnel. Specifically, through the creation of unified armed forces (n_1) there is no non-loyal faction among the army as officers of dubious loyalty were either pushed out or put into positions where they lacked any power to influence the armed forces' behaviour. This strategy also implies that most of the personnel in the armed forces owe their position to the goodwill of the autocrat and they are unlikely to keep their position if there is any change in the state's political leadership (Bratton & van de Walle 1994, 464). Because the fate of military personnel in such armies is tied to the maintenance of the current regime, such personnel is unlikely to be swayed by the promises of other political factions and are thus likely (Y) to repress any demand for regime change.

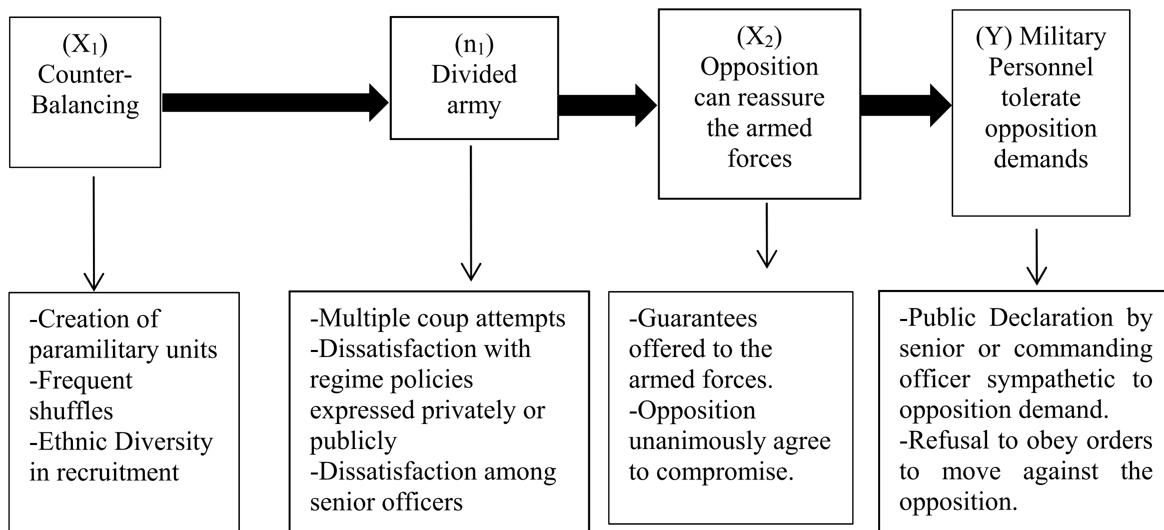
I have laid out the key mechanisms in theoretical terms. I now specify the evidence needed to demonstrate each link (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 14). Because I link the implementation of (X_1) counterbalancing strategies and (X_2) an opposition movement willing to provide credible guarantees to the military to (Y) the toleration of opposition mobilization by military personnel in my first causal mechanism, I need data on X_1 and X_2. Previous work identifies two particular counterbalancing strategies (X1): the creation of paramilitary forces (Brooks 1998, 36-8; Powell 2012, 20-1) and frequent command shuffles (Brooks 1998, 9; Bethke 2011, 2). I add a third technique which is recruitment and promotion across ethnic groups, in reaction to the work on ethnic recruitment and military coups that points out how different groups integrated into the army can become rivals for the control of the military institution (Horowitz 1985, 272-3). Accordingly, by integrating many ethnic groups within the armed forces, autocrats can try to play these groups against one another.

For (n_1) the presence of heightened division within the armed forces, I look for signs of dissatisfaction among senior officers, such as public or private discourse denouncing the regime or its policies (Przeworski 1986, 56) or involvement in coup-attempts against the regime. Coup-attempts can demonstrate dissatisfaction against the standing government or an attempt to use political dominance to overpower military rivals (Thyne & Powell 2016, 199).

Next, (X_2) the opposition forces must demonstrate their willingness to respect military interests. This requires the provision of certain minimal guarantees, such as general amnesty for human rights violations committed during the rule of the previous

regime, budgetary guarantees, or certain promises of reform demanded by officers (Barkey 1990, 171-2,76; Thiriot 2008, 25-6; Welch 1987, 199). These promises can be made through the official proposals of different civil society groups, or in resolutions passed during political meetings. At the same time, there must be tangible signs that such promises will not be broken once the opposition is in power and thus that the opposition is unified and in agreement about their promises to the military. This requires the absence of declarations by important opposition leaders against such deals. Finally (Y) we look for signs that military personnel tolerate opposition demands, through public declarations of support from senior or command officers, and refusal by commanding or senior officers to order troops to move against the opposition (Oberschall 1996, 100). These indicators generate the stylized model of Figure 4 for Benin.

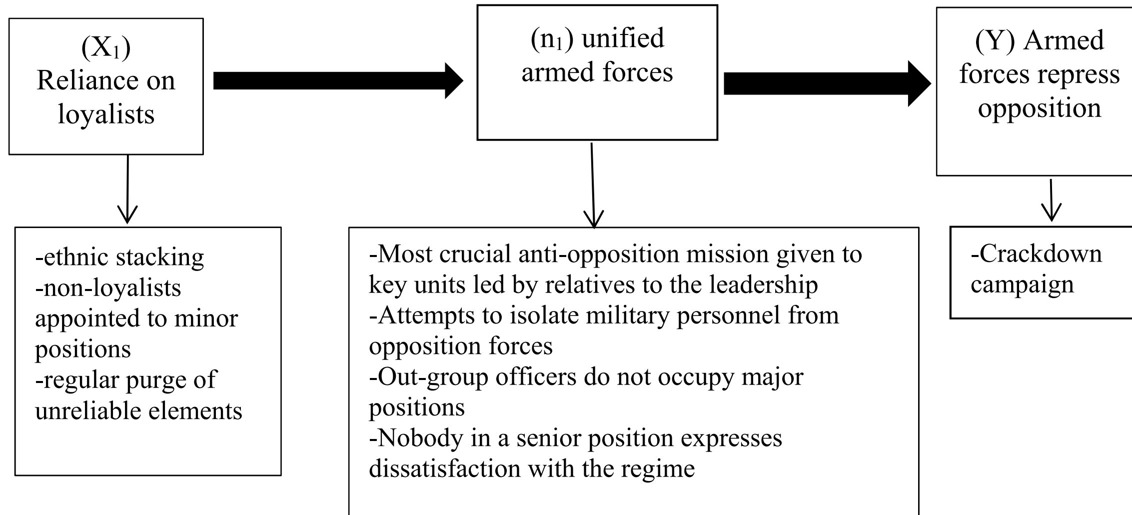
Figure 4: Benin's Causal Mechanism[15]



[15] For every causal chain, the top part indicates the variables and the causal mechanism while the bottom part indicates the observable manifestation of the said-mechanism or variables (Beach & Pedersen 2012, 35-7).

For my second causal mechanism, I link (X_1) reliance on loyalists to (Y) the military willingness to repress the opposition movement. Where X_1 is reliance on loyalists, the creation of loyal armies is the result of autocrats' tendencies to exploit family, ethnic, religious or ideological ties in order select personnel from groups that are less likely to stage a coup (Pilster & Böhmelt 2011, 5). This usually takes the form of one or two ethnic groups dominating the officer corps or elite units such as the presidential guard (Harkness 2016). Military personnel from less reliable groups should be either put into minor positions, or fully removed from the military institution (Brooks 1998, 35). In other words, we should see the selection of military personnel from specific groups while other groups are purged from the army. As the army should be loyal to the regime, (n_1) we should find family members at the head of elite units critical for the regime's survival, no out-group officers occupying major positions, and nobody in a senior position expressing dissatisfaction with the regime (Brooks 1998, 33). There should be, furthermore, public declarations in support of the regime by military officials, minor officers and even rank-and-files soldiers (Przeworski 1986, 56). Note that I theorize that loyalist armies are unaffected by the opposition forces' willingness to come to terms with the military and also that loyalist armed forces are sufficient to bring about repression. For this reason, I do not integrate my second independent variable (X_2) in this causal mechanism. Finally, (Y) when the armed forces are willing to repress the opposition movement, orders to do so should be rapidly respected by troops. We could probably also find cases where loyalist military launch anti-opposition operations even if they are not given a specific order to do so. These indicators generate the stylized model of Figure 5 for Togo.

Figure 5: Togo's Causal Mechanism



2.3: Data collection

2.3.1: Fieldwork

I proceeded in two rounds of fieldwork, between January and March 2013 and in November and December 2013. During my first round, I was mostly based in Cotonou, Benin. During my second trip, I stayed in Lomé, Togo, to complete my interviews there. From the start, it should be noted that Benin and Togo's political environments are quite different. In Togo, the regime can be qualified as authoritarian. While certain individuals, especially those close to the regime, regularly maintained that Togo is now a democracy, the country remains politically closed. Consequently, access to data from regime sources – specifically, access to military personnel – is still problematic today. Despite various attempts, no military officer was willing to participate in my research. The country's opposition parties and civil society are somewhat vibrant even if in the last few years the opposition's movement has entered a more dormant phase. For these reasons, most

interviews were conducted with members of opposition parties, professors, journalists and civil society members who were active in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In Benin, access to data was not problematic. Benin is qualified as democratic by most analyses of political regimes (Levitsky & Way 2010, 296-7). Through the Canadian consulate in Cotonou and the *Université Abomey-Calavi*, I got in touch with a number of ex-*Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin* (PRPB) dignitaries and military officers who agreed to answer my questions. These interviews were complemented by interviews of former regime opponents, members of other state institutions, and professors.

Overall, thirty-four interviews were conducted over the course of the two rounds of fieldwork. Sixteen interviews concerned the case of Togo and eighteen the Beninese case. Most individuals asked for anonymity. Most of their names will not appear in this dissertation. However, four interviewees gave me permission to use their names: Jean Yaovi Degli, Robert Dossou, Theodore Holo and Victor Topanou.

2.5.1.1: Semi-structured interviews

In order to get individual observers and participants' opinions, I used semi-structured interviews. Such interviews are designed:

> to have a number of interviewer questions prepared in advance but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way (Wengraf 2001, 8).

In other words, as the interviewees' answers cannot be predicted and will guide any following questions, the researcher must be ready to improvise questions during the

meeting. This method leaves the researcher at the mercy of the interviewee's subjective analysis of the facts, but as my aim was also to discover the individual's own perception of the facts, perception issues were not a significant drawback (Wengraf 2001, 11).[16] Furthermore, as the literature on military response to regime crises does not fully explain the reasons behind military actions in such contexts, it was critical to leave the possibility for the interviewee to hint at new paths of interpretation. The interview questions can be divided into four large categories: (1) origin and career, (2) evolution of civil-military relations from independence to the 1990s, (3) perception of the origin of the regime crisis, and (4) armed forces' perception and reception of opposition demands.[17]

2.3.2: Document analysis

While interviews were at the core of my research, there were limits to the information I could gather because of the limited number of interviews, my lack of access to security personnel in Togo, and also because interviewees do not have perfect or unbiased memories of past events. For these reasons, alongside the semi-structured interviews I gathered data from newspapers, academic writings and biographies covering the history of Benin and Togo between 1960 and 1994. I looked specifically for any data about the coup-proofing methods used by the Beninese and Togolese governments, as well as data regarding opposition traits. Additional evidence was also gained through analysis of newspaper articles, books as well as biographies of key political actors. Information

[16] For instance, officers' perceptions of the opposition's demands are key to the verification of my second hypothesis.
[17] One individual, Professor Topanou, was interviewed for his knowledge of both Benin and Togo.

gathered through this documentary analysis was then contrasted with the interviewee testimony in order to paint a more balanced portrait of the events.

2.4 Conclusions

Military actions during periods where a country's authoritarian regime is challenged by popular protests greatly limit the possible actions of the incumbent regime as the refusal of the armed forces to repress the opposition greatly reduces the regime's ability to maintain the status quo. I theorize that the leader's survival strategy, specifically coup-proofing measures, will greatly influence military factions' willingness to preserve the status quo. The opposition forces' provision of credible commitment in turn influences the decisions of out-of-favour factions. In other words, opposition characteristics should only have an effect on military members where coup-prevention techniques led to the formation of relatively powerful marginalized cliques within the armed forces.

To analyze the validity of these two hypotheses, Benin and Togo were selected due to their cultural, historical, and political similarities. Two important differences, relationship to France and economic resources, cannot be rejected without further analysis, which will be provided in Chapter 6. Through Theory-Testing Process-Tracing, I establish every step in this relationship and follow how my two independent variables are causing my dependent variables. Namely, I explain how in Benin the military's decision to support demands for regime change was linked to the counterbalancing strategy put in place by the PRPB government and by the willingness of the opposition movement to accommodate military interests. In Togo, I explain how the decision by President Eyadéma and the RPT

to implement a strategy of reliance on loyalists within the army assured them of the military's willingness to repress the opposition movement.

This chapter has only provided a rudimentary analysis of the two cases. In order to further validate the selection of these cases, both the causes and the evolution of the regime crises in Benin and Togo in will be described in Chapter 3. I then test my two hypotheses in Benin and Togo, in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

Chapter 3: Regime Crises in Benin and Togo

In this chapter, I set the stage for the analysis to come. Accordingly, I provide crucial background to the historical evolution of the two states and their regime crises. In the two cases, the pre-crisis eras were marked by important ethno-regional divides and civil-military tensions that led to the establishment of military regimes less than fifteen years after independence. These military regimes, although ideologically different, would be weakened by long-term economic crises and foreign pressures to liberalize. Thus weakened, the authoritarian regimes could no longer prevent the mobilization of opposition and their demands for major political and economic reforms. After both countries held National Conferences, there came an important divergence between their political trajectories, with regime change in Benin but not Togo.

Through my analysis I also eliminate alternative explanations for the divergence in military behaviour, such as European domination or ethno-regional division. These factors played an important role in the ignition of the two regime crises, but they do not explain the variation in military behaviour.

In section 3.1, I analyze the pre-crisis eras in order to understand the important ethno-regional tensions that would shape the two countries after independence. In section 3.2, I turn to the two major factors behind the regime crises that hit both countries at the end of the 1980s, namely: economic turmoil and opposition mobilization. In section 3.3, I look at the National Conference and transitional government period in order

to establish how each case took a different trajectory during that period. Finally, in section 3.4, I look at the role played by foreign actors in these two regime crises.

3.1: The pre-crisis eras[18]

In Benin, two centralized kingdoms – situated around Abomey and Porto-Novo – dominated the southern part of the country between the 16th century and the end of the 19th century. Slowly, most groups from the south were integrated into these two kingdoms, to the point that most groups became identified with one of two dominant groups – Fons or Yorubas (Heilbrunn 1994, 49-50). Similarly, in Togo two groups – Ewe and Minas – dominated the southern regions. However, these groups did not form unified kingdoms and were separated from their northern neighbours. Diverse groups – Kabyes, Baribas, Sombas, Kotokolis – had settled the north of both countries, mostly as they fled slave kingdoms and the regional empires (Heilbrunn 1994, 58-9). These different tribes thus had little to do with one another before Europeans conquered the region.

In Benin, each kingdom was composed of distinct identity groups: the Abomey kingdom was populated by Fons (25% of the population of Benin in the 1990s), Adjas (6%), and Aizos (5%); the Porto-Novo Kingdom was populated by Goun (11%) and Yorubas (12%); finally, the northern kingdoms were mostly populated by Sombas (4%), Fulanis (6%), and Baribas (12%). Starting in 1890, these various kingdoms were annexed by France, first with the coastal city of Cotonou. This city would later become the economic

[18] The analysis in this section provides only a shortened version of the pre-1980s history of Benin and Togo. I refer the readers to John Heilbrunn's Ph.D. dissertation (1994) for a more detailed account.

and political hub of the country. After Cotonou, France launched a four-year war with the Abomey kingdom. By 1900 France dominated all the kingdoms that would be integrated into Benin. However, it would take another twenty years for French colonial forces to fully pacify the territory.

Togo's southern region is populated by the Ewe-speakers – which includes southern groups like the Adjas, the Minas and the Ewes – who made up about 43% of the population of Togo in the 1990s. North of the Togo mountains, also known as the Atakora Mountains, the region is inhabited by the Tem-Kabye speakers – northern groups like the Lambas, the Kabyes, the Lossos and the Kotokolis – who represent 30% of the population. The region at the far-north of the country, near the Burkina Faso border, is inhabited by the Bassars, the Konkombas, the Mobas and the Natsambas (Cornevin 1987, 361; Brown 1983, 433). Germany began the colonization of Togo in 1884 (Heilbrunn 1994, 123). It conquered the northern regions of Togoland in a series of military expeditions launched between 1888 and 1897. Togoland was divided as part of the Milner-Simon Treaty that established British Togoland and French Togo. Despite many attempts by Ewe elites to reunify both halves of the former colony, in 1956 western Togo voted in a referendum in favour of being fully integrated into Ghana. The eastern half became Togo.

In both territories, development projects favoured the southern regions, with little (if any) infrastructure built in the northern territories. This uneven development greatly affected the economic opportunities of northern populations. Decalo, for instance, concluded that by 1967 there was a 77% disparity in school attendance between Cotonou in the south of Benin and Tanguieta in the North (1973b, 451). Similar discrepancies were

found in Togo (Decalo 1973a, 63). By independence, the south of both states was far more developed and organized than the north. Southern groups dominated the economic and political spheres of society in both cases, although not the military. In Benin, French officials recruited northern tribes for the rank-and-file, but Fons – the dominant group in the former Abomey kingdom – were selected as officers (Decalo 1998, 6). In Togo, individuals from northern tribes – particularly Kabyes – represented the quasi-totality of Togolese in the French security forces (Cornevin 1968, 68; Heilbrunn 1994, 394). These north-south divides had important implications for the military and political evolution of both states, as northern groups resented both the European favoritism towards the south and remembered that they had been subjected to slavery by southern kingdoms. These divisions would be a source of military tension and be among the factors explaining military coups in the first decades after independence.[19]

In both cases the first decade after independence was marred by political turmoil. In Benin, three political forces rose to pre-eminence in the 1950s, namely: Justin Ahomadegbe and the *Union démocratique dahoméenne* (UDD) in the former Abomey kingdom; Sourou-Migan Apithy and the *Parti des nationalistes du Dahomey* (PND) in the former Porto-Novo kingdom; and Hubert Maga's *Rassemblement démocratique dahoméen* (RDD) in the North/Nikki Kingdoms. Hubert Maga was President of the *République du Dahomey* (Benin's name at the time) from 1960 to 1963 and again from 1970 to 1972, while Sourou-Migan Apithy was President the Dahomean Republic between 1963 and1965

[19] There was also a south-south tension between Fons and Yorubas, but there were almost no Yorubas in the army before the 1970s (Horowitz 1985, 545).

and again in 1972. Justin Ahomadegbe, while an important political actor, was never made president.[20] These political groups attempted to deny political offices to their rivals and create client networks among the political, economic and military elites of the country (Decalo 1973b, 457-458).

In Togo, a political party called the *Comité de l'unité togolaise* (CUT), headed by Sylvanus Olympio, monopolized the political sphere between 1958 and 1963 (Kitchen 1963, 7; Tète 1998, 15-8). Olympio and his associates harassed their political rivals and ultimately banned other political parties as of January 1962 (Decalo 1979, 106; Heilbrunn 2005, 20).[21] When the *Union des chefs et populations du Nord* (UCPN) – the northern political party – was expelled from the political sphere, northern military personnel became the stewards of northern interests and north-south conflicts took a more violent turn (Horowitz 1985, 486).

Two military strongmen emerged after a first period of military intervention and would dominate their respective countries: Étienne Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who became president of Togo in 1967, and Mathieu Kérékou, who became president of Benin in 1972. While Benin was officially Marxist-Leninist, this ideology was never seriously implemented, to the point that it became known as "Laxist-Beninism" (Banégas 2003, 44). The Beninese elites attempted to use this ideology to find support – both financial and

[20] Between 1965 and 1970 the country was ruled by two military autocrats (Christophe Soglo and Alphonse Alley), one appointed civilian (Émile Zinsou), and one military directorate.
[21] The main rivals were the *Parti togolais du progrès* (PTP) and the *Union des chefs et populations du Nord* (UCPN). Their leaders, Antoine Meatchi (UCPN) and Nicolas Grunitsky (PTP), were in exile. After 1962 even the *Mouvement de la jeunesse Togolaise (*Juvento), an ally of the CUT, was subjected to the campaign of harassment.

political – from China and the USSR. However, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, China and the USSR provided little funding or political support to Benin's regime. Furthermore, a merchant class still thrived in Benin under the Marxist-Leninist regime.[22] These military strongmen, after they removed their most important civilian and military rivals, set up to build single-party regimes – the *Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin* (PRPB) and the *Rassemblement du peuple togolais* (RPT).[23] Afterwards, all independent political, economic and social groups were either banned or coopted into new official organizations. In Togo, all student groups were merged into the *Mouvement national des étudiants et stagiaires togolais* (MONESTO) while all workers were integrated into the *Confédération nationale des travailleurs togolais* (CNTT). In Benin, all workers were integrated into the *Union nationale des syndicats des travailleurs du Bénin* (UNSTB) (Heilbrunn 1993, 283-4). The only exceptions to this social engineering were the merchant groups who remained autonomous in both states due to their political influence and the importance of their revenues to the regimes' survival. Political supporters – including military officers – were rewarded with positions in new nationalized industries and in the ever-increasing bureaucracy (Heilbrunn 1993, 281-2). However, these highly controlled state apparatuses would be shaken by economic turmoil and the diminishing revenues that would accompany them.

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[22] I return to the question of Marxism-Leninism and how it was used as a mean to co-opt certain social groups into the regime in the next chapter.

[23] While there were elections after these parties were established, only party-nominee or independent candidates were allowed to run– other parties were barred from the electoral process.

3.2: The factors behind the regime crises

3.2.1: Economic structures and long-term recessions

Benin's economy was heavily reliant on two sectors: its agricultural industry, particularly its cotton production, which represented more than a third of its Gross Domestic Product and its import-export network with Nigeria (Gisselquist 2008, 795-6). Around 55% of all government revenues came from taxation of imports across the Nigerian border (Banégas 2003, 74-5). Togo has similar economic sectors. As Steinholtz reported, "the port of Lomé's real *raison d'être* is to serve as an entrepôt for the smuggling of manufactured goods" (1985, 30). There were also major plantations in the south of the country, mostly of coffee and cocoa (Decalo 1990, 209). However, an important difference between the countries is the presence of a phosphate industry in Togo (Heilbrunn 1997, 225). At its peak in the early 1980s, Togo sold three million tons of phosphate a year, which represented 40 percent of the country's export (Kazadi 1981, 40).[24]

Both regimes relied on these export revenues to consolidate their control. Presidents Eyadéma and Kérékou followed similar patterns of neopatrimonialism and used state resources to buy off their supporters and co-opt potential opponents (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 65-7). Both used their growing state revenues to launch development projects and increase the size of the state bureaucracies. In Benin, the number of civil servants in fact nearly doubled under PRPB rule, and more than 47,000 individuals were employed within Benin's civil service (Heilbrunn 1993, 281; Allen 1992b, 46). Togo's civil service

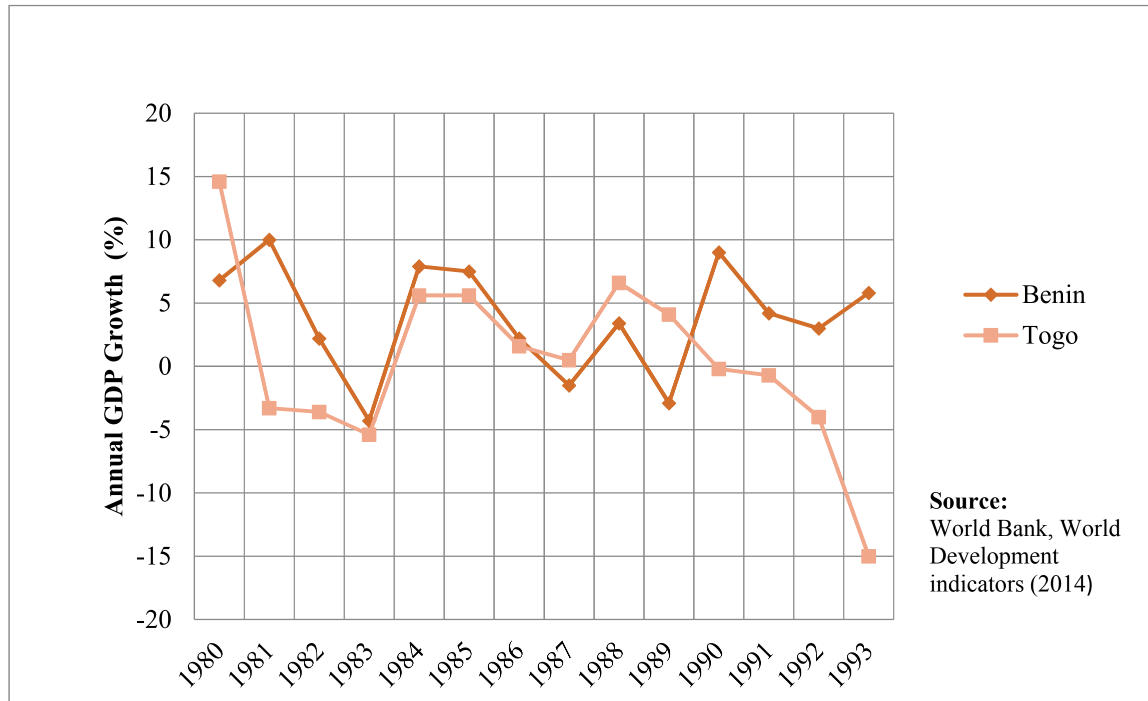
[24] While Benin did exploit an oil field in the period, its revenues were minimal compared to the size of Togo's phosphate industry.

wages represented more than 50% of the government budget (Decalo 1990, 211). This allowed the formation of relatively important middle classes that occupied positions in the civil service, parastatal corporations, or were involved in smuggling networks (Heilbrunn 1997, 227; Magnusson & Clark 2005, 574).

In both states this capture of state resources was accompanied by cronyism. Both regimes had formed parastatal corporations and nationalized key industries, with the exception of trade networks, which remained autonomous. These state corporations' resources were diverted by officials on numerous occasions. In 1987, Togo's *Caisse Nationale du Crédit Agricole* closed as its employees embezzled most of its funds (Heilbrunn 1997, 227). By 1987, most of Benin's State Owned Enterprises were bankrupt. In 1989, an internal inquiry revealed that Benin's three main banks – including Benin's *Caisse Nationale du Crédit Agricole* – were running out of currency as employees, businessmen and state officials were guilty of embezzlement (Seely 2001, 90).

Togo's regime continued to commit itself to large infrastructure projects even after the end of the phosphate boom in 1976. By 1984, the external debt of the country accounted for 1 billion US dollars, more than 135% of all government revenues (Heilbrunn 1997, 276; Steinholtz 1985, 29). In 1986, Benin also reached an external debt of 1 billion US dollars (Allen 1992b, 45). There were important drops in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of both countries during the 1980s (Gisselquist 2008, 791).

Figure 6: GDP Growth Per Year in Benin and Togo



As their debt increased, the revenues of both countries began to decrease significantly. Both regimes were affected by the economic crises in neighbouring Ghana and Nigeria, as well as by tightening border controls (Steinholtz 1985, 30; Heilbrunn 1993, 281). There was an important drop in cotton production in Benin as a direct result of competition from neighbouring countries and failures of parastatal corporations (Houngnikpo 1999, 82). Revenues from Togo's main exports – phosphate, cocoa and coffee – also plummeted during this period (Decalo 1990, 210). The decline in GDP growth after 1986 (shown in Figure 6) also affected the revenue streams of both regimes, particularly as key industries were nationalized in both countries.

Faced with major budgetary deficits, both regimes had no choice but to implement austerity measures. Starting in 1987, Benin began to privatize its parastatal corporations and to freeze government employees' wages (Houngnikpo 1999, 84). By 1988, Togo had already sold thirty state companies and had frozen civil servant wages as well (Seely 2001, 85). The sales of state corporations did help Togo to continue to pay its civil servants (Seely 2001, 86). However, government cutbacks worsened the economic conditions of many citizens who were already affected by the economic crisis.

When these cutbacks failed to bring balanced budgets, both governments had to rely on foreign loans. These loans managed to isolate the merchant and professional middle class in Lomé from the worst effects of the economic crisis as the RPT regime could maintain some of its patronage networks (Heilbrunn 1997, 227). In order to secure more funds, the regime in Togo had to agree in the early 1980s to massive privatization of its state corporations, except for the phosphate industry, and strict fiscal austerity imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By 1991, as Heilbrunn mentions, the regime had just passed through its fourth Structural Adjustment Credit (SACs) (1993, 281). During this period the Kabye-dominated army could still benefit from the government funds secured through these SACs. The regime could in fact be selective among its distribution of favours and cuts among military units. When the regime had, in its fourth round of structural adjustments, made cutbacks in military expenditures, units in Lomé were not affected as they were key to the regime's survival (Heilbrunn 1997, 244). In fact, the presence of the national phosphate industry made it easier for Togo to secure loans than Benin. However, the regime only used available resources to maintain its patronage

networks and began to abandon other sectors of Togo's society (Heilbrunn 1993, 283). Benin, meanwhile, relied first on a French loan in 1985 and then on IMF stabilization loans in 1987. The funds in Benin were insufficient to deal with the significant financial weight of civil service wages. In 1989, the PRPB government announced major wage cuts and the privatization of state corporations as prerequisites to secure a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). The salary cutbacks began to eat away at regime support among both civilian and military personnel.

While the economic crisis was more drastic in Benin than in Togo, it led to regime crises in both cases. The lack of funds to maintain their political hegemony meant that both regimes left vacant space for opposition movements to step into. Furthermore, as the regimes diminished the scope of their patronage networks, their opponents grew in number, with new grievances. In the next section, I analyze how these regime outsiders began to mobilize for reforms or regime change.

3.2.2: Popular mobilization and the crises

In Benin and Togo there were adversaries to the regimes, adversaries who either acted from exile or clandestinely from within the country. In Benin, the *Parti communiste du Dahomey* (PCD) was formed by left-wing students who refused to join the regime in the middle of the 1970s.[25] The movement was active in Benin's rural areas and would help to mobilize opponents to the regime during the 1989–1990 civic resistance campaign.

[25] The party was formed after the failure of the *Jeunesse Unie du Dahomey* to federate PRPB opponents.

There was also the important formation of student organizations at the Université *Abomey-Calavi*, the initial hub of student protests in 1989 (Banégas 1995, 29-31).[26] Most Togolese opposition forces were far more active within the diaspora than in the country, although they were also involved in some violent actions against the regime inside Togo itself. The *Mouvement togolais pour la démocratie* (MTD), formed by the son of the late president Sylvanus Olympio, was far more active in France and in Ghana than in Togo itself (Toulabor 1986, 277-83).[27] The MTD had nonetheless been involved in bombings around the Lomé area in 1985 (Cornevin 1987, 470). There was also a small communist party – *Parti communiste du Togo* (PCT) – but it remained too weak to be a real challenge to the regime. There was also the *Convention démocratique des peuples africains* (CDPA) formed in 1984 by Leopold Gnininvi, a professor at Lomé University. This group was somewhat active in Togo before and during the regime crisis, although it would remain stuck with the image that it was a party of intellectuals (Toulabor 2003, 119). Finally, Tavio Amorin formed the *Parti socialiste panafricain* (PSP) in 1991 but the party disappeared after Amorin's assassination in 1992 (Heilbrunn 1997, 239).

The opposition mobilization that marked the true beginning of the regime crises in Benin and Togo did not start the same year. The first wave of student strikes started in January 1989 in Benin but only in September 1990 in Togo.[28] Civil society groups that would be crucial to the opposition campaign in Togo, like the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (LTDH) and the *Association togolaise de lutte contre la torture* (ATLT) were founded in

[26] As I cover in greater detail later on, the PCD policy of violent revolution would be used as a spectre by moderate opposition groups to show how reasonable they were in their negotiations with the regime.
[27] It would later be dissolved and renamed *Union des forces du changement* (UFC).
[28] There had been protests as early as May 1990, but they were small in scope.

the summer of 1990 (Iwata 2003, 143). Nevertheless, civic resistance movements in both cases gained momentum when students launched major protests in both countries. In Benin, students at the University Abomey-Calavi near Cotonou – the economic capital and the headquarters of most ministries – went on strike on January 17, 1989, demanding the payment and reestablishment of their scholarships (Rennebohm 2011a, 5). In Togo, the main protests were in reaction to the torture of student activists and their imprisonment verdict on October 5, 1990 (Iwata 2003, 143).

Students continued to protest in both cases as civil servants and members of the middle class joined them. In Benin, professors and civil servants from the finance ministry were the first to join the protests (Rennebohm 2011a, 5). In Togo, lawyers walked in public protests against the violent repression of the student movement and demanded for the first time the holding of a National Conference to discuss political reforms. The regime tried to crush the protest movement by sending security forces against them in order to prevent it from spreading. In Benin, the regime threatened to fire any civil servant who did not show up to work, sent troops against student protesters and occupied the university (Noudjenoume 1999, 125-7). In Togo, protesters were arrested and tortured. However, President Eyadéma proposed the formation of a committee to propose political reforms after the 72-hour strikes called by Yaowi Agboyibo, head of the LTDH. This committee was supposed to propose measures that could lead to the establishment of a new constitution; however, the report of the committee established by President Eyadéma to discuss political reforms concluded that the regime was still quite popular (Interview, Journalist #1, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

The initial waves of protest were followed by the formation of new opposition groups. Starting with the university professors, workers and professionals in Benin opted out of the regime-sanctioned labour unions to form their own unions. These new unions would ultimately coalesce into the *Confédération des syndicats autonomes* (CSA-Bénin) (Banégas 1995, 34). In Togo, the first group to split from the official state-run labour union – the *Confédération nationale des travailleurs togolais* (CNTT) – were the professors at Lomé University. Other labour organizations split and joined them throughout 1991, forming the *Collectifs des syndicats indépendants* (CSI). Unlike its Beninese counterpart, the CNTT was never fully splintered and kept some strength throughout the period (Seely 2001, 166). New independent newspapers also appeared during this period and challenged the regime's official voices – newspapers like *Tam-Tam Express* and *La Gazette du Golfe* in Benin, and *Forum Hebdo* and *La Tribune des Démocrates* in Togo (Seely 2001, 170; Heilbrunn 1993, 285).

Other groups also joined the movement. In Benin, the Catholic church organized its own autonomous groups at the beginning of the 1980s but it was not until March 1989 that its condemned the government's corruption (Banégas 2003, 100-1). As the PRPB regime tried to extract heavier taxes on illicit trade, merchant groups like the *Association professionnelle des revendeuses de tissus* (APRT) and *the Union nationale des commerçantes du Bénin* (UNACOBE) joined in the protests (Nwajiaku 1994, 433). However, in Togo the merchant groups began to split into pro and anti-regime factions (Seely 2001, 176). In both countries, groups outside of the middle class, such as

unemployed youth, taxi drivers, and small merchants also joined the protests (Nwajiaku 1994, 436; Banégas 2003, 116).

Student and teacher groups once again went on strike in Benin in April 1989. In Togo, ten civil society groups, including student associations, professional groups, and independent labour organizations, formed the *Front d'action pour le renouveau* (FAR) in March 1991 and launched major strikes (Iwata 2003, 145). In chapters 4 and 5 I explain how this second wave of strikes also marks a clear demarcation between the two cases, as the armed forces were kept away from the streets in Benin but not in Togo. Protests gained momentum during this period and the regimes had to offer concessions. In May 1989 President Kérékou offered to finally pay wages that had remained unpaid since January 1989. This failed to end the protests, however, as civil servants joined the protesters during the summer. President Kérékou also offered a general amnesty for all political prisoners and promoted regime reformists to cabinet positions (Rennebohm 2011a, 6; Houngnikpo 1999, 99). On March 18, 1991, President Eyadéma began negotiations with FAR and offered to legalize other political parties, to give an amnesty to all political prisoners, and to hold a *Forum National de Dialogue* that would lead to constitutional reforms (Iwata 2003, 145).

These first rounds of concessions failed for different reasons. In Benin, independent trade unions saw the reforms as insufficient, and would settle for nothing less than an overhaul of the state's political and economic structures (Houngnikpo 1999, 99). President Eyadéma publicly stated that the *Forum National de Dialogue* was unlikely to bring any drastic change to the country, while security forces continued to wound and kill protesters

(Tète 1998, 59-60; Iwata 2003, 146). As the FAR was disbanded, prominent leaders came back from exile and former members of FAR did not agree to form a unified party.[29]

In December 1989, tens of thousands of people protested in the streets of Cotonou; there were also protests in other large cities throughout the country, including in northern cities. The government announced that it would abandon Marxism-Leninism as its official ideology and, finally, that it would hold a meeting of all social forces in the country to discuss political and economic reforms (Heilbrunn 1993, 286). In Togo, the *Collectif de l'opposition démocratique* (COD) launched major strikes between June 7 and June 10, 1991. As Rennebohm reported: "The strikers had shut down Lomé to such an extent that little was functioning except for electricity and the international airport" (2011b, 6). On June 12, COD and regime representative came to an agreement to hold a *Conférence nationale souveraine* (CNS) (Degli 1996, 39).

The civic resistance campaigns launched by students in Benin and Togo pushed their respective standing governments to hold National Conferences offering political and economic reforms. In the process, various social forces joined the movement, including more traditional opponents of the incumbent governments. There were still important differences, however. First, Benin's opposition movement was centred on economic demands while Togo's opposition movement rallied around a denunciation of human rights abuses. Second, by the end of the protests, Benin's official corporate organizations were shattered, while Togo's were weakened but still active. Still, in the two cases, the

[29] While some of these parties formed a coalition called the *Collectif de l'opposition démocratique* (COD), the COD never had the unity of FAR (Iwata 2003, 146).

opposition coalitions pushed the *ancien regimes* to the negotiation table, though the results of these negotiations would be quite different.

3.3: The National Conferences and transitional governments in Benin and Togo

After more than a year of protests in the two countries, opposition forces pushed their respective regimes to hold National Conferences. Preparation for these conferences would not go as well in Togo as in Benin. Benin's opposition groups had formed various communication networks in the two years that preceded the National Conference (Creevey, Ngomo & Vengroff 2005, 473).[30] These networks allowed opposition groups to prepare common reform plans for the National Conference (Banégas 2003, 123). There is one exception to this unity as the historical foe of the incumbent regime, the PCD, refused to participate in the National Conference as the PCD promoted the violent overthrow of the regime (Banégas 2003, 147).[31] In Togo, there was a double tension within the opposition movement. First, COD's moderate and radical factions constantly struggled over the control of the organization and to maintain respect of the June 12 accords (Agboyibo 1999, 105). Second, Gilchrist Olympio refused to join COD as he was convinced that he could topple the RPT with his own political party (Degli 1996, 39). Due to this infighting, the Togolese opposition never truly prepared a common and cohesive reform project. As Jean Yaovi Degli, head of the ATLD, mentioned: "practically no one in the Togolese opposition was prepared at the beginning of the conference" (1996, 97).

[30] They also benefitted from the fact that many of them had been formed by the same source, namely the PCD.
[31] A former PRPB dignitary, however, mentioned that the heads of the PDC went to the National Conference as members of other delegations (Interview, ex-PRPB Dignitary, Porto-Novo, March 8, 2013).

Cohesion among Benin's opposition groups allowed these groups to rapidly take control of the reform process. In what has become known as the Quota War, the opposition refused the initial offer vis-à-vis the composition of the National Conference, which favoured government representatives. The government then made a second offer that gave the majority to agricultural and regional associations (Adamon 1995, 38). The opposition accepted this second offer as they simply co-opted regional and agricultural representatives to their cause. At the beginning of the conference, the opposition elected their own representatives to head the conference and passed a motion making the National Conference sovereign – that is autonomous from President Kérékou and the PRPB (Houngnikpo 1999, 102). In contrast, in Togo there was constant infighting among opposition groups from the start of the National Conference, as groups competed over the control of the conference and of the transitional government (Tète 1998, 71). This divergence in the relative cohesion of both countries' opposition groups also affected the selection of their transitional prime ministers. In Benin, Nicephore Soglo, a former executive director for Africa at the World Bank, had already been selected as opposition choice before the conference and was elected to the position by a large majority (Magnusson & Clark 2005, 559). In Togo, Leopold Gnininvi used his support among youth groups to be chosen as the official COD candidate; but moderate COD members and representatives of Gilchrist Olympio's *Union des forces du changement* (UFC) voted for Joseph Koffigoh, a member of the LTDH. Koffigoh won by a very slim majority (Iwata 2003, 147).

In Benin, there were important attempts to accommodate the old regime. While most power was now in the hand of the transitional government, this government accepted that President Kérékou remain president and head of the armed forces. He was also allowed to run in the presidential election and given general amnesty for the human rights abuses of the old regime. In Togo, representatives constantly attacked and denounced the regime's abuse. As Seely stated: "the National Conference in Togo became a forum for denouncing [President] Eyadéma's regime" (2005, 367). Regime and military representatives had walked out of the conference in response to the sovereignty motion, and it took a lot of work from the head of the conference, Archbishop Kpodzro, for regime representatives to come back (Degli 1996, 99). It is thus not surprising that while President Kérékou endorsed the results of the National Conference, President Eyadéma declared himself untied to conference results. Benin's National Conference only lasted nine days – February 19 to February 28, 1990 – but managed to put in place major political and economic reforms. In contrast, Togo's National Conference ended after close to two months of work – July 8 to August 28, 1991 – without a clear reform project (Seely 2005, 367).

The new Togolese transitional government, named *Haut conseil de la république* (HCR), struggled with unity from the outset. Leopold Gnininvi attempted to prevent representatives from the two main moderate forces, Edem Kodjo's *Union togolaise pour la démocratie* (UTD) and Agboyibo's *Comité d'action pour le renouveau* (CAR), from being represented in the transitional government. The transitional government's prime minister was also blocked in his attempt to include RPT representatives in the government as appeasement to the old elites (Agboyibo 1999, 165, 8). In Benin, the PRPB had no

representatives in the HCR but the transitional body was still willing to accommodate its interests: the PRPB could in fact reform into a new political party and President Kérékou along with other PRPB dignitaries was promised amnesty from all human rights violations. [32]

At this point, the two cases differ significantly as Benin prepared for a national referendum and its founding elections while Togo's *ancien regime* launched a coup. Benin's transitional government put in place a new electoral law and a new constitution (Gazibo 2005, 105). This new constitution implemented important checks and balances to the presidential power, including a Supreme Court and a Constitutional Court. These reforms were approved by 73% of the population in a referendum held December 2 1990 (Magnusson 2001, 184). The transitional government then prepared the first elections. The first parliamentary election was held February 17, 1991. Two major political forces did not participate: the PCD – who boycotted the election – and the PRPB – who had been disbanded and had not yet reformed. Thirteen parties were elected to the new national assembly and a majority of parliamentarians formed a coalition around the transitional Prime Minister, Nicephore Soglo (Banégas 2003, 187). On the 10th of March, 1990, Beninese citizens voted in the first presidential elections. Nicephore Soglo came in first and Mathieu Kérékou second and there was a second round on March 24th as none of the candidates had received a majority of first-round votes. Nearly all opposition leaders rallied around Soglo's candidacy and he got 67.5% of the vote (Gisselquist 2008, 797). While

[32] The PRPB came back in the 1995 parliamentary election under two banners: the *Alliance Caméléon* and the *FARD-Alafia* (Banégas 2003, 185).

Kérékou did not immediately accept the results, he ultimately conceded the victory to Soglo.

The transition process in Togo did not go as well. On the 26th of November 1991, the HCR banned the RPT – which had already been done by the National Conference – and took away the party's financial assets. The next day, members of the RPT youth wing, along with military units, took over the street of Lomé, occupied the national media stations and terrorized the population (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 93). Prime Minister Joseph Koffigoh's calls for help from French troops went unanswered as French officials replied that only the head of state – President Eyédema – could make such a demand (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 94). After a short battle between his own guard and the pro-Eyadéma troops, Prime Minister Koffigoh capitulated and was taken in front of President Eyadéma. President Eyadéma used the opportunity to renegotiate the transition terms and regain his lost political power. As Heilbrunn pointed out, this confrontation demonstrated that President Eyadéma's monopoly over violence played a crucial role in deciding who held the ultimate power in Togo (1997, 238). President Eyadéma regained most of his lost political powers and put RPT dignitaries in crucial cabinet positions. By September 1992 all essential transitional ministries were in the hands of the RPT (Degli 1996, 159).

By the Fall of 1992, the only power centre outside of the RPT's control was the CSI, which launched a series of strikes in November 1992. As Seely stated: "the strike was widely followed in the south and wreaked havoc with the country's economy" (2005, 368). If anything, the strikes only convinced the regime to switch its target from opposition leaders – who had been subject to assassination, torture and kidnapping that same year –

to the general population. Military personnel burned numerous houses in the Bé area – the hub of the opposition in Lomé – on January 30, 1993. Afterwards, hundreds of thousands of Togolese began to flee the country (Macé 2004, 844).

In the following months there were important attempts by the international community to come to some form of arrangement. The first meeting, in Colmar, France the 8th of February 1993, was a major failure as both sides refused to negotiate (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 95). Attempts by representatives from Benin also failed. Finally, Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, managed to convince all sides to negotiate.[33] After two months of negotiation (June and July 1993) all parties accepted an agreement, the Ouagadougou Accords, that promised to remove the army from the streets and committed to holding a presidential election in the near-future. The RPT was still, however, in full control of the publication of electoral lists – which were skewed in favour of the RPT – as well as the announcement of the results (Gazibo 2006, 626). This control over the electoral process allowed the regime to rush the election, set for August 25, 1993 (only 45 days after the signature of the Ouagadougou Accords), and catch the opposition parties unprepared (Pilon 1994, 141). Political parties attempted to unify under COD 2 – a new coalition of opposition parties similar to the COD coalition of 1991 – and presented a single opposition candidate, Edem Kodjo. Olympio refused to join them and Yaovi Agboyibo called for all opposition parties to vote for Olympio as he was clearly the most popular candidate (Degli 1996, 202-4).

[33] Though Gilchrist Olympio and the UFC refused to participate (Seely 2001, 330).

In order to prevent Olympio from running in the election, the Togolese government ordered all candidates to bring a medical certificate by a Togolese doctor. Olympio had fled the country after attempts were made on his life in the summer of 1992 and instead provided a certificate by a French doctor. This was used as an excuse to disqualify his candidacy. Afterwards, all opposition leaders called for a boycott of the election and only RPT partisans went to vote – around 36% of the population. President Eyadéma received 96% of the vote (Pilon 1994, 137). The Togolese opposition did manage to win a slim victory in the parliamentary election of February and March 1994. Two political parties, CAR and the UTD, won a majority of seats but President Eyadéma played on their divisions and a UTD-RPT coalition governed instead (Degli 1996, 210). In a by-election in August 1996, the RPT secured the last three seats it needed to rule without the UTD (Nohlen, Krennerich & Thibaut 1999, 893).

The transitional periods marked important divergences between the two cases. In Benin, a well-unified opposition coalition had a well-written reform project and managed to impose it on the old elite but still keep these elites on the political scene. In contrast, the Togolese opposition was quite divided and failed to use the National Conference as the foundation for a new political regime. Worse, the public denunciations of the RPT and attempts to preclude the old elite from participating in the transitional government led to a violent backlash. The regime capitalized on this division during the first presidential and parliamentary elections to secure its political power. While I centered my analysis to domestic factors in actors in the last three sections, foreign actors did play a role; I analyse the latter groups' influence in the following section.

3.4: Foreign actors and the crises

As I mentioned in section 3.2.1, economic recessions forced both regimes to look for other sources of funding. This was a period when international financial institutions and foreign services of western countries agreed on the necessity to push for liberalized market policies. This usually meant reductions in government size and its overall control over the economy (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 132). Togo is one of the African states that adopted a large number of structural adjustment agreements (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 133). Benin was in the process of negotiating its first Structural Adjustment Program in 1989 after it secured an International Monetary Fund (IMF) stabilization loan in 1987 (Heilbrunn 1993, 281). In both cases, the demands for a reduction of the size of the government limited the government's control of social forces as both governments lost the financial means to maintain their patronage networks (Heilbrunn 1997, 227; Banégas 1995, 27).

Two international financial institutions, the IMF and the World Bank, played a critical role during the period. The IMF's purpose was to lend money to countries that were hit by poor currency exchange rates. However, as Karns and Mingst stated, "beginning with the 1982 Mexican debt crisis, [the IMF] took on the role of intermediary in negotiations between creditor and debtor countries, then became involved in bailouts and structural adjustment lending" (2010, 398). The IMF required countries to implement economic reforms in exchange for their financial aid. The World Bank is composed of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). The World Bank provides loans to "complement private

capital by funding projects that private banks would not support, such as infrastructure, social services, and government restructuring" (Karns & Mingst 2010, 396). Like the IMF, the World Bank attaches conditions in order for recipients to have access to the provision of funds.

These international pressures were accentuated as France also altered its foreign policy towards the *Françafrique* in the 1980s, putting democratic conditionality at the centre of Franco-African relations.[34] This shift is mostly symbolized by the Franco-African La Baule conference in June 1990 where President Mitterrand stated that French aid would be linked to an increase in individual freedoms (Bratton & van de Walle 1997, 135). French ambassadors and officials in fact played an active role in both Benin and Togo during the National Conferences. In December 1989, exiled Beninese political forces met at Versailles to prepare a common plan for the upcoming National Conference. The French ambassador in Benin at the time of the crisis, Guy Azaïs, met with pro-democracy forces and presented to regime officials reform proposals that would lead to democracy to (Houngnikpo 2001, 56). Bruno Delaye, named ambassador to Togo in February 1991, played an even more active role and spearheaded the June 12th accords which paved the way for the National Conference in Togo (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 89).

There were, however, important limits to French influence on the potential regime transitions. First, the clear change of foreign policy at La Baule arrived after the end of the Beninese National Conference. Furthermore, as Seely mentioned "[In Benin,] the

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[34] *Françafrique* refers to the former French colonies in Africa.

bargaining power of France […] was mitigated by the unwillingness of any domestic group to allow France to take direct part in the negotiations" (2001, 147). At the same time, French elite were divided on the question of democratic conditionality. While left-wing forces favoured democratization, right-wing politicians publicly expressed their disapproval of such a shift. During Benin's National Conference, Jacques Chirac – mayor of Paris at the time – publicly declared that multiparty elections were an error for developing countries (Robinson 1994, 585).

In Togo, this tension led to inaction at a critical juncture. Before November 1991, there had already been multiple tensions between the military and the transitional government; officers had attempted on at least two occasions to kidnap Prime Minister Koffigoh, and the armed forces refused to apply all new military policies (Tète 1998, 70). At the end of November 1991, when the youth wing of the RPT and military units launched a campaign of terror in the streets of Lomé, French troops were sent to Cotonou.[35] This led to a certain pause in the attacks but when it became clear that these troops would not fight the Togolese forces, the assault resumed (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 93). Furthermore, just before the November attacks, the French government had officially lowered the importance of democratization in its Chaillot declaration of November 21, 1991. Even President Mitterrand stated that "each African country must find its own 'rhythm' for reform and political change" (Houngnikpo 2001, 59). This was seen as a signal to African dictators allied with France, including President Eyadéma, that they could do away with strong pressure to liberalize. After the transitional periods, French elites clearly favoured

[35] These troops were supposed to move rapidly to Togo if the need arose, though they never did.

stability over democracy. French observers declared Togo's election fair where other international observers stated that the election was anything but fair (Pilon 1994, 139-40). I return to the role played by the change in French foreign policy in section 6.1.2. For now, it should be noted that the Togolese armed forces had already refused to accept regime change and had attempted to use force against the new government even before the Chaillot declaration, while Benin's armed forces endorsed regime change before the *La Baule* conference.

Other foreign actors attempted to influence the outcome of the Togolese conference. In March 1993, Germany spearheaded negotiations between the RPT and the opposition, which failed (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 95). Following a hostage taking of the transition government in 1992 – when members of the armed forces took control of the HCR and forced, at gunpoint, members of the legislative body to grant additional power to President Eyadéma – the European Community and the United States suspended their foreign aid to the Togolese regime in an effort to push all sides to negotiate. This had little, if any, effect (Seely 2001, 325).

In summary, foreign actors did play a role in Benin and Togo's regime crises but this role was secondary to more important factors. International monetary institutions did reduce the ability of autocratic governments to control societal forces, but only after these regimes were plunged into economic recessions. During Benin's crisis, France had a more coherent foreign policy aimed at pushing for political liberalization in the African territories it once controlled, although this official foreign policy was fully implemented only after the end of Benin's National Conference. French foreign policy vis-à-vis Togo

during that country's regime crisis was far more ambiguous, as the country was officially in favour of political liberalization, but the importance of this policy was reduced in November 1991 when the RPT and the Togolese armed forces launched their coup against the transitional government.

3.5: Conclusions

By the 1980s, Benin and Togo passed through similar historical phases plagued by north-south divisions, military coups and the establishment of military governments. These military governments would be weakened by foreign pressures and economic turmoil; these weakened governments could then no longer prevent the rise of opposition coalitions who demanded political reforms and regime change. While the PRPB lost power in the process, the RPT managed to hold its ground against an increasingly divided opposition coalition.

An important reason why Togo's authoritarian regime could hold its ground but the regime in Benin could not is the relative degree of loyalty of their respective armed forces. I explain why patterns of military loyalty varied between the two cases in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4: Counterbalancing the Power of President Kérékou's Rivals in Benin's Army

This chapter explores the evolution of Beninese civil-military relations in order to understand the reasoning behind Benin's armed forces' support for regime change, a decision initiated by the *Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives de la Nation* (CN) in February 1990. At the end of the National Conference, the armed forces came out to publicly express their support for democratic renewal. My analysis thus centres on the factors explaining this military decision to drop its support for the authoritarian regime, in favour of political change. As set out in Chapter 2, I argue that such a decision is linked to the enactment of a counterbalancing coup-proofing strategy which led to the creation of important cliques of out-of-favour officers. Marginalized officers had stopped benefitting from the regime's largess and had many grievances against President Kérékou – such as being denied promotions, as well as suffering from the favoritism towards regime loyalists, particularly within the presidential guard. While the counterbalancing strategy limited such out-groups' ability to single-handedly enact regime change, they could still refuse to defend the regime during periods of domestic crisis, thus reducing the military leader's power. Ultimately, these groups chose to refuse to defend the regime as the opposition forces proved their credibility by limiting their reform agenda and showing their willingness to protect key interests of the military institution.

In section 4.1 I look at the birth of Benin's military factions after independence in order to understand how President Mathieu Kérékou's government (which is at the centre

of this study) gained power thanks to an alliance of various military factions. The presence of these factions greatly influenced President Kérékou's military policies. In section 4.2, I analyze the military policies put in place by President Kérékou after 1972 – policies which were meant to counterbalance the power of rivals who were entrenched within the armed forces. In section 4.3, I analyze the rise of the opposition movement, which ultimately toppled the regime in 1990 after successfully swaying marginalized military factions to support their demands.

4.1: The birth of military factions within Benin's army

By 1963, Benin's armed forces were increasingly divided among rival factions. These rifts were based on two main differences: ethnic-regional and generational. Officers from Abomey, the capital city of the former kingdom of Abomey in the south, who were in large majority at the time of independence, were opposed by officers from the northern regions, who felt disadvantaged within the military institution. While northern officers remained mostly united, partly due to their small number, officers from Abomey were increasingly divided along generational lines. The first generation, composed mainly of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and rank-and-file soldiers in the colonial army, were opposed by a second generation, which had received their commissions after independence, and a third generation which came out of the French military academies (like Fréjus, St-Cyr or Saint-Maixent) in the late 1960s and early 1970s and were thus influenced by the French radical-left movements of the time (Heilbrunn 1994, 434; Lemarchand 1968, 51-2). These three generations, as Ronen noted, "were not tied by similar military training" (1987, 113). Ultimately, a coalition of northern officers and third generation southern

officers would dominate the military and it was they who appointed Mathieu Kérékou as the new head of state. As it was Kérékou who established the coup-prevention technique at the center of this chapter, this section explains the origin of Benin's military dynamics, namely factional divisions, which marked President Kérékou's reign from the start.

Benin, then called Dahomey, achieved independence from France on August 1st 1960. Dahomey, as Decalo noted, "[was composed of] the cultural successors of two mutually antagonistic kingdoms, Abomey and Porto Novo in the south, and the still mostly isolated and unassimilated tribal groups of the north" (1973b, 450). Three political forces rose to pre-eminence in the decade that preceded independence: the *Union démocratique dahoméenne* (UDD) in the former Abomey kingdom; the *Parti des nationalistes du Dahomey* (PND) in the former Porto-Novo kingdom; and the *Rassemblement démocratique dahoméen* (RDD) in the North/Nikki Kingdoms. These political forces attempted to create networks within the security forces to insure their political supremacy (Allen 1992b, 43). Such moves disrupted the esprit de corps and the unity of the army (Harberson 1987, 13).

There was an important regional disequilibrium in military recruitment during the colonial era. French officials recruited northern tribes as rank-and-file soldiers, while Fons – the most numerous ethnic group in the South – were selected as officers. By the time of independence, approximately 80% of all officers were Fon while close to 80% of the military's rank-and-file members were northerners (Decalo 1998, 6).[36] For Horowitz, this favouritism can be explained by the French perception of Fons as more militaristic and

[36] Yorubas from Porto Novo were mostly kept out of the military hierarchy during the colonial era despite the relatively high literacy level of its nobility (Horowitz 1985, 545).

better educated (1985, 451). Top officers, like General Christophe Soglo, Colonel Philippe Aho, and Commander Benoit Adandejan, were all from Abomey (Decalo 1973b, 450).

The southern domination of the armed forces was troubling to President Hubert Maga (RDD) who was President of Benin between 1960 and 1963 and then between 1970 and 1972 during the rotating presidency. He was already challenged by unions dominated by southern workers who were angry about the government's austerity measures. Afraid of the potential consequences of his unpopularity among members the officer corps – as they had supported the UDD (his political rivals) in the 1960 parliamentary election – Maga attempted to create an alternative power base by massively recruiting Baribas (his own ethnic group, from the North of the country) to the gendarmerie (Horowitz 1985, 545; Onwumechili 1998, 26). In 1963, Maga was deposed by the military at the behest of the RDD and the PND.

In 1965, General Soglo, head of the armed forces, established Benin's first military junta (Skurnik 1970, 71-9). Soglo dismissed both President Apithy (PND) and Prime Minister Ahomadegbe (RDD) – heads of a unity government formed following the 1963 coup – and set in place a new military government. Up until this point the military hierarchy had been mostly respected, but factions soon began to appear. The two most powerful factions were the Abomey group and the Kouandaté group. The Abomey group, composed of first generation officers from Abomey, was dominant, as two of its members – General Soglo and Colonel Benoit Koffi Sinzogan – headed the armed forces and the gendarmerie, respectively, while Colonel Aho, as minister of defense, was one of the few military officers integrated into General Soglo's government. Second generation southern officers, opposed to the first generation of southern officers' domination, joined forces with northern

officers and organized around a northern officer named Major Maurice Kouandaté to demand to play a larger role in the government (Lemarchand 1968, 51-2).[37]

In December 1967, after General Soglo had clearly lost the support of a majority of the military corps due to salary cuts, Kouandaté's group decided to move in (Gazibo 2005, 57). Paracommandos from Ouidah, headed by Major Kouandaté and his *protégé*, Captain Kérékou, encircled the houses of three of the most senior officers from Abomey - General Soglo, Colonel Aho and Colonel Sinzogan - and pressured them to resign from power (Lemarchand 1968, 52; Heilbrunn 1994, 441). This was followed by a rapid purge of the Abomey group after General Soglo fled to France and Colonel Sinzogan, Major Jean-Baptiste Hachémé, and Colonel Aho were pushed out of the army on corruption charges. By 1968, the first generation officers were all either in exile or had lost their military commissions as second generation officers took command.

The 1967 coup has been interpreted by both Heilbrunn and Horowitz as the rise of northern military power, previously marginalized, and the end of Fon domination over the military (Heilbrunn 1994, 441; Horowitz 1985, 530). While it is true that northerners would, from then on, play a larger role and that key northern historical figures like Kouandaté and Kérékou had made their appearance, junior southern officers were involved in the new ruling coalition. In a move to appease southern civil society groups that had

[37] In 1965, only 14 officers out of 90 were not Fons.

backed the 1967 coup, Colonel Alphonse Alley, previously perceived as a close ally to the Abomey group, was chosen to head the new government (Allen 1988, 29).[38]

The new military government attempted to prepare new rounds of elections without Apity, Ahomadegbe, and Maga, who were barred from participating. The three political leaders of the dominant factions made a successful call for an election boycott and only 27 percent of voters participated. Members of the military government consequently decided to appoint the next leader and chose Doctor Emile Zinsou as president in 1968 (Gazibo 2005, 69; Decalo 1973b). Behind the scene, however, military tensions rose as Colonel Alley and Major Kouandaté continued to compete for dominance. Major Kouandaté came out on top as Colonel Alley was arrested and sent to jail after a failed attempt on Major Kouandaté's life (Decalo 1990, 111).[39] In a bid to consolidate his power, Major Kouandaté ordered troops loyal to him to kidnap President Zinsou in 1969 and force him to resign (Agboton 1998, 23). While he successfully deposed Zinsou, Major Kouandaté met insurmountable opposition from his fellow officers (Agboton 1998, 40-3).

Until that point, the lack of cohesion among the rest of the army had enabled Kouandaté and his partisans to maintain a dominant position (Heilbrunn 1994, 442-3). However, the 1969 coup rallied the various factions against Kouandaté. While junior officers, representing a new third generation, were wary of Kouandaté's political aspirations, moderate officers were tired of the incessant politicization of the military and desired a rapid return to civilian rule (Garin 1970, 3; Martin 1986, 63). Furthermore, Major

[38] Colonel Alley came from a region seen as a buffer zone (the city of Basila) between the northern Nikki Kingdoms and the Abomey Kingdom; he was thus portrayed as a good compromise between Northern and Abomey interests.
[39] There were other kidnapping and assassination attempts against Major Kouandaté for the remainder of 1969.

Mathieu Kérékou also abandoned Kouandaté at this point as he began to form his own alliances with 3rd generation officers such as Commander Janvier Assogba and Captain Michel Aikpe of the Ouidah Garrison (Agboton 1998, 39).Competing factions finally decided to install a military directorate headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Émile Da Souza, the former head of President Zinsou's military cabinet; Colonel Sinzogan, a member of the Abomey group, and Major Kouandaté were also included in the new government. This new directorate was marked by a certain return of the first generation of officers, as Lieutenant-Colonel Da Souza and Colonel Sinzogan were in the directorate and three senior officers from the Abomey group – Colonel Alley, Commander Ghislain Chasme, and Major Hachémé – were reintegrated into the armed forces (Horowitz 1985, 530; Decalo 1990, 112; Martin 1986, 63).

The 1969 coup also marked the rise of the third generation of officers, whose most prominent members – Commander Assogba and Captain Aikpe – would eventually play important roles. The failure of the 1969 coup is critical as it demonstrated that no single faction could rule by itself. Major Kérékou, a northerner, learned this lesson as in 1972 he sided not with Major Kouandaté but with southern radical officers in a bid to topple the newly installed civilian government.

The new directorate prepared for elections in March 1970. However, the elections were marked by major irregularities and the military began to divide into partisan factions with officers openly supporting their favourite candidates. As the three main candidates refused to accept the electoral results and tried to get the army once again involved in the political crisis, it was decided to put in place a rotating presidency. Ahomadegbe, Apithy, and Maga – who would become known as the triumvirate – would successively be

president for two years as the rotating presidency was meant to balance political, ethno-regional, and military factions. The triumvirate period was marred by even more military confrontations than the previous periods. Partisans of the three presidents, as well as of Zinsou, competed for military promotions alongside partisans of senior officers like Colonel Alley and Major Kouandaté, now ranked Colonel. Tensions worsened as there were not enough military commands for all the newly-promoted officers (Agboton 1998, 54). The armed forces had never been so bloated with officers, as their number rose from 90 in 1968 to close to 200 in 1972 (Decalo 1973b, 473). Tensions were running high, as demonstrated by the January 1972 mutiny in the Ouidah Garrison, headed by junior personnel, and the March 1972 coup attempt by Major Kouandaté's faction.

One faction in this period slowly overpowered its adversaries: the Ouidah Command. They were third-generation officers who came out of French military training embracing socialist ideologies. Many of them were southerners, including Captain Aikpé from Abomey. As a former officer mentioned,

> The Ouidah command was at the center of all political activities as every single politician would come with their luggage full of money to buy some political influence. […]. The base was also critical because it integrated an armoured division and a paratrooper unit. (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013).

Ouidah officers played their rivals against one another in order to prevent new military coups. In March 1972, under the command of Major Kérékou, this faction was at the center of a counter-coup operation which neutralized Colonel Kouandaté's attempt to seize power (Agboton 1998, 67-9).

By 1972, various factions were still competing for control over the military institution as well as to install their preferred political regimes. During the same period, the Togolese officer corps was far more united, with northern officers from various regions

acting together, although with a few notable exceptions. This heightened factionalism within the Beninese military would greatly restrict the actions of whichever clique came out on top, as they would have to deal with a large number of military rivals, well integrated within the army's ranks.

4.2: President Kérékou and the establishment of a counterbalancing strategy

4.2.1: The 1972 military junta and internal rivalries

In 1972, after many cycles of coups/countercoups, a military coalition finally gained the upper hand over its political and military rivals. On October 26, 1972, the Beninese heard through their public radio channel an announcement by Major Kérékou, a northern officer. Kérékou announced that the triumvirate in power since 1970 was "divided and undermined by their own contradictions, and condemned to inertia" (Decalo 1973b, 476-7). Chosen by the coup-plotters, Major Kérékou would now head a military government. The coup was headed by a group of third-generation officers from Ouidah; among the group were Captains Nestor Béhéton, Michel Aikpe and Hilaire Badjogoumè, Commander Janvier Assogba, and Major Michel Alladayé (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 31-2; Martin 1986, 64). The coup also had the support of two senior officers, Colonel Alley and Major Kérékou, from the first and second generations, respectively, as well as support from other officers, particularly southerners.

On October 24th, paratroopers and armoured infantry from Ouidah stormed the presidential palace and arrested the three presidents (Akpo 2012, 66). Two names were put forward to head the new government: Colonel Alley, who was favoured by Captain Aikpé, and Major Kérékou, who was favoured by Commander Assogba and the rest of the

ringleaders (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Banégas provides a somewhat similar explanation of the events as he concludes that the southern officers from Ouidah, incapable of agreeing, selected Kérékou in order to get support from northern regions – as Kérékou was a Somba from Kouaba, one of the northern cities (2003, 44-5).[40]

The new military government was called *Gouvernement militaire révolutionnaire* (GMR). There was only weak, if any, civilian opposition to the new government; unionists and student groups supported the new government, in large part thanks to its ties to radical officers (Allen 1988, 43). The government at first appeared to have a collegial nature, as power would be divided among three new institutions: the revolutionary military government (the executive branch of the GMR), the military council of the revolution (an advisory council) and the national council of the revolution (which acted more-or-less as the legislative body of the GMR). All three branches of the GMR were composed solely of officers and NCOs (Martin 1986, 65; Holo 1979, 175-218). The large number of officers integrated within the structure was meant to ensure equal representation of all participatory factions (Holo 1979, 172).

The new government, while integrating junior officers, moved rapidly to eliminate the remaining first- and second-generation cliques. Already, in 1972-1973, three of the most senior military officers, Colonel Aho and General Soglo from the former Abomey group, and President Kérékou's former mentor, Colonel Kouandaté, went into retirement

[40] He left Benin in his youth to study in Burkina Faso, then went to Senegal to join the Tirailleurs Sénégalais. He also studied at Fréjus and Saint-Maixent (Akpo 2006, 37-47).

(Decalo 1973b, 472). As Allen concluded: “[Other senior officers,] some of whom desired a return to more conservative and bountiful days, were easily diverted by appointments to sinecures in the public sector, or silenced by dismissal” (1992a, 66). Three majors and four colonels were thus put into retirement or placed at the head of parastatals, including Lieutenant-Colonel Da Souza, Colonel Alley, Commander Hachémé and Colonel Sinzogan, all of whom had played a role in the 1970 military directorate (Allen 1988, 32). This removal of senior officers included President Kérékou’s potential rival, Colonel Alley. This assured that the GMR was in firm control of the armed forces and that senior officers did not pose any more threats. Some senior officers did start to plot for the overthrow of the GMR: Colonel Alley and Commander Hachémé, alongside some of their supporters, were arrested on February 28th 1973 for conspiracy against the GMR and imprisoned (De Medeiros 1981, 142; Ronen 1980, 138).[41]

Still, several military factions remained (Martin 1986, 69). Even within the GMR there were rivalries, as conservatives, moderates and radicals competed over policy orientation while the original ringleaders and President Kérékou contested the control of the GMR (Allen 1988, 33; Decalo 1990, 121-2).

The continuing presence of these rival military cliques put Kérékou in a precarious situation from the start. As a civil servant reported: “President Kérékou knew that the officers who had put him in place could remove him at any moment” (Interview, Civil Servant #1, Cotonou, March 5, 2013). In the first few years, 1972 to 1978, President

[41] Officers opposed to the GMR have challenged the idea that there was any serious plot (Agboton 1998, 139; Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 40).

Kérékou would make a series of moves to assure his own domination over the military and neutralize the power of his rivals. With his first move, a 1972 decree, the head of the state was made minister of defense and head of the armed forces (Holo 1979, 166).

A second move was to integrate radical young students and union members within the military institution in order to gain individuals more dependent and loyal to President Kérékou himself. In 1974, President Kérékou announced in Goho that he would officially adopt Marxism-Leninism as the state ideology (Martin 1986, 66). The Marxist-Leninist declaration became as much a means to foster national unity as a step towards creating loyalty towards President Kérékou among members of far-left groups. While not all radical leftists accepted this 'bargain', those who joined the movement (referred to as the National League of Patriotic Youth, or *Ligueurs*), became an essential part of the regime (Interview, Union Leader, Cotonou, March 7, 2013; Noudjenoume 1998, 14). The declaration of Marxism-Leninism and the subsequent integration of Ligueurs into the regime led to the rise of radical young officers, such as Lieutenant Martin Azonhiho and Captain André Atchadé, who would become close associates of President Kérékou (Allen 1988, 36). These Ligueurs felt that their integration into President Kérékou's inner circles was an opportunity to get revenge for the discrimination they faced from the southerners who dominated the military elite (Heilbrunn 1994, 389).[42]

Anti-communist forces, called reactionaries by the regime, organized around Commander Janvier Assogba, one of the 1972 ringleaders, in an effort to build a counter-

[42] Not all Ligueurs were northerners. Lieutenant Azonhiho, for instance, was from Abomey (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 69).

weight to President Kérékou and to socialist officers (Decalo 1990, 121-2). Commander Assogba, as one of the leading moderates within the regime, was also the commander of the Ouidah Garrison and thus could potentially topple the GMR (Akpo 2012, 67; De Medeiros 1981, 143). Commander Assogba, at first in collaboration with Captain Aikpe (another ringleader of 1972), planned to oust President Kérékou during a ministerial meeting in Cotonou on January 22nd 1975. "Assogba gathered the officers and said he would go to Cotonou with the troops for his own protection" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). While the armoured division did join Commander Assogba in his deployment towards Cotonou, Commander Assogba ultimately returned to Ouidah and was subsequently arrested (Ronen 1980, 138). Two elements seem to have prevented a successful new coup. First, there were officers loyal to President Kérékou within the Ouidah command structure who warned President Kérékou in advance; in other words, he could not count on their full support if they needed to battle the Guezo Garrison – the military garrison in downtown Cotonou where the military headquarters were at the time (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Second, Captain Aikpe and his paracommandos did not follow Assogba in his coup attempt. For Lieutenant-Colonel François Kouyami, today a General, Aikpe decided to drop his former ally as he felt that: "if Assogba became president, Aikpe and his entire clique [radical officers] would have been purged from the army" (Kouyami, quoted by Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 66).

President Kérékou's second closest rival was Captain Aikpe. Captain Aikpe, as one of the prominent members of the government, had built a network of supporters as radical officers, unionists, and students organized around him as he championed a more populist

form of socialism (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 35; De Medeiros 1981, 144). After Commander Assogba's removal, Aikpe became the focal point of the mobilisation of two opposed groups, namely those "who wanted the revolution from below [and] moderate officers who were opposed to Kérékou's policies" (De Medeiros 1981, 144). President Kérékou moved rapidly to eliminate this second threat. In June 1975, in a supposed accident, Captain Aikpe was assassinated by a member of the presidential guard in President Kérékou's house (Ronen 1980, 138). Lieutenant-Colonel Kouyami, one of Aikpe's close allies at the time, stated that he met Lieutenant Azonhiho, a Ligueur officer now closely associated with President Kérékou, and President Kérékou himself the same day and that the latter one declared to him: "[on Aikpe's death] this will be the fate of all the reactionaries. Michel Aikpe was killed because he wanted to stage a military coup" (Kouyami, quoted by Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 69).[43] His death sparked popular protests in Abomey and Cotonou (De Medeiros 1981, 144; Allen 1992b, 44).

During this period, there had been a growing frustration among the officer corps, particularly southerners, with the political orientation of the regime. The purge of senior officers provided President Kérékou with the space to appoint Ligueurs within the officer corps. There was also a growing feeling that promotion was not due to merit anymore, but rather because of political loyalty and ethnic favoritism (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 49; Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). The gendarmerie, heavily northernized since Maga's presidency, became the subject of many grievances among members of the officer corps (Martin 1986, 70). After Captain Aikpe's death, the

[43] His death was interpreted by Horowitz as the ouster of Fons from the military junta (1985, 530).

majority of the military officers showed sympathies towards the protesters and refused orders to curb their actions. President Kérékou, abandoned by most of his troops, moved to the security of the Guezo camp and put his allies in key positions in order to survive this latest crisis (Martin 1986, 70; De Medeiros 1981, 144). Ligueurs*,* both civilian and military, took an even more important role within the regime in that period. Lieutenant Azonhiho, the well-known Ligueur officer, became minister of the interior and launched a campaign of repression against the protesters, while Captain Atchadé, another officer linked to the Ligueurs, became Commander of the Ouidah garrison. The exile of many civil servants and some officers after the end of the 1975 protests allowed President Kérékou to integrate even more Ligueurs within the government (Decalo 1990, 122; Allen 1992b, 44). The events of 1975 proved to President Kérékou that the armed forces were mostly unreliable and that he had to undermine his potential rivals (Akpo 2006, 74-6). Because rivals were still influential in the officer corps, reducing the power of the military became a priority.

4.2.2: Countering the armed force's power

The 1975 protests and lack of response among the armed forces convinced President Kérékou of the need to curb the power of the military. The first reform implemented to limit the power of potential rivals diversified the sources of military recruitment, both within the rank-and file and officer cliques. In 1974, after the Goho speech – the proclamation of Marxist-Leninism as the official state ideology – a new military recruitment policy was put in place. Under this new policy, rank-and-file soldiers would be drafted according to regional quotas (Holo 1979, 51). This led to a rapid expansion of the armed forces as new social groups were incorporated within their ranks

(Dickovick 2008, 1124). The armed forces, without counting the paramilitary forces, increased rapidly in size over the entire period. From 1,500 soldiers in 1974, it passed to 2,200 by 1978, 3,100 by 1981, and 4,400 by 1990.[44] As Banégas observed:

> The policy of recruiting across diverse social groups prevented any single force from dominating the entire institution. The increase in the total size of the armed forces made the armed forces too difficult for any single clique to control, and too divided to oppose the government (2003, 70)

The first attempts to reform the recruitment and promotion policy within the officer corps were less successful:

> There was an admission contest for the officer corps, only some were admitted. [In the late 1970s and 1980s] some northern officers attempted to advantage their own candidates. They tried to get other candidates to drop out, but it did not work (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013).

While Northerners still managed, with time, to increase their representation within the armed forces, southerners, particularly those from urban areas, were heavily advantaged due to their higher literacy rates (Seely 2001, 61).[45] In contrast, in Togo President Eyadéma gave himself the power to personally choose recruits and give promotions. To compensate for the low number of northern cadets, President Kérékou and his closest allies began to favour their own candidates. A retired officer mentioned during his interview that "The armed forces was the instrument of power of the state; they appointed loyalist and party members within its ranks" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). Loyalists began to occupy the most senior positions while other factions, still present within the officer corps, were denied promotions.

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[44] See Figure 7, p.123.

[45] In the late 1960s school attendance varied from 90 percent in Cotonou to 13 percent in the far-north (Decalo 1973b, 451).

There are several reasons for the failure of the loyalists to become a majority in the officer corps. First, President Kérékou's ethnic group – the Somba – represented less than 10% of the population. The Sombas did not represent a group sufficiently important to complete a full overhaul of the military's ethnic composition (Dickovick 2008, 1124). Second, southerners, particularly Fons, had been predominant within the officer corps since independence; while the process of diversification had reduced their numbers, they had enough power to prevent any move by the regime to purge them. Finally, it would be a mistake to conceptualize military rivalries as purely ethnic; there were northerners and southerners among President Kérékou's allies. In fact, as Ronen (1987) and Dickovick (2008) have argued, after the rise of the third generation of officers, military divides took a more ideological turn as officers clashed increasingly on ideology – Marxist-Leninism, Socialism from Below, or Maoism, as well non-socialist ideologies (2008, 1125; 1987, 51).

After 1975, a new paramilitary organization was created as a move to curb the potential threat of the regular army. Paramilitary organizations reduce the military's threat to the regime by: (i) challenging the military's monopoly on violence; (ii) diverting resources away from the military, particularly weaponry; and (iii) increasing the cost of military coups as paramilitary units are often packed with loyalists and, thus, tend to defend their regimes (Quinlivan 1999, 141; Feaver 1999, 225; Brooks 1998, 36-8). Former civilian president Maga had already used a paramilitary force, the gendarmerie, as an offset to the army. Nonetheless, the gendarmerie was overpowered continuously by military units, particularly by Ouidah's para-commandos. The Ouidah para-commandos had been at the center of almost all coups and coup attempts since 1968 and Commander Assogba's failed

coup in 1975 demonstrated to the regime that it was still vulnerable to this unit being in the hands of potential rivals (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 57). With the help of North Korean and Libyan instructors, the regime transformed the ceremonial presidential guard into a highly trained guard and equipped it with some of the best equipment the armed forces had to offer (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 57; Heilbrunn 1994, 453).[46] Loyalists, particularly northerners, were recruited en masse within the *Batallion de la garde présidentielle* (BGP). The BGP thus provided an opportunity for promotion of loyalists within the armed forces and a counterbalance to southern units (Allen 1992b, 44). The BGP, due to its advantage in terms of budget and equipment, represented the true power of the president (Decalo 1997, 47).

An additional measure to curb the power of rival cliques was the reform of the command structure. The hierarchy was divided to isolate officers within the army from their fellow officers in other security institutions. In 1975, all security institutions were unified into the *Forces armées populaires* (FAP), which would be divided into three autonomous command structures: the national defense command, the public security command, and the BGP. The national defense command was composed of the ground army, the air force, the gendarmerie, the national police, and naval forces (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013). The last section covered the civilian militia and the police (Holo 1979, 216). The BGP was independent of these structures and under the direct command of officers hand-picked by President Kérékou. The security apparatus was "divided among several junior officers all responsible to the

[46] Including after 1986 twelve Panhard armoured cars (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 75).

president and Azonhiho" (Allen 1988, 39). Power was thus divided into separate structures with little interaction between groups, and whose only meeting point was the president and the head of the armed forces. Power was thereby centralized within President Kérékou's hands but also diffused among various factions into separate general staff and the BGP command structure.

Alongside these policies, military equipment and budgets were also diverted away from garrisons commanded by potential rivals. As an officer of the Ouidah command stated:

> President Kérékou abandoned the Ouidah Garrison after Assogba's coup. We were denied fuel for the tanks, ammunition for practices, and new batteries. Most men demanded to be transferred to other units […] ammunitions and weaponry was kept, locked, at the Guezo Camp. (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013).

This evolution points to a potential strategy designed to prepare a purge of rivals from the armed forces; alternative powerbases were formed, and non-loyalists were isolated while loyalists were given key command posts.

Events in 1977, nevertheless, would push the government to steer its policy towards counterbalancing, namely by keeping potential rivals within the army and allotting them resources while still reducing their power. From exile, former President Emilie Zinsou and other Beninese were planning to act against President Kérékou's government.[47] As mentioned above, the armed forces were in a deplorable state as military equipment was kept locked in the Guezo camp in Cotonou rather than being distributed among the military

[47] At the same time, France had cut relations with Benin in 1975 over the adoption of the *Lois cadres* which officialised the adoption of Marxism-Leninism.

units throughout the country (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Internal and external assessments concluded that Cotonou was extremely vulnerable to attacks as no combat-ready units could rapidly intervene on its territory.[48] On January 16th 1977, just such an assault took place as mercenaries, under the command of French Colonel Bob Denard and with the support of former President Zinsou, landed in Cotonou. Two factors prevented the success of the mercenary attack: the gendarmerie and the Ouidah forces did not defect; and Cotonou citizens came out to defend the country (Denard & Fleury 1998; Akpo 2012, 123-6). The mercenaries seemed to have taken southern military defection for granted and in fact made few efforts to assure their support (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 88). Exiled elites who backed the coups failed to take into account that at that point the remaining officers were mostly third generation officers who, while not all in favour of Marxist-Leninism, still opposed France and its policies in Africa (Heilbrunn 1994, 437).[49] While the gendarmerie remained neutral in the entire operation, the Ouidah armoured division deployed itself towards the airport, forcing Denard's mercernaries to retreat.

Among the armed forces the mercenary attack was a demonstration of the near-failure of the military's strategy, as it showed that President Kérékou still required the support of his potential rivals against external foes. The strategy of military marginalization would thus soon come to an end, as equipment and budgets were finally distributed to the

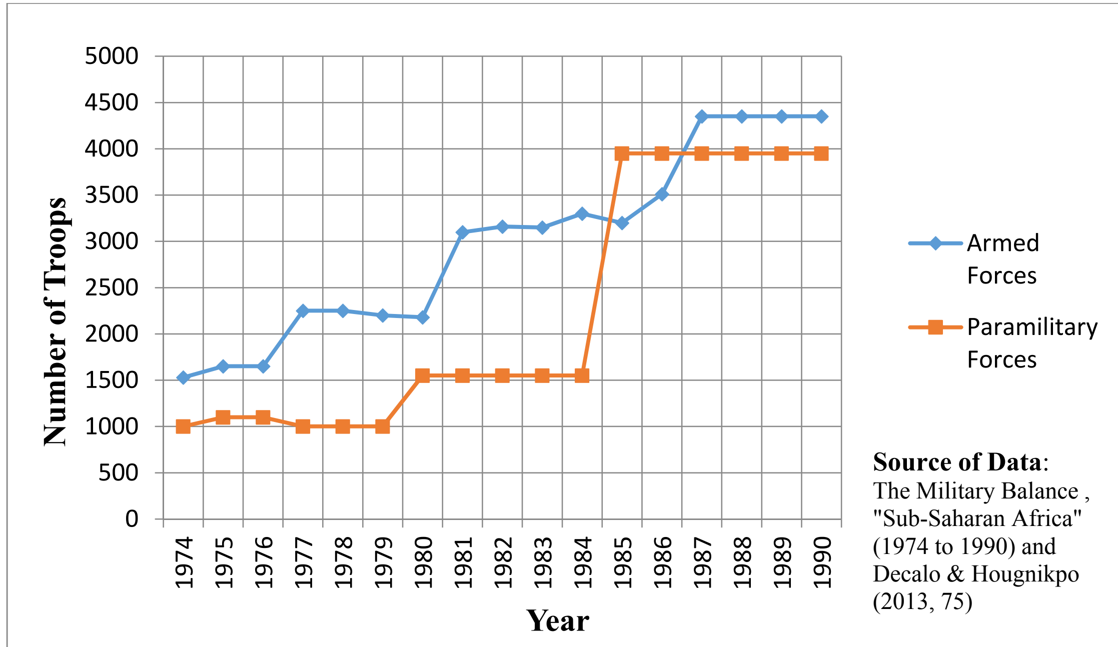
[48] The Ouidah garrison, three hours away, was in fact the only force with the strength to fight off an invasion in the south of Benin.
[49] The choice of a French officer, Bob Denard, was thus ill advised.

southern bases. However, the regime also created an additional paramilitary unit as a counterforce to the armed forces' newly increased power.

A new militia, the people's militia, was formed in direct response to the 1977 attack (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013). By 1988, the militia would count nearly 2,000 members and could be found in all urban areas and in most rural counties. While militias could be found in most African states, including Togo, and particularly in almost all socialist states, in Benin the militia was not solely used to mobilize the citizens to the revolutionary cause. As Heilbrunn noted: "Kérékou countered the military's monopoly over military force by a people's militia" (Heilbrunn 1994, 453). The now-combined force of the presidential guard, the people's militia and the gendarmerie competed in strength with the armed forces.[50] In neighbouring Togo, the paramilitary forces remained quite small in comparison. The paramilitary forces would become an alternative power base for President Kérékou and a defense of the regime against the military institution. The three main paramilitary forces would enable the regime to divert equipment from the military and appoint loyalists within the security sector without risking backlash from members of the officer corps. As Seely concluded: "the new military branches, like the presidential guard, […] shore[d] up his support without alienating other social groups already present in the army" (2001, 61).

[50] See Figure 7, p.123.

Figure 7: Evolution of Benin's Armed Forces[51]



In an effort to isolate military rivals from other security forces, the FAP command structures were once again reorganized. The gendarmerie was moved to the public security force command. The division of the security sector was, at this point,

> the defense component, which included the ground army, the air force and the navy; and the public security force component, in charge of citizen security, which included the national police, the gendarmerie, the custom officials, the firefighters and the park services. The two had distinct roles (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013).

A new command was also created for the militias, while the BGP, as mentioned above, was under the direct control of officers appointed by President Kérékou. From this point forward, military commands would act as separate entities and be rivals for power. Thus, by 1980, the security sector was divided into separate power centers which, if necessary,

[51] The Military Balance does not include the numbers of the presidential guard. These numbers were taken from *The Historical Dictionary of Benin*, which puts it at 450 men (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 75).

could balance each other out. The other important reform of the period was the creation of a unified general chief of staff to supervise the security organisations.[52] President Kérékou would officially occupy the position of chief of the general staff (Dickovick 2008, 1124).

Improvement in education was another important reform, which created within the population a larger pool of potential recruits for officer positions. This permitted greater northern access to the officer corps. At the end of their studies, many students chose to join the army as a path to wealth and prestige. As Banégas noted: "it was not rare for ambitious individuals, returning from their studies […] to take a position as an officer from which they could constitute their own faction or swear allegiance to members of President Kérékou's inner circle" (2003, 54). Coupled with regional quotas among the rank-and-file, this meant that new military factions were formed. By this point, no faction could by itself control the army like the Abomey group had in the 1960s (De Medeiros 1981, 145; Banégas 2003, 70). This integration of graduates effectively diversified the military and by the end of the 1980s the Beninese armed forces were particularly ethnically balanced (Seely 2001, 125; Allen 1992a, 68).

Another tool used to heighten division within the armed forces was the diversification of training programs. Before 1975, all officers were trained in French military academies – Fréjus, St-Maixent, and St-Cyr. While the first generation of officers (by then mostly retired) had not received military training in the academies, the second and third generations were educated through the French colonial academies and, for a certain

[52] With the exception of the BGP.

number, through military academies in France. This common training program had, until the late 1970s, facilitated cooperation among officers (Ronen 1987, 113).[53]

As relations with France became strained around the mid-1970s, particularly after the mercenary attack, France cut its ties with Benin until 1982. This created a necessity to look for alternative sources of training for Benin's armed forces. The training of the presidential guard had already been assumed by Libyans and North Koreans. After the rift with France, other officers began to be trained elsewhere. As a retired officer stated: "Our first model was France. But during the revolution, France shut its doors to us. Training was instead done in Libya, the USSR, Cuba, or China" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey Calavi, March 5, 2013). These new recruits came back with a whole new vision of the military's role in society, as "some wanted a revolutionary command structure, like in China" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). These officers disagreed with Ligueurs and other radical military cliques on the societal role of the armed forces (Heilbrunn 1994, 452). Furthermore, their perspective clashed with the senior officers trained in France who desired to maintain the military status-quo.

By 1982, France and Benin's relations had improved and Benin's officers and cadets were again sent to French academies; training in the socialist states continued alongside training in France. This led to clashes about the vision of the armed forces, as officers trained in the East were deemed mediocre by many French-trained officers:

[53] In fact, as Lemarchand noted, the radical ideology of the third generation of officers came as a result of their contact with left-wing student groups in France (1968, 53). For Decalo, the main explanation for generational differences between officers in the 1960s and 1970s were differences of education (1990, 54).

> [Those trained in the socialist states] were less well trained and thus the least qualified officers, especially compared to those trained in the West. They still wanted the same advantages, but their training was more ideological (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013).

Furthermore, there were also officers who did not receive training abroad; they represented another sub-class of officers in the eyes of many western-trained soldiers. "People trained abroad were better trained; there was thus a duality between foreign-trained and home-trained soldiers" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). Training, in other words, became a source of tension and division as different cliques formed of officers with different academic backgrounds competed for promotions and disagreed about military policies. Combined with an increase in the size of the officer corps, this meant that there were far more military factions in the officer corps during the 1980s than ever before.

As there were now many cliques within the Beninese armed forces, and also many autonomous command structures, President Kérékou began to use a strategy of command shuffle in order to assure that no single faction could gain preponderance (Gazibo 2005, 61). While Ligueurs had dominated the regime structure through the 1970s, after 1977 southern officers were slowly reintegrated into the ruling circles.[54] In 1982, two important Ligueurs, Simon Ogouma and Lieutenant Martin Azonhiho, were replaced by two moderate southern officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Vincent Guezodje and Captain Philippe Akpo (Banégas 2003, 48; Martin 1986, 74).[55] The same year, Lieutenant-Colonel Guezodje

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[54] A similar process happened on the civilian front with the foundation of the *Parti de la Révolution Populaire du Bénin* (PRPB). While the Ligueurs dominated the structure between 1975 and 1978, by 1979 Kérékou had invited southern civilian elites to join the party and began to side with moderates (De Medeiros 1981, 146).

[55] Captain Akpo had participated in Commander Assogba's coup attempt, albeit reluctantly (Akpo 2012, 138-47).

became head of the public security command while Lieutenant-Colonel Kouyami, an officer who had been a partisan of Aikpe, became the head of the Gendarmerie (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 95). In 1984, imprisoned officers like Colonel Alley and Major Hachémé (senior officers formally involved in military governments in the 1960s and a supposed coup attempt in 1973), as well as Commander Assogba and his fellow 1975 ringleaders, were freed. Commander Assogba and some of his close followers were even reintegrated into the armed forces (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Moderates continued their rise to power as Lieutenant-Colonel Guezodje became chief of staff of the popular armed forces, in charge of all three military components, in 1989 (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 196).

This return to good favour of the moderate southerners did not mean that they would take the place of the Ligueurs in President Kérékou's inner circle. Instead, throughout the 1980s, there were constant shuffles within the cabinet and military command as certain factions were used against one another. While in 1982 the Ligueurs had been put aside, in 1984 it was the turn of more conservative members like Major Barthélémy Ohouens and, in 1985, of 1972 ringleaders like Major Alladyé (Allen 1988, 45). Some officers returned to their positions, like Lieutenant Azonhiho, a Ligueur officer, in 1987. President Kérékou, as Banégas and Adamon mentioned, was fully aware that the armed forces were still a threat and decided to set his rivals against each other in a bid to maintain his power (2003, 70; 1995, 91).

The rise and fall of every clan depended on threat levels. Between 1972 and 1978, the main threat came from reactionaries, moderates and pro-Captain Aikpé radical officers;

by 1978 the Ligueurs had come to occupy major positions within the government. For Allen, President Kérékou's control of the military institution in the late 1970s and early 1980s was characterized by "frequent changes in senior personnel, combined with relatively high levels of spending and pay" (1992a, 66). Cabinet and military command shuffles allowed President Kérékou to control the relative power of every faction.

4.2.3: The consequences of the counterbalancing strategy

In the previous section we saw how President Kérékou put in place a policy of counterbalancing aimed at reducing the power of rival factions by creating other factions through education as well as institutional and clan rifts. This implies that out-of-favour officers were still present within the armed forces. As I argued in chapter 2, the presence of out-of-favour military factions can be identified through public/private declarations against the regime policies and by these factions' coup attempts.

The size of Benin's armed forces continued to expand throughout the 1980s, rising from 3,510 to 4,300.[56] This ballooning of the military ranks meant that the military budget had to be continuously increased in order to pay soldiers' wages. The policy of co-option of all social groups meant that Benin's bureaucracy, including the army, was ever expanding. The maintenance of the civil service, including the military institutions, represented one of the main economic burdens of the state – the cost rose from 10% to 16% of the GDP between 1980 and 1987 (Banégas 2003, 77).

[56] See Figure 7, p.121.

Despite these increases in the military budget, there remained frustrations with the state of the military, particularly its equipment. As a retired officer stated: “resources provided to the army in the period were so thin that it barely covered instruction and mobilization costs” (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Despite the many grievances held by certain military cliques, there were no coup attempts between 1977 and 1985. “As long as everyone was well paid,” Theodore Holo reported, “everyone [in the army] forgot their own ambitions and their own grievances” (Interview, Theodore Holo, Porto-Novo, February 13, 2013).

At the same time, the many state-owned corporations had failed to provide alternative sources of revenue for the government. In fact, as Decalo argued:

> [state corporations] actually served to divert what few resources the state was still able to generate into the hands of those who had access to them. Few profits ever accrued to the state. Instead, the public sector became a cesspool of corruption, mismanagement, lack of accountability, and a feeding ground for predatory civil servants, bureaucrats, and military officers alike (1997, 48; Gisselquist 2008, 795).

Appointments to state corporations were not based on merit but rather as a reward for individuals loyal to President Kérékou. As a result, many appointees used their tenure as a means to accumulate wealth for themselves (Heilbrunn 1993, 282). In other words, by 1985 it became clear that at the same time as Benin’s commercial, industrial and agricultural production were stagnating, regime expenditures were increasing (Noudjenoume 1999, 36). As government revenues started to deplete there were concerns that the army’s political silence might come to an end.

In 1983, for the first time since 1975, Benin's economy went into recession. The regime's industrial and agricultural policy had not brought the hoped-for increases in the country's production, with the exception of the cotton industry. Benin's economy remained heavily dependent on France for manufactured products, and on Nigeria for oil and re-exported products (Magnusson & Clark 2005, 555; Magnusson 2005, 81). In order to keep the regime afloat, there was a need to cut the budgets in many state institutions, including the military (Noudjenoume 1999, 38). This became problematic for the regime as unpaid soldiers were seen as a serious threat. A civil servant employed during the 1980s reported that "they [the government] began looking for crumbs to give to soldiers to avoid a revolt" (Interview, Civil Servant #2, Cotonou, February 21, 2013). In 1985, as rumours of coups began to appear, France agreed to give a loan sufficiently large to pay military wages (Allen 1988, 71). This enabled President Kérékou to continue to integrate new recruits within the armed forces and between 1985 and 1988, the armed forces increased rapidly in size.[57]

After 1985, the lack of proper budgeting angered military officers, who blamed the regime's failures on civilian administrators and on the regime's policies. There were constant rumours that, frustrated by both the problems with the payment of their wages and the regime's acceptance of economic liberalization, radical officers trained in socialist states would attempt to stage a coup (Allen 1988, 72). While the rumours were for the most part unfounded, Officers trained in socialist states were among the most discontented members of the officer corps in the final years of the regime (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). Young officers began to express their discontent with

[57] See Figure 7, p.123.

the regime more publicly. In 1988, they sent a memorandum in which they advised the president to dissolve the PRPB and the *Assemblée nationale révolutionnaire* (ANR) – the authoritarian legislature of the regime – to appeal to exiled political forces in order to promote national reconciliation (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 96).

By the end of the 1980s, there was a growing feeling among military personnel that the armed forces' resources were unevenly distributed. Despite the constant command shuffles, there were also accusations that Northerners and Ligueurs were favoured by the regime (Akpo 2006, 75-6; Allen 1992a, 68). Loyalist units, such as the presidential guard, were equipped and paid far more regularly than other military units (Banégas 2003, 89). While many of rumoured coup-plots were actually excuses by the regime to arrest or expulse officers deemed "dangerous" for the future of the regime, in 1988 some of these rumours were in fact well-founded (Interview, ex-PRPB dignitary, Porto-Novo, March 8, 2013).

In April 1988, 162 officers were arrested for planning to assassinate President Kérékou (Decalo 1990, 129). The coup-plotters, mostly Fons, had been angered by the nonpayment of their wages and a rumoured plan to stock nuclear waste near Abomey. Among the arrested officers there were 10 senior officers, including Lieutenant-Colonel François Kouyami, head of the public security command, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hilaire Badjogoumé, the last 1972 ringleader present in the government. Some of the suspected and arrested officers, like Lieutenant-Colonel Kouyami, fled the country and went into exile in Nigeria (Decalo 1990, 129). In a separate coup attempt, twelve officers trained in Libya, including an officer within the presidential guard and the head of the secret service,

were arrested in June of 1988 (Allen 1992b, 47). By then, it became clear that the regime's control over the armed forces was fading as its only base of support seemed to be almost exclusively among northern officers.[58] While all military personnel were frustrated by the non-payment of their wages, southerners had also the growing frustration that for years they had been marginalized and disadvantaged by a military promotion system benefitting northerners (Allen 1992a, 68).

Unlike in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the coup attempts never came close to being successful. The increased size of the armed forces meant that there were a large number of cliques, which were in disagreement with one another on the political orientation any coup should take – some favoured a return to full civilian rule while others favoured a deepening of the communist revolution. While President Kérékou's support within military forces between 1985 and 1989 was decreasing, these disgruntled military cliques were still unable to coordinate themselves and overpower the regime. Furthermore, while it is true that, among the gendarmerie and the armed forces, the security sector was "bubbling with plots and power-grabs", these military rivals were counterbalanced by the presidential guard and the people's militia, mostly composed of loyalists (Allen 1992b, 47; Banégas 2003, 89). In short, the counterbalancing strategy had successfully reduced the power of military rivals. The rising civilian opposition to the regime, as demonstrated in the next section, exacerbated the crisis and prevented the regime from reconsolidating its hold on the military.

[58] Banégas calculated that there were 6 attempted coups against Kérékou between March and October 1988 (2003, 89).

4.3: The agreement between the opposition and marginalized officers

As I demonstrated in the last two sections, President Kérékou managed to put in place a counterbalancing strategy which allowed him to stay in power despite the presence of military rivals. However, the equilibrium of the army would be disrupted as the civilian opposition to the regime intensified and provided a potential allied force to officers marginalized by President Kérékou's policies.

4.3.1: Rising opposition and political liberalization

From the early 1970s to 1985, the PRPB did not have much political opposition. Other political parties had been banned and, with the exception of Zinsou participation in the 1977 mercenary attack, the exiled elites were without any strength domestically. (Banégas 1995). Former independent unions had been federated into the *Union nationale des syndicats des travailleurs du Benin* (UNSTB), which acted as a means of control over the labour movement (Seely 2001, 62). The only clandestine organization fighting the regime was the *Parti communiste du Dahomey* (PCD), which encompassed communist partisans who did not join the PRPB (Banégas 1995, 28).[59] The PCD, however, never made inroads outside of a few rural areas. The only group which remained unregulated was the merchants, as fees and excise taxes from trade with Nigeria represented a critical part of the state's revenue (Nwajiaku 1994, 162).

[59] PDC members were mostly Adjas from the Mono region.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, students became the most vocal opponents of the regime's policies.[60] Between 1985 and 1988, professors and students began to organize into alternative associations and protested on several occasions. In 1985 they went on strike as the government terminated a policy of post-graduation recruitment into the civil service (Astrow 1985). The lack of a strong response from Major Alladayé (minister of education at the time and one of the ringleaders from 1972), interpreted as a *de facto* approval of the students' actions, also marked "the rise of dissidence within the regime forces" (Banégas 1995, 33). Major Alladayé was dismissed by President Kérékou as security forces were sent against the students. Troops moved in, killing two students while fourteen student leaders were arrested. By 1987, as new rounds of cuts agreed upon by the government at the demand of the IMF were implemented, the students again went on strike, and then again in 1989.

Opposition grew as the regime became less and less able to provide its necessary services and had to find extra sources of income. By 1987 and 1988 the salaries of most civil servants had been cut in half (Noudjenoume 1999, 90-1). By September 1988, most civil servants' wages remained unpaid. As a public servant in place during the 1989 crisis told me:

> The state was not able to pay the wages of civil servants. There had always been frustrations with the regime since the revolution, but they were contained. With this new economic aspect [the non-payment of wages], these frustrations could no longer be contained (Interview, Civil Servant #1, Cotonou, February 5, 2013).

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[60] Students had been active partisans of Captain Aikpé in the early 1970s. Kérékou had judged that "students' organizations were used by Aikpe for political ends" (Heilbrunn 1994, 554).

As the economic crisis worsened, President Kérékou had to plan new cuts. On December 31, 1988, Kérékou publicly announced a new round of austerity measures which included reduction in wages for civil servants, reduction of government expenses, and freezing of post-graduation recruitment into the civil service (Banégas 2003, 112). In response, the regime's opponents used the networks they had formed in previous strikes, often thanks to the PCD implication, to coordinate their actions.

Students and teachers began striking on January 9th 1989 in Cotonou and Porto-Novo. At first the government attempted to use repression to end the strikes. Other civil servants began to join the protests soon afterwards. On the 21st of January the government announced that any civil servants who did not return to work would lose their jobs. On the 23rd, the interior minister, Colonel Azonhiho, a recently-promoted Ligueur officer, called for all patriotic citizens to use force against the demonstrators. The next day, President Kérékou himself sent the army into the streets and demanded that the security forces "fire without warning, both at night and during the day, on all gatherings on roads and public spaces" (AR 1989). In Porto-Novo, para-commandos had to be sent to contain the protesters (AR 1989). Key public buildings, such as ministries and the university, were occupied by military forces (Noudjenoume 1999, 127).

Many officers began to sympathize with the civilian protesters. As a retired officer reported: "We could easily witness the harsh reality lived by our families" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Another retired officer reported a similar situation: "Even within the army's ranks, there were soldiers with grievances and individuals who sympathized with the protesters were easy to find" (Interview, Retired

Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). There were signs that the loyalty of the armed forces could be questioned (Allen 1992a, 70). After a series of meetings demanded by the high command, military commanders reported that soldiers were turning their backs on President Kérékou and the PRPB. As a retired officer reported,

> the general feeling was that the revolution had succeeded until civilians were integrated; when they arrived, the situation worsened and the only solution now was to abandon politics and return to the military's fundamental mission (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013).

This officer's answer, interestingly enough, echoes the conclusion of many earlier works on military withdrawal from politics; Geddes and Welch both concluded that the return to the barracks is often the result of intense lobbying by officers unhappy with the political role of the army (Geddes 1999, 126; Welch 1992, 334).[61] Another officer reported a more chaotic situation; according to him, "there were some who felt marginalized, disadvantaged; they were seriously questioning the integrity and neutrality of promotion procedures and of the decision-making processes" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 12, 2013). Certain military cliques were beginning to express their frustration with the regime more openly. As Decalo reported: "Southern senior military officers warned Kérékou [in 1989] that they would refuse to move against their kinsmen" (1997, 55).

As Robert Dossou reported: "The armed forces were dividing into two: Kérékou's partisans and those opposed to them" (1990, 184). Military officers whose military standing was linked to President Kérékou's power remained loyal to the president. They

[61] This group is often referred to as 'professional soldiers' in the literature, as they favour a clear boundary between society and the military.

were opposed by a large majority of officers; mostly junior or older officers denied promotions and who were aware of the social problems and of the growing frustration within the military ranks. Out-of-favour officers began to express their grievances, particularly in military elections to the ANR in the summer of 1989. It should be noted that military elections were not done by secret ballot but rather openly in large rooms where voters could express their opinions. While the marginalized cliques were still divided and disagreed on a common plan, they were more numerous than loyalists and could defeat the loyalist candidates in the ANR elections. This demonstrated to President Kérékou that he was losing his hold on the military institution. As the next chapter documents, this is a critical difference with Togo. The strategy of ethnic stacking enacted by President Eyadéma meant that a majority of officers depended on the good will of the autocrat for recruitment and promotion, making it much less likely that officers would be willing to turn against the government.

On the civilian front, the regime was also facing increasing mobilization by its opponents outside of the armed forces. Students in Cotonou and Porto-Novo took to the streets again. Autonomous unions began to form outside of the UNSTB (Heilbrunn 1993, 291). By April 1989, strikes had been reignited as professors once again joined the protests. In July 1989, civil servants joined the protests in large numbers (Rennebohm 2011a). Many others, while not participating in the street protests, signalled their opposition by simply refusing to go to work (Interview, Civil Servant #1, Cotonou, February 5, 2013).

The regime's attitude began to shift by the summer of 1989. Already in May there had been negotiations, albeit unsuccessful, between the government and teachers. In the

ANR election of July 18 1989, intellectuals critical of the regime – Robert Dossou, René Ahouanssou, and Germain Kadja – were elected; they became the leaders of the reformist wing within the regime. They successfully pushed a series of political openings, including a general amnesty for all political opponents (including military officials) on August 29th (Dossou 1990, 183).

As the anti-regime protests continued throughout the end of 1989, it became clear that the regime was no longer in control of its armed forces. President Kérékou dared not use the armed forces, as he began to fear that any intervention would lead to intramilitary fighting (Decalo 1997, 54). The regime became fearful that a coup would topple the sitting government, and there were new coup attempts in 1989. As Gazibo wrote:

> In 1989, the regime stopped two coup attempts. While one planned by Colonel Benoit Sinzougan [an officer from the Abomey group quite active in the 1960s] was not alarming, the other one was as it involved trustworthy officers like Captains Abderamane Amadou, Kérékou's aid, and Gomina Fousseini, head of the information and documentation services [the secret services] (2005, 79).

This loss of control of the armed forces meant that one option, repression of the protesters, was now off the table. While President Kérékou had sent the troops to shoot protesters in January and February of 1989, by the end of that year it was clear that such orders would be disobeyed (Seely 2001, 144). As he began to lose the support of the military, the president's relative control over Benin, always limited to begin with, began to collapse (Dickovick 2008, 1129; Allen 1992a, 70). This lost of control over the military destabilized the regime because, as Theodore Holo reported:

> A regime needs force to resist pressure, in order to repress, to impose its will. If this backbone is crumbling, this constitutes a pressure in itself on the regime as it has no

> longer the mean to impose its will (Interview, Theodore Holo, Porto-Novo, February 13, 2013).

The regime attempted to make minimal promises to contain the protests and avoid military rivals potentially using the situation to stage a successful coup (Interview, Theodore Holo, Porto-Novo, February 13, 2013). In exchange for the end of the strikes, the government promised to release all students and teachers who had been arrested in the strike and to pay three months of unpaid wages (Rennebohm 2011a). While these proposed deals slowed down students' and teachers' mobilizations, other groups increased their pressure on the regime. Exiled political forces and the PCD joined the protests and demanded political reforms. Strikes were no longer contained to Cotonou and Porto-Novo and protests spread to other cities, including Bohicon, Lokossa, Abomey, Parakou, and Natitingou. Independent unions and the PCD called for a general strike in early December 1989. In an effort to prevent the strike, President Kérékou announced that he would abandon Marxist-Leninism as the official state ideology (Dossou 1990, 185; Dan 2011, 189). This move failed, as on December 11th more than 40,000 protesters took to the streets of Cotonou. The armed forces were once again not sent to end the protests and some protesters even called for the army to join them (Rennebohm 2011a).

Meanwhile, within the regime there was struggle between two large camps, one in favour of political compromise and the other willing to use violence to end the opposition protests. Similarly, in the high command, "two factions began to form – military hawks and doves, which were mostly junior officers" (Interview, Civil Servant #2, Cotonou, February 21, 2013). In November it became clear that President Kérékou was pushed to side with pro-reformists as he began to sideline hardliners like Colonel Azonhiho in general

meetings in order to accommodate international demands for reforms required for the access to the funds through the Structural Adjustment Program (Adamon 1995, 91). Pressures were still building around the President, both within the government and from opposition forces, to call for a National Conference in which regime reforms would be discussed (Dossou 1990, 184; Dan 2011, 189). Finally, on January 8th 1990, President Kérékou announced the *Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives de la Nation*, where representatives from all sectors of society would gather in order to discuss economic and political reforms. President Kérékou also thought that by calling a national conference, he would: would appease international donors and co-opt his opponents in the short term (Seely 2005, 363).

4.3.2: The National Conference and the agreement between non-loyalist officers and opposition leaders

By January 1990 the civic resistance campaign had forced the PRPB government to hold a National Conference. While many in the regime, including President Kérékou, were convinced that the regime could use this meeting to co-opt opposition forces to the already existing political structures, two factors unforeseen by government officials would make the National Conference a platform for regime change: a military increasingly in favour of major political reforms, and unified opposition forces who could make highly credible commitments. The combination of these two factors pushed the regime to accept the political transition and embrace democratic reforms.

The preparation of the National Conference was in the hands of Robert Dossou and other regime members selected as the preparatory committee (Derryck 1991, 24-5). Every

social group were invited to submit memoranda expressing their own proposed reforms (Dossou 2000, 216-8). While they did send their own memorandum, the PCD declined to participate in the CN, calling it a "plot against the emancipation of a people" (Dossou 1990, 191). This self-exclusion from the conference would complete a power shift from the more radical forces in the opposition movement to more moderate leaders. As Seely explained: "the most radical part of the opposition lost influence when the initiative moved from the streets to the conference hall, and more moderate pro-democracy leaders drew from the ranks of those who had supported the communists" (2005, 363).

In total, over 520 representatives would take part in the CN (Dossou 2000, 220). The government, through its political representation, central bodies, and affiliated groups, could count on more representatives (36) than could other political groups. The Popular Armed Forces were allotted 17 representatives (Adamon 1995, 196). This included 3 for central command, 5 for the national defense (the military) and 9 for the public security sector.[62] Military participation would be critical to the success of the conference – many participants were anticipating the army's reaction.

In preparation for the CN, a series of meetings was held among the various military units. Many divergent opinions were heard during these meetings. Those trained in socialist states, wanted an overhaul of the state structure and the creation of new revolutionary structures. Some wanted to fully back President Kérékou and end the conference (Interview, Robert Dossou, Cotonou, March 7, 2013). For others, the National Conference

[62] There were no representatives of the BGP.

became a way to express their many grievances (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). Two opinions dominated at the conclusion of the meetings: the majority of the participants came out in favour of political reforms and opening up the regime (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013). Others, including within the high command, favoured a return to the barracks and the withdrawal from politics as a solution to the heightened factionalism within the military's ranks. With respect to the latter position, a retired officer stated that : "In the army, when you are under heavy fire, that you cannot go forward, you fall back, but it must be in a disciplined manner" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013). The memorandum submitted by the Popular Armed Forces reflected the preference for a return to the barracks, seen as a strategic retreat by some and a reflection of their preferences for political reforms by others. Entitled *Contributions des Forces Armées Populaires à la Conférence*, the military memorandum states that "the Popular Armed Forces wish to return to the barracks and to be apolitical. […] This depoliticisation must be characterized by the non-affiliation with any political tendencies" (FFS 1990, 123-4). Furthermore, the document was in favour of a restructuration of the FAP.[63]

On the opposition front, a coalition was starting to form. Throughout the 1989 strikes many coordination bureaus had already been set up (Banégas 2003, 122-3). Through these networks various independent unions and new political parties built a common discourse on the benefits of electoral democracy (Seely 2001, 122; Creevey, Ngomo &

[63] These decisions also reflected the feelings of non-military members of the FAP that the FAP's structure was inefficient, and their growing frustration about the promotion procedures (Interview, Retired Paramilitary Force Officer #1, Cotonou, February 15, 2013).

Vengroff 2005, 473). These networks remained active in the preparatory phase and during the CN as a means of coordination between the regime's various opponents. As Seely reported: "Opposition leaders spent long hours, even before the conference, meeting with one another to ascertain the views of different groups of participants and anticipating how compromises would be reached" (2005, 363).[64] This unity was an important indicator of the opposition forces' capacity for credible commitment, as only unified groups might make more radical demands that could go against vital military interests.

As the conference opened on February 19, 1990, opposition forces managed to elect their own representatives to every position in the presidium that led the conference, including the presidency, which went to Archbishop da Souza, a representative favoured by the opposition. As the representatives of the government realized that the wind was clearly turning against them, they expressed a series of warnings. Colonel Azonhiho, as minister of the interior, reminded the CN representatives that they had been called to improve on the existing institutions and not create new ones (Banégas 2003, 151). President Kérékou himself went to the meeting and declared that "[the CN representatives] cannot ask for my resignation" (Dossou 1990, 196). While these two declarations can be interpreted as warnings, there were more serious threats by participants opposed to the reform project. Colonel Kouandaté, President Kérékou's former mentor, threatened to stage a coup if the CN representatives removed President Kérékou from power and declared their sovereignty (FFS 1990, 7).[65] There were also rumours that Amadou Cissé, a

[64] The potential spoiler of this coordinated effort, the PCD, had already decided not participate in the CN.
[65] By declaring themselves sovereign, the conference participants would give themselves the power to disband already existing institutions. This made themselves independent from the incumbent regime and propose reforms beyond the scope desired by the PRPB government (Seely 2005, 364).

Marabout who became one of the President's closest collaborators, was preparing to attack the conference with Libyan mercenaries (Dossou 2000, 223-4). None of these threats, however, managed to stop the proceedings of the conference.

Except for these few anti-reformists, most of the armed forces could be assessed as pro-reform by this point. Three large pro-reform groups can be identified: (1) those who desired to stick to the memorandum plan of the FAP; (2) those who were convinced by the opposition guarantees; and (3) those who saw the CN as a means to get their revenge on regime loyalists. For the first group of officers – who wished to stick to the memorandum plan – the opposition take-over of the conference did not change anything. As a military representative put it: "When you invite people to play tam-tam, you cannot refuse the rhythm they set" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013). The CN and the military's withdrawal from politics were perceived by this group as the only alternative to intramilitary fighting (Interview, ex-PRPB Dignitary, Porto-Novo, March 8, 2013).

The second group was swayed by the opposition forces' efforts to accommodate military-corporate interests. The opposition's willingness to compromise with the military and integrate them into the reform process was crucial to the persuasion of these officers. From the start of the conference, opposition representatives integrated military representatives in the decision-making process. Before the question of sovereignty was debated on the floor, it was discussed in a committee meeting which involved, among others, Colonel Vincent Guezodje, representative of the armed forces. The armed forces even managed to bring some changes to the motion regarding sovereignty (Adamon 1995,

61). The consultations led to a series of compromises, which helped solidify many officers' decision to support a democratic process. While a prime minister and a new legislative council – the High Council of the Republic (HCR) – were put in place, President Kérékou remained head of the armed forces. Two retired military officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Da Souza and Colonel Kouandaté, were members of the HCR as former heads of state. President Kérékou and the rest of the military personnel would be granted immunity from future prosecutions for human rights violations perpetrated during his rule (Seely 2005, 365; 2001, 250). Military institutional reforms would not be decided by the CN but rather by military officials during the military Estates General – a meeting held in 1997 where military and civilian representatives discussed and planned security sector reforms (Dossou 2000, 225; Interview, Retired Military Officer #1, Abomey-Calavi, February 19, 2013). The credibility of such promises was reinforced by opposition leaders' ability to control their movement and enforce any agreement with the military.

A third group, mostly out-of-favour officers, began to rally around opposition representatives as they perceived that regime change could also become a means to assure a changing of the guard within the army (Houngnikpo 1999, 220). "Many told themselves it was the time to take their revenge" (Interview, Retired Military Officer #3, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). As Colonel Akpo, a former partisan of Commander Assogba, reported: "Nicephore Soglo [the prime minister nominated by the National Conference] rallied around him all the military officers embittered by the revolution" (Akpo 2006, 135). They were assured that two paramilitary forces – which had been a means of diverting resources away from the army, and guaranteed promotion for regime loyalists – would be disbanded

and their equipment redistributed to the army (Seely 2001, 240). Additionally, two moderate officers, Colonel Séraphin Noukpo and Lieutenant-Colonel François Kouyami, were chosen to lead the armed forces and the gendarmerie (respectively) after presidential elections.

As the interests of these three groups collided, military representatives acted in favour of the reform process. The military, accordingly, defused the threats of anti-reformists within its ranks. On the day where Colonel Kouandaté made his threat to the conference, Colonel Vincent Guezodje, head of the armed forces, declared publicly that: "[Kouandaté's declaration] is a military coup and it cannot be so" (FFS 1990, 7). He then went directly to address Colonel Kouandaté to remind him that he no longer held any position or power within the army (Interview, Retired Military Officer #5, Cotonou, March 5, 2013). Later that same day, military representatives presented the military memorandum as a reminder of the military's approval for democratic transition and desire to return to the barracks (FFS 1990, 7-8).

This support of the armed forces renewed the confidence of the opposition representatives, galvanizing their efforts to push through their reform agenda (Levitsky & Way 2010, 293). The vote on the CN sovereignty passed, with the support of even some military representatives (Adamon 1995, 62). As Omittogun and Onigo-Itite summarized, "the army stood by and did nothing while the conference usurped Kérékou's powers" (Omitoogun & Onigo-Itite 1996, 35; Levitsky & Way 2010, 293).

It was still uncertain, however, that President Kérékou would endorse the conference's conclusion. The decision of a majority of officers and soldiers to support the democratic renewal would help to sway President Kérékou.[66] There were signs that large segments of the armed forces would act against the president's wishes if he did not accept the conference's result (Decalo 1997, 54-5; Levitsky & Way 2010, 293; Seely 2001, 235). This point pushed President Kérékou to come out against loyalist officers' will to end the conference or, at the very least, to refuse to endorse its conclusions (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 6, 2013; Interview, Civil Servant #2, Cotonou, February 21, 2013). A former PRPB dignitary reported this conversation between an officer and President Kérékou at a government meeting on the eve of the end of the conference:

> Officer: "The people of Benin only understand one language: force. It is time to put an end to this chaos at the National Conference so that every Beninese citizen faces his responsibility and its destiny!'
>
> President Kérékou: "I've heard what you just said, but there is a moment in the life of a leader where he must make decisions alone. The conference will continue" (Interview, ex-PRPB Dignitary, Porto-Novo, March 8, 2013).

On the final night of the conference, President Kérékou declared his endorsement of the conference's conclusions (FFS 1990, 11).

During the following year a transitional governmental prepared a new Constitution along the lines of the resolutions voted by the CN. The new Constitution was approved by referendum in December, 1990. A presidential election was then held in March, 1991.

[66] Noudjenoume stated that 90% of all military personnel had stopped supporting Kérékou by that point (1999, 166).

Nicéphore Soglo won the presidential election in the second round with 67.5% of the votes (Gisselquist 2008, 798). President Kérékou accepted the election result and passed the power to Soglo (Interview, ex-PRPB Dignitary, Porto-Novo, March 8, 2013). Still, there was resistance from loyal officers, particularly within the BGP. After the defeat some loyalists would refuse the transition. The former second-in-command of the BGP, Captain Pascal Tawès, fled after he was accused of staging a coup in May 1992 (Banégas 2003, 190). In May and April 1994 another group of northern officers had begun to plan a coup to reinstate a PRPB-style government, however the coup was aborted as the two factions failed to agree on the distribution of power (Magnusson 2001, 224).

In the case of Benin, while certain guidelines were promulgated during the CN, most reforms took place during the Estates General in 1997. Still, the new Constitution outlined by the CN called for the political neutrality of the army, a large limitation of its role in domestic affairs and the creation of a ministry of defense that would be headed by a civilian appointed by the elected president (Alao & Loko 2008, 33). There was also a changing of the guard at the head of the military, as officers from the long-marginalized factions headed both the armed forces and the gendarmerie. Certain paramilitary units were integrated within the military as the army's size increased between 1990 and 1995, pro-Kérékou officers who had been in command of the BGP were integrated in the armed forces' hierarchy (Decalo & Houngnikpo 2013, 57-8). There were a certain number of retirements in the years that followed, including from the former head of the BGP (Interview, Retired Military Officer #4, Cotonou, March 6, 2013). In the 1996 election campaign these pro-Kérékou officers prevented pro-Soglo officers from launching a coup

when it became clear that President Kérékou was going to win the second presidential election (Adjovi 1998, 45).

At the Estates General, held in July 1997 in Cotonou, participants decided on a number of reforms: the FAP were divided; paramilitary forces – with the exception of the gendarmerie – were disbanded; and training curriculum and promotion procedures reflected the new professional orientation of the army rather than any ideology (Gazibo 2005, 139). Since then the Beninese armed forces have mostly been uninvolved in political affairs.

4.4: Conclusions

When Mathieu Kérékou came to power in 1972, he depended on a military institution fragmented due to ethno-regional, ideological, and generational differences. While his integration of other social forces helped him build his own power base, events in the mid-1970s demonstrated the need to find a strategy that both maintained a minimal level of support from rival groups while also diminishing their power. Accordingly, a new strategy was put in place to counterbalance rival factions by: (1) creating additional divisions within the regular army; and (2) creating alternative power centres within the security sector. However, the relative equilibrium of power established through these measures was disrupted by the rise of a new player, the civilian opposition forces. These opposition forces would provide sufficient guarantees to convince a large majority of Benin's military personnel to favour regime change.

I turn to a very different case in the next chapter, that of Togo. In Togo, the regime did not establish a counterbalancing strategy but rather stacked the army with loyalists. As a consequence, the opposition forces that challenged the authoritarian regime in that country would have a very hard time finding military allies in their quest for regime change.

Chapter 5: Ethnic Stacking and Military-Opposition Clashes in Togo

In the previous chapter I explored how a counterbalancing strategy of coup-prevention meant that marginalized military factions were still present and influential within the Beninese armed forces. Their refusal to come to the regime's defence, combined with coup threats, greatly constrained Kérékou and the *Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin*'s (PRPB) ability to repress popular protesters in 1989. This chapter focuses on the Togolese case. In Togo, the armed forces have been willing, since the rise of the opposition movement in September 1990, to use their coercive capacity to end protests. The destabilization campaign that took place between October 1991 and February 1993 crushed the opposition movement and reconsolidated the power of the president and head of the military, Gnassingbé Eyadéma.[67] I argue that the Togolese army's propensity to use coercive means against opposition forces can be explained by the domination of President Eyadéma's loyalists – particularly the Kabye people from Eyadéma's home village of Pya – within the military's ranks. Furthermore, the opposition forces' low level of credible commitment convinced most of the few out-of-favour officers, the non-Kabye, to side with the loyalists and favour the repression of the opposition movement.

In section 5.1 I explore how the post-independence dynamics in Togo led to the establishment of a military junta in 1967. I also outline the characteristics of the armed forces during Sylvanus Olympio's presidency. In section 5.2, I evaluate the policies of

[67] He was originally named Étienne Eyadéma but changed his given name to Gnassingbé during the Africanization campaign of 1974. I refer to him as Gnassingbé Eyadéma throughout the text.

ethnic stacking put in place by President Eyadéma after he became Togo's leader in April 1967 – a process that resulted in the inflation of the military ranks with President Eyadéma co-ethnics, particularly those from his own clan. In section 5.3 I analyze the rise of anti-regime opposition forces as well as the military's response. Military response to popular protests in Togo can be divided into two periods: (1) the period between September 1990 and June 1991; and (2) the period between July 1991 and March 1993, also known as 'the Creeping Military Coup'.[68] I make this division in order to assess how changes in the opposition coalition's credible commitment influenced the response of marginalized cliques to their mobilization but not the loyalist response.

5.1: Northern preponderance within the Togolese army

As described in Chapter 3, Togo was born out of the eastern half of the former German colony of Togoland. After the 1921 Milner-Simon Treaty (also referred to as the Milner-Simon Agreement), Togoland was divided into two regions, with the western half administered by the British. The European administration of the eastern section, both German and French, implemented something close to an ethnic division of labour in the territory that would become Togo. While Ewe-speakers – particularly Afro-Brazilian families from the coastal cities – were employed in administrative and commercial sectors, northerners formed most of the French security forces due to their reputation as excellent warriors (Cornevin 1968, 68; Horowitz 1985, 449).[69] Military careers became the only path

[68] Translated from the French expression *Coup d'État Rampant.*

[69] Afro-Brazilians are former slaves and free people of African origin from Brazil who returned to West Africa in the second half of the 19th century. They formed prosperous trade networks and would end up as the economic and political elite of major coastal cities like Aneho and Lomé. For example, Sylvanus Olympio (the first president of independent Togo) came from an Afro-Brazilian family (Amos 2001, 293-96).

open to northerners. There was a growing feeling that northerners were, “blocked [in their social ascension] by the 200 families from […] Aneho [the Afro-Brazilian elite]” (Cornevin 1968, 68). The lack of opportunities for northern populations meant that “military service was for many young northern men the only way out” (Interview, Journalist #2, Lomé, February 26, 2013). It also meant that there was long-term resentment among northern populations for what they saw as southern favoritism, which was reinforced when the *Comité de l'unité togolaise* (CUT) took over and marginalized northern political elites. Many young northerners exiled themselves to Dahomey and enlisted in the French army (Lee 1969, 15, 45; Welch 1970, 8). The Kabye were particularly numerous among the Togolese serving in the French army as: (1) they were the largest northern group, and (2) the Kabye territory was just across the border from a French recruitment post in Dahomey (Cornevin 1968, 68; Heilbrunn 1994, 394).

President Sylvanus Olympio and his partisans' expulsion of northern elites from the political arena at the time of independence meant that military officers from the north were the last remaining elites in northern populations (Horowitz 1985, 486). Northern grievances, linked to northern marginalization and unequal development, were expressed through the military (Decalo 1979, 105-6).

At independence Togo inherited a single gendarmerie unit of 200-300 men, in large majority northerners (Thiriot 1999, 73). They were commanded by a Losso, Major Kleber Dadjo, assisted by some Togolese Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and French

officers (Decalo 1979, 109).[70] President Olympio's military vision clashed with the interests of military personnel. From Olympio's perspective, the French military-assistance accord provided security guarantees, making the army useless (Howe 1967, 9). President Olympio conceived the military as either a police force or a way to give work to unemployed young men and thus indoctrinate them into the regime's ideology (Lee 1969, 51 ,140). In 1963, 600 ex-servicemen who had fought in French forces arrived in Lomé to petition the government in favour of their integration into the army. Officers in the gendarmerie also petitioned for an enlargement of the armed forces. In the end, President Olympio announced that he would allow a 100-man expansion of the military, but he would only hire unemployed young urbanites. As he declared to Lieutenant Emmanuel Bodjollé, who was leading the group of ex-servicemen: "I shall employ unemployed school-leavers or people who fought for independence, and not you mercenaries who were killing our Algerian brothers when we were fighting for independence" (Howe 1967, 9). This declaration angered veterans, who began to plan a coup in coordination with officers from the gendarmerie (Interview, ex-RPT Dignitary, Lomé, November 12, 2013).

On January 13 1963, veterans armed by the gendarmerie toppled the government and President Olympio was killed (First 1970, 87). A group of veteran Non-Commissioned Officers – Lieutenant Emmanuel Bodjollé and Sergeants Janvier Chango, James Yaovi Assila, Albert Alidou Djafalo, Ayité Mensah, Koffi Rainhilf Kongo, as well as Étienne

[70] Lossos are closely related to Kabyes.

Eyadéma – would come out of the crisis as newly pre-eminent players both within the armed forces and in the political sphere.[71]

Nicholas Grunitsky and Antoine Meatchi – heads of the two political parties opposed to the *Comité de l'unité togolaise* (CUT) – came back from exile to lead a government of national unity. Although a northerner, Meatchi, occupied the vice-presidency, power still mostly remained in southern hands; Grunitsky was president and officials from the CUT occupied many cabinet positions (Howe 1967, 10). President Grunitsky was largely subservient to military corporate interests (Decalo 1973a, 76-77): he accepted large increases in the military budget and the creation of new brigades. Between 1963 and 1965 the security forces expanded from 300 to 1,200 men and it remained in northern hands thanks to the integration of the veterans. The budget increased by nearly 300% (First 1970, 208; Koffi 1985, 569). The ringleaders of the 1963 coup were all fully reintegrated and promoted in the ranks, to the point of rapidly overpowering the other officers (Houngnikpo 1999, 150).[72] The Togolese army, unlike the Beninese army, was not troubled by a large north-south division, as a coalition from different northern tribes dominated both the rank-and-file soldiers and the officer corps. The fear of retribution by the political descendants of the CUT, and the memory of former President Olympio's anti-military policies, held the ringleaders together (Toulabor 1993, 18; Houngnikpo 1999, 158). Much later, the theme of southern revenge would be used by

[71] Étienne Eyadéma would later take his clan name as a first name and be called Gnassingbé Eyadéma.
[72] Bodjollé became Captain while Eyadéma, Djafalo, and Assila became Lieutenants. See Koffi (1985, 569).

Sergeant Eyadéma during his presidency – and particularly during the 1990-1993 regime crisis – to prevent defection within the armed forces.

The most influential officers – Captain Bodjollé and Lieutenant Eyadéma – competed between 1963 and 1966 for control of the armed forces. They also sided with different political leaders, as Lieutenant Eyadéma sided with President Grunitsky while Captain Bodjollé sided with Vice-President Meatchi (Howe 1967, 10). Captain Bodjollé was pushed into retirement after a failed coup attempt in 1965 (Decalo 1979, 111).[73] In 1966, President Grunitsky expelled Vice-President Meatchi from his position. These military and political divisions provided an opportunity for CUT members to attempt to topple President Grunitsky. In November 1966, thousands of CUT partisans took to the streets and occupied the national radio station. Howe states that the protest leaders overestimated the power and ability of disgruntled southern Ewe officers to prevent a military crackdown (1967, 10). Others hypothesized that CUT elites did meet with the military high command, including Lieutenant Eyadéma, to appeal to their common grievances against President Grunitsky's weak government, but that the high command sided with President Grunitsky as they feared that a new CUT government would prosecute the officers involved in the 1963 coup, who included most of the high command (Cornevin 1968, 81; Decalo 1979, 110). In any case, the military effectively ended the protests rapidly in the same month.

[73] Some reports state that Moba soldiers sided with Captain Bodjollé on this occasion (Thiriot 1999, 75; Decalo 1973a, 84).

The CUT attempt failed, but President Grunitsky's government was permanently weakened in the process (Horowitz 1985, 504; Howe 1967, 10). By January 1967 the military had decided to step in and establish a military junta under the leadership of Colonel Dadjo, head of the armed forces since independence. All political institutions were suspended and former Vice-President Meatchi was arrested (Decalo 1973a, 81).[74] In April 1967 Lieutenant Eyadéma was appointed as the head of government by the other commanding officers as Colonel Dadjo was pushed into retirement. Initially, Lieutenant Eyadéma's government largely relied on northern power, as seven of the twelve cabinet posts were occupied by northerners, four of which were occupied by Kabyes (Cornevin 1968, 81).

To summarize, attempts by CUT elites to eliminate other political elites and manipulate the state's institutions provided the opportunity for military coups in 1963 and 1967. The northern military elite became the principal player in Togolese politics. Unlike in Benin, certain ethnic groups already dominated the military from the start. In future confrontations, southern civilian elites and northern military elites would use the memory of the 1963 coup to gather political support. Although no single northern group formed a majority in the armed forces and there was the potential for ethnic rivalry within the military ranks, this potential was largely diluted by their common fear of southern retribution for the 1963 coup. Later this northern military/southern elite divide greatly constrained the credible commitment capacity of opposition forces during the 1990s, as the theme of southern revenge was used by President Eyadéma's associates to scare away

[74] Grunitsky fled the country during the coup.

potential military defectors. The revenge theme was also reinforced by the radical opposition force's usage of former President Sylvanus Olympio's image.

5.2: Ethnic stacking in the Togolese army

By April of 1967, one of the 1963 ringleaders (Lieutenant Eyadéma) was both the head of the armed forces and leader of the new military junta.[75] Like Mathieu Kérékou in Benin, he came from a northern tribe and removed civilian political elites and senior officers from state structures. The two leaders, however, had to deal with armies who were very different: while the Beninese army was increasingly divided among various factions based on ethno-regional and ideological divisions, Togo's army was almost exclusively composed of northerners. From the start, President Eyadéma could count on a relatively cohesive army, particularly after Captain Bodjollé's partisans were purged.

Still, coup plots and assassination attempts convinced President Eyadéma that only a single group, the Kabye, could be relied on to defend the regime in any given circumstance. In this spirit, President Eyadéma initiated a policy of reliance on loyalists, which led to ethnic stacking within the military's ranks as recruitment and promotion procedures favoured the Kabye above all other groups.

[75] In 1969, President Eyadéma also spearheaded the establishment of the *Rassemblement du people togolais* (RPT), which would be the sole legal party in Togo until 1991. The RPT became an instrument for the northern military elite to co-opt southern political and economic elites.

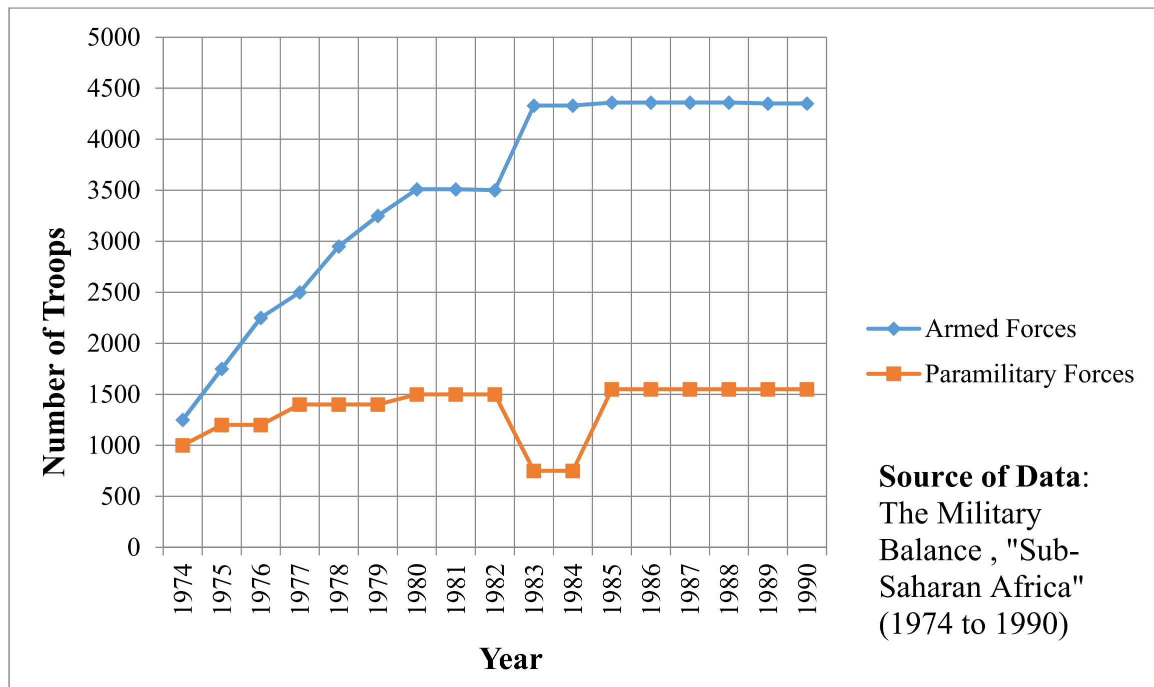
5.2.1: Ethnic favoritism in the recruitment and promotion processes

President Eyadéma's government started under less than auspicious terms as Captain Bodjollé's partisans attempted to overpower his faction.[76] On April 24th 1967 a gendarme from Bodjollé's village of Kouméa – Norbert Bokobosso – tried to shoot President Eyadéma (CVJR 2012, 161-2). In the aftermath of this attack, all soldiers and officers from Kouméa, particularly prevalent in the gendarmerie, were expelled from the army. This ban lasted throughout Eyadéma's rule. As one interviewee mentioned, "the entire military segment from the Kouméa village was pushed into retirement supposedly because a gendarme from the same village might have shot [Eyadéma]" (Interview, Journalist #2, Lomé, February 25, 2013). In 1970, Bodjollé incited Moba troops to mutiny.[77] The mutiny failed and Mobas were purged from the army (Thiriot 1999, 201). While in Benin there were also individual purges in the early 1970s, they never involved entire groups but were, rather, Kérékou's individual military rivals. In a process similar to other regimes where ethnic stacking has been used, group identification in Togo became a form of proxy for the degree of loyalty in the Togolese army.[78] These group-based purges marked the beginning of a process that would see entire groups either favoured or pushed out of the Togolese military.

[76] It should be recalled that Bodjollé and Eyadéma competed for control over the military institution between 1963 and 1965.
[77] It remains unclear if there was an actual mutiny or if this was used as an excuse to imprison them. This was not the first time Mobas were supposedly involved in a military mutiny – in 1965 many Mobas were on Bodjollé's side in the power-play between Bodjollé and Eyadéma (Thiriot 1999, 75; Decalo 1973a, 84).
[78] See, for instance, McLauchlin (2010, 338-9).

President Eyadéma launched a vast expansion of the Togolese armed forces, partly as a means to provide employment to Kabyes from Pya, but also to avoid unrest. Between 1974 and 1980 the number of soldiers increased from 1,250 to 3,510 (see Figure 8). By 1975 the military budget represented close to a third of the government's expenses (Toulabor 1986, 102). New units, such as the presidential guard, were also formed. While the overall majority of the armed forces had always been composed of northerners – near 80% by most accounts –the Kabye were not the only group present (Degli 1996, 58-9). Starting in the early 1970s, the Kabye became unofficially advantaged by the system. Over time the vast majority of new recruits were selected from President Eyadéma's own ethnic group (Ellis 1993, 467).

Figure 8: Evolution of Togo's Armed Forces



Informally beforehand and formally from 1979 onwards through article 10 of the Constitution, President Eyadéma controlled nominations to all civilian and military positions (Hodges 1977, 61; Heilbrunn 1994, 460). While there was an official policy that the position of second-in-command should be filled by a southerner – Colonel Assila then Colonel Mawulikplimi Ameyi – the real power was always held by another Kabye (Koffi 1985, 583). The newly formed presidential guard was controlled by of one of President Eyadéma's half-brothers, Lieutenant Toï Donou, and an officer from Pya, Colonel Akoussoyé Séverin Assih (Heilbrunn 1993, 460). Colonel Assih was also in charge of the gendarmerie. Eyadéma's uncle, Benoît Yaya Malou, was in charge of the national police academy (Toulabor 1986, 190). The army's rank-and-file soldiers were also increasingly selected directly from the Kabye population. As Ellis described, "[Eyadéma] habitually hand-picked new recruits during the wrestling matches which were traditionally held every year in his home region during the important festival known as *evala*" (1993, 467). These reforms consolidated the Kabyes' hold on the armed forces.

Southerners were still present within various positions of the army. Colonel James Assila, an Ewe involved in the 1963 and 1967 coups, was one of the members of the inner circle of the military junta after 1967 (Koffi 1985, 580). After Colonel Assila retired in 1975, he was replaced by another southerner, Colonel Ameyi (Koffi 1985, 580). Southern officers, however, were largely kept out of command posts, and occupied technical or administrative positions instead. The few who did occupy command positions were seconded by northerners who unofficially commanded those units or monitored the southern officers' activities (Interview, Jean Yaovi Degli, Lomé, November 14, 2013).

Until 1976, while Colonel Assila was officially the second-highest ranking officer in the military after Eyadéma, it was Commander Robert Kidjandan Adewi, a Kabye from President Eyadéma's village, who was unofficially the second-most powerful officer in the army (Koffi 1985, 583). Additionally, there was an unofficial cap on the number of southern officers within the army: southern officers could never be more numerous than those from Pya (Manley 2003, 5). In other words, Southerners, who represented more than 50% of the population, could never be more numerous within the officer corps than those who came from a village of no more than 15,000 inhabitants.

After a series of assassination attempts, President Eyadéma set in place a network of informants that acted as an unofficial command structure within the military and was in charge of internal surveillance. As a participant at the National Conference later reported:

> There were two hierarchies in the Togolese army: an official one and an unofficial one. The second hierarchy was solely composed of individuals who also come from Pya [President Eyadéma's village]. They held the real power and spied on their fellow officers. When they had any doubts, they made sure you either had to leave the army, or they tortured you, or killed you (Interview, National Conference Participant #1, Lomé, November 18, 2013).

This second hierarchy was involved in the assassination of potential military rivals. On July 31, 1975, Colonel Paul Komlan was assassinated by Lieutenant Toï Donou, one of President Eyadéma's brothers, after the former complained too publicly that Colonel Akoussoyé Séverin Assih (an officer from Pya) was promoted before him (Decalo 1990, 237). In 1976, Lieutenant Gaston Gnéhou – a northern officer and one of Eyadéma's sisters' husbands – was assassinated as he was trying to create a network of northern officers dissatisfied with presidential policies (Toulabor 1986, 186).

President Eyadéma also frequently shuffled military ministers and senior officers in order to ensure their loyalty and demonstrate that he was the sole source of power (Ellis 1993, 464; Houngnikpo 1999, 76). Commander Adewi, an officer from Pya, was removed in 1976 under suspicious circumstances, potentially because he was a powerful rival of President Eyadéma himself (Toulabor 1986, 276). Colonel Assih, also from Pya, was stripped of his command position in 1987 as his popularity and control over key units – the presidential guard and the gendarmerie – made him a potentially powerful rival (Decalo 1990, 235). In 1994 it was the turn of Colonel Assih's successor, Lieutenant-Colonel Djoua, also from Pya (N.D. 1994b). As in Benin, command shuffles were used by this military autocrat to prevent the rise of powerful rivals. However, none of these purged officers had a faction behind him, unlike in Benin, indicating a relative degree of military unity.

While other groups were slowly pushed back into minor roles, cohesion in the army was maintained through the provision of economic incentives. Military wages were substantially increased between 1968 and 1970 (Decalo 1990, 215). Officers and soldiers were rewarded for their loyalty with appointments in state corporations, economic benefits, and participation in the lucrative trans-border trade (Gaba 1997, 436; Ellis 1993, 464). A member of a civil society group stated that "Military officers were offered pensions twice as generous as other civil servants. You could also find many military officers and their family members in state corporations" (Interview, Civil Society Leader #1, Lomé, November 14, 2013).

As President Eyadéma could count on the loyalty – or at the very least silent consent – of most of the military's personnel, there was no need to set up a parallel power base within civil society or any alternative security organizations. Geddes theorizes that autocrats can set up political parties as a counterweight when they cannot rely on the military (2009). In Benin, for instance, the foundation of the PRPB allowed Kérékou to slowly demilitarize the government and integrate individuals more loyal to him within the government (Banégas 2003, 48). In Togo, the *Rassemblement du peuple togolais* (RPT) allowed the regime to co-opt southern elites, but it did not decrease military power. Southern elites, particularly merchants and plantation owners, were co-opted through the new RPT's patronage networks, but northern military officers were in control of the party (Interview, Jean Yaovi Degli, Lomé, November 14, 2013). Entire party cells were reserved for soldiers while the national council and the political bureau included many senior officers (Gaba 1997, 264). President Eyadéma himself declared at the founding ceremony of the RPT on August 30, 1969: "As a necessity to maintain power and countervail destabilizing efforts of our adversaries, governing officials must, naturally, rely on the military groups which support them" (Koffi 1985, 552). Furthermore, appointments to the RPT became another potential benefit for loyal officers.

Strong support for President Eyadéma in the armed forces also meant that he did not have to employ counterbalancing strategies, unlike President Kérékou in Benin. True, he did establish an elite unit of the Presidential Guard, dominated by loyalists (Heilbrunn 1994, 461). This was a second paramilitary unit, alongside the gendarmerie. By the late 1980s the presidential guard and the gendarmerie would together count 1,600 men.

However, in Togo the regime never really depended on this unit for regime protection. In 1974, 57% of all security personnel were in the regular army; this proportion rose to 67% by 1990.[79] In Benin, this proportion remained stable – from 49% in 1974 to 46% in 1990.[80] In other words, while Benin's regular army was constantly kept in a minority position within the security sector, Togo's regular army became increasingly predominant within its own security sector over the years. Additionally, unlike in Benin, the gendarmerie, the presidential guard, and the armed forces were all integrated into a single command structure.

From the start, President Eyadéma initiated a number of military reforms in order to assure his control over the military. Certain groups that he deemed untrustworthy – Mobas, Kabyes from Kouméa – were either entirely purged from the army or kept in a minority situation, as the Ewes were. Promotion and recruitment procedures were also meant to benefit the Kabye. Key command posts were occupied by President Eyadéma's clan. As compensation, other groups were given financial incentives. Unlike in Benin, paramilitary forces were never strong enough to counterbalance the ground army. These policies are in fact perfectly in line with the creation of a loyalist army. This process of ethnic stacking would accelerate in the 1980s as the Kabye would become a majority within the army and have a near-monopoly of commands and senior positions.

[79] See Figure 8, p.160.
[80] See Figure 7, p.123.

5.2.2: The consolidation of the power of the Pya circle and the purge of southern officers

Throughout the 1970s President Eyadéma managed to initiate reforms aimed at assuring Kabye control over the military. He did so by expanding the civil service to get other northern groups and southerners to accept their exclusion from the military. This process depended on growing government revenues, however after a fall in the prices of key exports such as phosphate and cocoa in the early 1980s, and a decrease in trade with other African states, government revenues dropped massively (Heilbrunn 1997, 225). By 1977, the phosphate boom was already over and the Togolese government's mineral rent greatly declined. This was a major problem considering that the economy was dependent on phosphate exports, which represented 40% of Togo's export earnings (Steinholtz 1985, 29; Kazadi 1981, 40). The government reacted by implementing selective austerity measures, namely by cutting social programs and freezing civil service salaries and employment (Heilbrunn 1997, 227). Military budgets, however, continued to increase during this period (Interview, Journalist #1, Lomé, February 25, 2013; Gaba 1997, 348).

As southern discontent grew, the regime treated southern officers with even more suspicion. After a mercenary attack in 1977, a number of southern officers were suspected of being involved (Thiriot 1999, 201; Decalo 1990, 234). Documents found in one of the participants' houses tied Ewe officers, particularly Lieutenant-Colonel Merlaud Lawson and Colonel Rainhilf Koffi Kongo, to the exiled civilian opponents of the regime (Toulabor 1986, 275-6). While some officers, like Lieutenant-Colonel Lawson, went into exile, others, like Colonel Koffi Kongo (who had been involved in the 1963 coup), were jailed.

Suspicions around Ewe officers were reinforced by a series of events in 1985 and 1986.[81] In 1985, multiple bombs detonated throughout the city of Lomé. The attacks, according to the Togolese security agencies, involved the *Mouvement togolais pour la démocratie* (MTD), which was composed of ex-CUT members; and the *Front national de libération du Togo* (FNLT), composed of ex-RPT members and exiled military personnel (Cornevin 1987, 470). In September 1986, 60 men led by Colonel Lawson unsuccessfully attempted to take over key government installations around Lomé (Everett 1986, 14).[82]

The attacks and the participation of exiled southern officers convinced President Eyadéma of the need to greatly reduce southern presence in the military.[83] He was convinced that southern officers were more likely to either participate in such attacks or to provide crucial information to his enemies (Toulabor 1999, 108). Most Ewe officers were either imprisoned, pushed into retirement, or forced to flee the country (Heilbrunn 1994, 462). As one journalist I interviewed reported, "the September 23 [1986] assault became an excuse to reinforce the power of loyalists within the army even more. Non-Kabyes were under heavy surveillance" (Interview, Journalist #2, Lomé, February 25, 2013). Additionally, from that point on, southerners were barred from serving in key units like the presidential guard or from being in charge of munition depots (Toulabor 1996, 108). These purges of marginalized cliques, including southerners and partisans of President Eyadéma's rivals, would limit the ability of opponents to sway military factions to the

[81] Colonel Kongo died in prison in 1985.
[82] President Eyadéma asked for military help from his key allies – Zaïre and France – in order to fully push back Colonel Lawson's troops.
[83]Also reinforced by the potential involvement of Ghana's Ewe military forces, including the country's leader, Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings (Heilbrunn 1993, 463).

reform agenda. Simply put, there were now very few people in the military who opposed the government: "President Eyadéma's potential military rivals – those susceptible to constrain his actions – had been eliminated far before popular protests were ignited in 1990" (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

Close to 1,000 new recruits were admitted into the armed forces during this period, almost exclusively Kabyes (Manley 2003, 6). Military colleges like Tchi Tchao reserved places for Kabyes, particularly sons of officers (Degli 1996, 59). The new recruits were used to create new military units, composed exclusively of Kabyes: the *Forces d'intervention rapide* (FIR), two paracommando units, and a new infantry battalion nicknamed 'pigeons' (Toulabor 2008, 324). These units were put under the direct control of members of the Pya circle: Lieutenant-Colonel Yoma Narcisse Djoua from Pya headed the FIR and the pigeons, while two of President Eyadéma's sons, Colonel Ernest Eyadéma and Commander Rock Eyadéma, headed the paracommando units (Thiriot 1999, 185). These units, better equipped and better trained than the rest of the army, would become – along with the presidential guard and certain gendarmerie commandos – the core of President Eyadéma's security apparatus (N.D. 1994a; Tète 1998, 47).

Promotions also increasingly favoured members of the Pya circle (Manley 2003). Lieutenant Toï Donou, President Eyadéma's half-brother, was made one of the top commanders of the presidential guard, and President Eyadéma's cousin, Yaya Malou, became head of the police academy (Everett 1986, 31). President Eyadéma's brother-in-law, Lieutenant-Colonel Marcel Sizing Walla, became head of the gendarmerie (Thiriot 1999, 185). Colonel Assih, head of the presidential guard and the gendarmerie, was

replaced by another of President Eyadéma's brothers-in-law, Major Tcha Akawelou.[84] The most sensitive command positions were all held by personal protégés of the president (Interview, Journalist #3, Lomé, February 23, 2013; Ellis 1993, 467). In the words of one professor I interviewed, "the military slowly became assimilated to President Eyadéma's power; it became a tribal militia at the service of President Eyadéma and a group of officers from Pya" (Interview, Professor #1, Lomé, November 18, 2013). By 1990, the Pya circle would represent almost a quarter of all troops.

By 1990 the Togolese army was largely in the hands of Kabyes: "The army was now controlled through ethnic and family ties" (Interview, Former Civil Society Leader #1, Montreal [phone interview], December 17, 2012). Kabyes represented 54% of all military personnel and almost a quarter of all troops were from Pya (Toulabor 2005, 4). The officer corps was even more in the hands of Kabye power as no units were commanded by southern officers. In addition, 10 of the 26 units were headed by officers from Pya (more than other all non-Kabyes combined), while five of the military's nine generals were Kabye (Toulabor 1999, 106). This differs with the situation during the 1960s, when there were many Losso, Moba, and Konkomba in the army (Degli 1996, 58). Two sectors were less touched by this ethnic-engineering policy: the air force and the navy, where Ewe commanders were still present. Neither sector was seen as necessary to the regime's survival and barely accounted for 10% of all military personnel, however (Toulabor 2005,

[84] One notable exception was General Ameyi, the highest-ranking Ewe officer, who became minister of the Interior.

11). In contrast, during the same period only a few units, such as the Presidential Guard, could be considered fully loyal to President Kérékou in Benin's army.

Two alternative explanations can be provided for this deepening of ethnic stacking in Togo. First, the beginning of the 1980s was marked by southern contestation, in part due to the economic recession, and by attacks by exiled southern officers. President Eyadéma may have become increasingly fearful, and decided to fall back on the only group which he could count on no matter what: the Kabye, and particularly the Pya circle (Decalo 1990, 237). External events, in other words, pushed the regime to fall back on its loyalist core. Alternatively, the consolidation of a Kabye core within the army was perfectly in line with policies initiated at the beginning of President Eyadéma's rule. From the start, the Kabye received preferential treatment in terms of recruitment, promotions, and attributions of command posts. The purge of most southerners was in line with previous purges of Mobas and Kabyes from Kouméa – all of whom were seen as potential rivals.[85] Such a strategy was possible as the Kabye were already a powerful group within the army at the time President Eyadéma took office. This purging of less reliable elements, and favoritism towards the most loyal elements, would assure the military's loyalty to President Eyadéma when he was challenged by civilian rivals in the early 1990s.

[85] In fact, many interviewees noted that the regime often either invented or exaggerated coup-plots as they could become excuses to purge the army of its 'unwanted' elements (Interview, Journalist #1, Lomé, February 23, 2013; interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

5.3: Confrontations between divided opposition forces and the loyalist army.

In the previous section, I centred the analysis on the first independent variable, namely coup prevention measures. The loyalist army that was formed in the process would, as this section demonstrates, favour repression of any civilian group demanding regime change. Still, opposition unity and moderation had some effect on the non-Kabye minority within the military, i.e. the out-of-favour factions in the Togolese army, some of whom publicly expressed grievances towards the regime during the first period. However, these marginalized officers were not powerful enough to counterbalance the power of loyalists who saw the opposition's actions as a direct threat to their individual and group interests. The increased power of radical groups consolidated the loyalist control over the military as most non-Kabye officers who had been on the fence in the first period joined ranks with the loyalists in their strategy to violently quell the opposition movement.

5.3.1: Opposition unity, defections by a few marginalized officers, and repression campaigns

From 1967 until the mid-1980s, President Eyadéma's control over the military and the co-option of southern elites had guaranteed his opponents' relative absence from the political sphere. Two factors led to a slow re-emergence of civil society action after 1987. First, the economic recession and the government's austerity measures began to affect the standard of living of the popular classes and, as the 1980s progressed, of the middle class, composed of merchants and professionals (Heilbrunn 1997, 227; Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 86). Second, there was a growing awareness of the repressive strategies used by the

regime, particularly as the Togolese civil society resurfaced and publicized such practices (Interview, Professor #2, Lomé, November 15, 2013). There were also numerous reports of suspicious deaths and torture of officials, published abroad by regime opponents and non-governmental organizations (Steinholtz 1985, 30).

In 1987, President Eyadéma made gestures of goodwill: he met with Edem Kodjo in France – an ex-RPT leader now in exile – to discuss political reforms and he approved the creation of the *Commission nationale des droits de l'Homme* (CNDH), charged with monitoring the respect of human rights by governmental agencies, including the security services (Agboyibo 1999, 35-6; Ameganvi 1998, 124). The CNDH became quite critical of the regime's ongoing practices, which involved massive human rights abuses by the gendarmerie and the police (Heilbrunn 1997, 231). Finally, in 1989, in order to show that the government was still popular, President Eyadéma created a commission to gather the opinion of the Togolese population, but the final report was not to the regime's liking:

> The members of the commission found an increasing dissatisfaction among the Togolese. Many wanted a transition to democracy. But as the report was supposed to legitimize the regime, the results were falsified: the report concluded that the people wanted to maintain the status quo (Interview, Journalist #1, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

The regime's reaction was violent. Close to two-thirds of all troops were placed around Lomé – seen as the potential center of any anti-regime actions (Toulabor 2005, 3). Prominent civil society figures were followed and arrested. In a meeting on May 12, 1990, General Ameyi gave this warning to Yaovi Agboyibo, the first head of the CNDH: "It is out of the question that we leave power to some embittered fools. If they want to challenge us, we will see who will come out on top" (Agboyibo 1999, 57). At the University of Lomé,

the *Haut conseil des associations et mouvements étudiants* (HACHEME) – a militia composed of Kabyes – was armed by the military in order to detect and repress student mobilization (Toulabor 2008, 320). The gendarmerie began to intervene more and more on campus (Interview, National Conference Representative #1, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

Nonetheless, mobilisation continued and new civil society organizations were formed. These included the *Ligue togolaise des droits de l'Homme* (LTDH) – headed by Yaovi Agboyibo and Joseph Koffigoh, the *Association togolaise de lutte contre la torture* (ATLT), and the *Association togolaise pour la liberté de presse* (Iwata 2003, 143). Like in Benin, it was students who were the catalyst for the protests. On October 5 1990, the trial of two students was followed by the opposition movement's first large protest (Ellis 1993, 465).[86] This pattern was confirmed by a journalist I interviewed:

> There had been opposition movements since 1985-1986. Two professors, Gnininvi and Yassobo, founded the *Convention démocratique des peuples africains* (CDPA) in 1986. Students and professors had been arrested for participating in anti-regime activities. But the pro-democracy movement really started with the student protest in 1990. Afterwards many groups dared to protest the regime (Interview, Journalist #2, Lomé, February 25, 2013).

The regime responded by sending the gendarmerie units to end the protest. In response to the death of five students in the protest, Agboyibo called for a general strike, which paralyzed Lomé for three days (Heilbrunn 1993, 287). From abroad, Edem Kodjo, the former RPT leader, called for a National Conference and a general amnesty in order to bring peace (Ameganvi 1998, 124-5). Lawyers walked to the presidential palace and

[86] The ignition of the 1990 protests recalled for many the similar events of 1933: the arrests of two leaders of a political organization named Duawo sparked protests in Lomé, forcing the French administrators to call troops from Dahomey and Senegal to pacify the city (Heilbrunn 1993, 231-4).

demanded constitutional change, including multiparty elections and respect for human rights.

On October 7, 1990, two days after the start of the student protests, General Ameyi, the highest ranking southern officer, blamed the protests on an international plot to destabilise the regime (Heilbrunn 1997, 231). On November 26, during a protest by striking taxi drivers, soldiers attacked the strikers with machetes (Tète 1998, 58). Clashes between student protesters and police continued; while some protesters threw rocks at the security forces, police used live ammunition.

Tensions lessened during January and February of 1991 when President Eyadéma made some concessions, including a general amnesty and a promise to tolerate other political parties (Houngnikpo 1999, 106). In March, students and urban youth returned to the street. In reaction, northern militias and military elements reignited their repression campaigns, even throwing acid on protesters. On March 14, 1991, ten organizations, including the LTDH and newly formed student groups, coalesced into the *Front d'action du renouveau* (FAR). The FAR launched a 48-hour strike from March 16 to 18, which affected most southern cities. Agboyibo, former CNDH head and spokesman of the organization, was personally threatened by senior officers and attacked in his house (Degli 1996, 33). The army rammed the protesters using jeeps, wielded clubs, and shot at them with live ammunition (Tète 1998, 58-9; Degli 1996, 34). After protesters burned a police station in the Bé area, the opposition hub in Lomé, military personnel began to set houses on fire.

In Togo, the beginning of the civic resistance campaign took a far more violent turn than in Benin. President Eyadéma could count on troops loyal to him, particularly from the Pya circle. For instance, his son Ernest was in charge of an attack on Agboyibo's house in March 1991 (N.D. 1994a). In contrast, after eight months of protests in Benin, President Kérékou was fearful of the military actions and had stopped using troops against protesters.

Still, there were some signs that not all military personnel in Togo agreed with the strategy of violent repression. The marine commandos declared to their commanding officers that they would refuse to raid civilian areas. During a protest on April 5, 1991, troops under the command of General Bassibe Bonfoh tried to prevent police/protester clashes (Thiriot 1999, 295-6). Furthermore, a group of young northern military officers suggested to Joseph Koffigoh, co-leader of the LTDH and eminent figure of the FAR, to stage a military coup (Degli 1996, 38).[87] Still, discontent within the military ranks should not be overemphasized: the marine commandos came from the underfunded Togolese navy, the last military section under the command of Ewe officers. The young officers who suggested the coup to Koffigoh were Sergeant Cal Amao and Lieutenant Vincent Tokofai – Lasso officers who did not command any units. The army, by-and-large, was loyal to the regime during this period (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

Still, President Eyadéma was aware that repression was not fully working, as opposition mobilization was increasing (Heilbrunn 1997, 232). Unlike in Benin, where

[87] The same northern officer clique became known as the Military Democrats.

military defection and popular protests had forced the regime to negotiate, in Togo the regime's decision to negotiate was a reaction simply to the scale of the protests, as well as foreign pressure. President Eyadéma thus began to make a series of political concessions, starting with the proposed political reforms of January 1991. On March 18, 1991, he met with FAR representatives and agreed to tolerate multipartism and even to a *Forum National de Dialogue* where the FAR and RPT would negotiate a number of reforms (Tète 1998, 60). The announcement that new political parties could be legally founded was, however, a mixed blessing for the opposition forces. Political leaders not involved with the FAR, like Edem Kodjo (an ex-RPT secretary general in exile), returned to the country. On April 12, Gilchrist Olympio, son of the former president Sylvanus Olympio, returned to the country and announced the creation of his own political party, the *Union des forces du changement* (UFC). The return of Olympio was met with heightened anxiety within the regime as it was always feared that opposition mobilization was orchestrated by the ex-CUT elites (Agboyibo 1999, 94-5). Even members of FAR divided up into multiple political parties. President Eyadéma used the FAR's dissolution as an excuse to abandon his promises made on March 18 and diminish the potential repercussions of the *Forum National de Dialogue* (Iwata 2003, 145).

The dissolution of the FAR coincided with a growing rift within the opposition movement. On one side, certain figures such as Edem Kodjo, Yaovi Agboyibo, and Joseph Koffigoh – leaders of the LTDH – were convinced of the need to limit their demands and come to terms with the regime's forces. On the other side there were radical forces, such as Gilchrist Olympio, head of the UFC, and Leopold Gnininvi, head of the *Convention*

démocratique des peuples africains (CDPA), who wanted the immediate removal of President Eyadéma. I qualify this second group as radicals because they were unwilling to come to terms with regime forces and were convinced that street protests would be sufficient to push the RPT and the military elite into accepting regime change. For some of these radical leaders, regime change was a means to get revenge for the 1963 coup (Degli 1996, 77-8, 90). As we saw in section 1 of this chapter, the military elites were fearful that a return to civilian rule would mean that they would be prosecuted for the actions taken in 1963 and 1967. The use of Sylvanus Olympio's image by radical political forces in the 1991 period thus reminded them of their fears. Radical political groups demanded the removal of most of the RPT and the military elite, the prosecution of government heads, and major military reforms, which included the dismantling of southern military bases and the supervision of the armed forces by a civilian council (Thiriot 1999, 390-1). Radical political forces, particularly certain military defectors and youth groups, demanded the creation of rival security organizations, demands which only aggravated the military's suspicion that political reforms would ruin them (Bellin 2004, 145). In other words, I classify certain political parties, like the UFC and the CPDA, as radical because they wanted the removal of the old elite from power and also promoted major military reforms.

The rise of the UFC and CDPA coincided with more violent protests. An increasing number of protesters were demanding President Eyadéma's resignation; other protesters organised an anti-regime militia called the Ekpemogs, mostly armed with Molotov

cocktails and rocks.[88] On April 11, 1991, around thirty bodies were found in the Bé Lagoon; it was later discovered that Captain Ernest Eyadéma led the slaughter. Radical groups increasingly used Sylvanus Olympio's image during their meetings (including a funeral procession for the late president in April 1991), while "Eyadéma, in reaction, felt increasingly attacked and began to bunkerise himself behind his troops" (Interview, Ex-RPT dignitary, Lomé, November 12, 2013). Furthermore, some opponents began to use anti-Kabye discourses and framed the conflicts as a basic north-south confrontation. This increasing use of language suggesting ethnic confrontation would later play to President Eyadéma's advantage as northerners, both in the military and civilians, rallied to President Eyadéma's camp in fear that reform would mean their complete marginalization from Togo's economic and political spheres (Interview, Journalist #2, Lomé, February 26, 2013).

However, moderate leaders still managed to gather and convince most radical leaders, with the exception of Gilchrist Olympio, to form a new coalition. In early May, opposition forces reorganized into the *Collectif de l'opposition démocratique* (COD), which included political parties, labour unions, and civil society. The COD leadership managed to call for new strikes and renegotiated concessions with the regime. On June 12, 1991, the COD and the RPT signed an agreement to establish the framework for the future *Conférence nationale souveraine* (CNS), which gave some guarantees to the RPT –

[88] The Ekpemogs were inspired by the Ablodé Sodja – former pro-CUT militias active between 1958 and 1963 (Gaba 1997, 242).

Eyadéma would stay president and head of the armed forces – but gave reform power to opposition forces (Agboyibo 1999, 147).

In contrast to Kérékou in Benin, during this first period President Eyadéma was not constrained in his actions by any lack of control over the military and could launch anti-opposition operations. The few discontented officer cliques did not control any crucial units; all such units were headed by members of the Pya circle. As certain groups became increasingly radicalized by the return of popular exiled leaders, and by the military's repression campaigns, the relative unity of the opposition movement began to crumble. As presented in the next sub-section, this disunity and radicalization did not affect the military's propensity to intervene and would lead to an increase in the violence of the anti-opposition military campaign.

5.3.2: Opposition division and the military counter-offensive

The June 12 accords and the formation of the COD marked the end of the relative unity of the opposition movement. The COD's control over protesters showed signs of weakening when, on June 8, 1991, close to 20,000 protesters took to the streets in defiance of orders by the COD leadership to stay home (Rennebohm 2011b, 4). Furthermore, the June 12 accords were condemned by many strikers who saw it as collaboration with the regime (Ameganvi 1998, 128). The COD leadership was divided between groups who demanded the immediate removal of President Eyadéma, and moderates willing to reach a compromise with the regime (Interview, National Conference Representative #1, Lomé, November 19, 2013). Leopold Gnininvi (the leader of the CDPA) used his popularity

among youth groups to remain leader of the COD after the end of his mandate (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, November 19, 2013).

Preparatory committees decided that the CNS would be composed of representatives from five categories: the RPT, the opposition parties, social groups, public and civilian institutions, and the military. The army was allotted 4% of all seats which was slightly more than their Beninese counterparts, who had 3.26% of the seats (Iwata 2003, 148; Adamon 1995, 196). A new group called the Military Democrats sent a letter to the CNS representatives denouncing President Eyadéma's military policies and embracing regime change. The group was composed of the few officers who had already suggested to Koffigoh to stage a coup before the conference (Huband 1991, 20). Exiled officers proposed an alternative – the formation of a new republican guard to counterweigh the armed forces (Tète 1998, 69-70). Two Generals (Ameyi and Bassibe Bonfoh) and one Colonel (Eugène Koffi Tépé) would come to be seen by opposition forces as potential allies as these three men were the highest ranking non-Kabye officers in the military. There are in fact some reports that Colonel Tépé and General Bonfoh declared their support for regime change (AR 1992, 5). General Ameyi, however, constantly pledged his support to President Eyadéma during this period. Despite the opposition's hopes, President Eyadéma could still count on the loyalty of his troops:

> From the start, many within the pro-democracy movement misjudged the support Eyadéma had within the military. They all thought that officers would massively defect and join their movement. This was a mistake, as Eyadéma had consolidated his control on the military even before the conference (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

This miscalculation can be attributed to the opposition movement's growing strength, and the fact that it was able to induce the government to agree to a National Conference – a surprising victory against a regime that had until now refused to compromise its positions. These facts convinced many that through "street-power" it would be possible to force the standing government to accept a regime change (Agboyibo 1999, 102-5). In pre-conference meetings President Eyadéma and his closest associates began to portray the National Conference as the result of pressure from southern elites who wanted to avenge Sylvanus Olympio (Interview, ex-RPT Dignitary, Lomé, November 12, 2013; Houngnikpo 1999, 157). In one of these meetings, President Eyadéma declared: "We will not let them [the opposition] do whatever they want, if need be we will show them we are a united army. […] Think about your promotions, your tranquility, your retirements" (Toulabor 1993, 18).

Opposition forces divided up even more in the conference preparation period: "Everyone had their own presidential ambitions, they tried to use the conference as a means to gather political support and isolate other opposition leaders" (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013). A former civil society leader concurred:

> The main problem with the conference was the opposition's disunity. Many, particularly UFC affiliates and individuals close to Gnininvi, decided to go against the planned reforms and the June 12 accords, even denouncing them (Interview, Former Civil Society Leader #1, Montreal [phone interview], December 17, 2012).

Military and RPT representatives walked out of the meeting as opposition representatives openly criticized the military. Only after long discussions between the conference president and Generals Ameyi and Bonfoh – the two highest ranking non-Kabye officers – did the

military come back to the table (Thiriot 1999, 386). In comparison with Benin, the military rapidly decided to withdraw from the National Conference proceedings, even making public statements against regime change.

The first conference resolution, passed on July 16, 1991 and giving sovereignty to the conference, directly went against the June 12 accords. After this resolution, the military once again walked out of the conference, though this time they did not come back. In a TV appearance General Ameyi, speaking on the military's behalf, declared that the military was skeptical about the concept of democracy, which he associated with civil war (Seely 2001, 283). Lieutenant Tokofai (who had suggested a coup to Koffigoh earlier in 1991) came to the conference as the representative of the Military Democrats – a small group of security force personnel in favour of political liberalization and opposed to President Eyadéma's policy – to condemn the regime's military policy. He was followed by Colonel Assih (the disgraced former head of the presidential guard who had been ousted in 1987) who had a similar message. The near-totality of the military personnel, however, was by then out of the reform process (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013; Huband 1991, 20).

Resolutions going against the military's interests continued to be passed: military officers close to President Eyadéma, including family members, would have to face prosecutions; military camps around Lomé would be dismantled; senior officers would be pushed into retirement (Thiriot 1999, 390-4). One of the last conference resolutions stripped President Eyadéma of control over military appointments and put the military under the supervision of an appointed transitional prime minister who would also act as

minister of defense (Agboyibo 1999, 156). This is in direct contrast to the Beninese conference, where the representatives agreed to respect the military's institutional autonomy (Heilbrunn 1993, 293). These resolutions angered the military. In the eyes of many close military associates of President Eyadéma, the conference symbolized the long-feared retribution by southern elites against the 1963 coup (Heilbrunn 1997, 234).[89] As this National Conference participant mentioned:

> We did not understand the army. The few who did and perceived a problem with the general strategy were shut down. This traumatized certain officers who could have otherwise negotiated with us (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

Armoured units surrounded the conference buildings on August 26, 1991, ready on President Eyadéma's order to end the entire process (Huband 1991, 20). On the last night of the conference, the representatives elected the new transitional prime minister. While Gnininvi, thanks to his control over the COD, thought the position would be his, it was Joseph Koffigoh who was elected, thanks to the support of RPT representatives alongside other opposition leaders fearful of giving Gnininvi more power (Ameganvi 1998, 130). Afterwards, a transitional government was selected, with each political party competing for appointments.

By the end of the conference the opposition movement had alienated the military institution. Before the CNS, military personnel were already skeptical about the necessity of political reforms and were willing to use their coercive monopoly. The transformation of the CNS into a tribune to condemn the military's human rights abuses worsened the

[89] This vision was reinforced by Gilchrist Olympio's speech, referring to his father's death (Ameganvi 1998, 132-3).

situation. The lack of unity and the radicalism of the opposition movement pushed many of the non-loyalist officers to embrace the loyalist viewpoint that repression of regime opponents was a necessity. As Heilbrunn concluded, “each resolution [of the conference] appeared to have an intoxicating effect on people […] and it would not be until ‘the morning after’ that local reformers would bitterly recall that President Eyadéma held all the guns” (1997, 238). Still, it was always unlikely that opposition actions could have swayed a majority of the military personnel to abandon President Eyadéma: unlike in Benin, there were few signs of military defection and President Eyadéma could count on many of his units to launch anti-opposition operations at his command. As a conference representative noted:

> It is unlikely that we could have convinced the army to support our demands even if we took a more moderate approach and respected their interests; Eyadéma had such a control on the army that no one would dare go against his will (Interview, National Conference Representative #2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).

Interestingly, this same interviewee both stated that the lack of knowledge of military dynamics spoiled the transition process and that it was unlikely that any promises made by the opposition would have swayed members of the armed forces. This combination points to the ambivalent situation of many moderate leaders. They were aware that: (1) there was a need to come to an agreement with military forces because they could end the reform process; but that (2) there was a need for military reforms if a new political regime was to be established. The Pya circle’s military power, even in the case of President Eyadéma’s electoral defeat, would have been a constant threat to the country’s political stability. In other words, there was an underlying tension about the need to reach an agreement and the need to neutralize potential spoilers during a possible future regime transition. Thus, while

opposition forces might have been aware of the need for a compromise with military actors, the characteristics of these military actors – in this case that the military was controlled by close associates of President Eyadéma – made such accords nearly impossible.

Joseph Koffigoh, the new transitional prime minister, faced an army completely opposed to his attempts to use the powers given to him by the conference. Most of his orders were not respected by military units. The newly created legislature, the *Haut conseil de la république* (HCR), also had no control over the military (Thiriot 1999, 401-2). The transitional government (which included no RPT representatives) could only count on the small guard force around Prime Minister Koffigoh – a force largely composed of the Military Democrats headed by Lieutenant Tokofai – and on the Ekpemog militia for defense. The few members of the armed forces that rallied to Prime Minister Koffigoh were almost entirely Minas, Ouatchis and Ewes who had been objects of discriminatory actions and violence by President Eyadéma's regime.

It was clear that President Eyadéma could use his military power to undermine the opposition movement (AR 1992, 6). As soon as the conference ended, the military's harassment campaign began anew. On October 1, 1991, troops took over the national radio and demanded the dissolution of the HCR. On October 8th and 9th, paratroopers attempted to kidnap Prime Minister Koffigoh (Tète 1998, 70). In reaction, the HCR passed a new resolution against the old elite, limiting RPT members and military personnel's rights to leave the country (Houngnikpo 1999, 108). On October 19th, members of the HCR demanded President Eyadéma's resignation, although they failed to pass a resolution (Iwata 2003, 148). On November 26th the HCR announced the RPT's dissolution and the

seizure of all their assets. The following day, the military armed the youth wing of the RPT and launched a combined terror campaign in Lomé. Prime Minister Koffigoh was under siege (Heilbrunn & Toulabor 1995, 93). On December 2nd they launched their assault, killing the few soldiers and junior officers in Prime Minister Koffigoh's guard (Tète 1998, 82; Laloupo 2005, 107). Prime Minister Koffigoh was taken to President Eyadéma, who renegotiated the transition agreement: the RPT became not only part of the government but was also given key ministries.[90] In other words, by December 1991 not only had President Eyadéma begun his return to full power, but the only military faction that had opposed his will in the 1990-1992 crisis had been eliminated.

In the summer of 1992, Gilchrist Olympio was nearly killed when the Kara paratroopers – an elite unit positioned in the Kabye heartland – shot at his vehicle. An opposition leader, Tavio Amorin, head of the *Parti socialiste panafricain* (PSP), was assassinated (Heilbrunn 1997, 234). On October 22nd, the members of the HCR were taken hostage and preeminent opposition leaders were tortured (Iwata 2003, 148). Others, like Degli, head of the *Association togolaise de lutte contre la torture* (ATLT), fled the country. By the end of the year the RPT had managed, through its control over the military, to force the opposition to hand over almost all executive positions of the transitional government.

While the opposition had, by that point, clearly lost control over the political institutions, it still held large powers within civil society. The remaining members of the COD, along with independent labour unions, launched a nine-month strike in November

[90] He also recovered his control over military appointments (Gbéou-Kpayile 2004, 38).

of 1992. Lomé was completely paralyzed by the strike and the country's economy ground to a halt. In early January, 1993, the regime reacted to the strike by launching its most massive repression operation yet: Troops began to completely push civilians out of the Bé area of its citizens by setting fire to their houses. Between January 30 and February 2, 200,000 Lomeans – including most opposition leaders – fled to Benin and Ghana (Macé 2004, 844). Overall, it is estimated that close to 500,000 Togolese fled the country in 1993. There was also a backlash against non-Kabye within the military. During the month of March 1993, after a failed assassination attempt against President Eyadéma, hundreds of southern soldiers were killed, including the few remaining southern officers like General Ameyi and Colonel Tépé (Kpatindé 1993). By 1993 President Eyadéma was back in full control of Togo, thanks to his loyalist army. A radicalized opposition force had greatly underestimated the consequences of President Eyadéma's control over the military and of their demands for major military reforms. While the opposition would try again to gain political concessions, and even to reunify, President Eyadéma's relatives were once again in full control of the country.

5.4: Conclusions

President Eyadéma became the head of the armed forces and the political leader of a military junta after the 1967 coup. Potential military rivals were assassinated or purged even when they had ties with Eyadéma. Recruitment and promotion policies privileged the Kabye, particularly those from Pya, which by 1990 represented a majority both within the military's rank-and-file and the officer corps. While a majority of officers were willing, from the start, to repress the civic resistance campaign that arose in 1990, some out-of-

favour officers took more moderate stances in the initial phase of the crisis. However, most of these non-Kabye officers rallied to the loyalist camp as the opposition radicalized.

The Togolese case also demonstrate that, in countries whose regimes use the reliance-on-loyalists strategy, the tension between the need for military appeasement and the need to reform the military is almost insurmountable. In some cases, however, – like in Niger in 1991 and in Burundi in 2000 – opposition forces reached agreements with heavily ethnicized and loyalist armed forces. Both of these cases still point to the difficulty of such tasks, as there were three military coups in Niger in the fifteen years that followed the 1991 National Conference, and the Burundi agreement was reached after nearly eight years of civil war (Peterson 2007, 127-8; Villalón & Idrissa 2005, 38, 41).

The previous two chapters provided the empirical evidence backing my hypotheses. I take up alternative explanations for the military behaviour in the two selected cases in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This Ph.D. dissertation's aim is to understand why the armed forces either tolerate or repress opposition movements in African authoritarian states during regime crises. In the previous two chapters I demonstrated that, in Benin and Togo, differences in coup prevention policies and opposition forces' credible commitment capacity significantly shaped the army's actions against opposition movements.

In Benin, I concluded that President Mathieu Kérékou implemented a policy of counterbalancing – by integrating new social groups within the armed forces, diversifying military training programs, and reinforcing paramilitary forces – in order to curb the power of his would-be military rivals. While this policy did prevent the success of coup-plots against his government, it meant that the military was even more factionalised than before coup-prevention policies were implemented.

When President Kérékou was challenged by civil society groups in 1989-1990, he therefore could not rely on marginalized military cliques to prevent opposition groups from mobilizing because some of those factions took the opportunity to launch attempted coups. Weakened by his lack of control over the security forces, President Kérékou had to call a National Conference to accommodate popular pressure. During the National Conference, the opposition coalition convinced a majority of the military's personnel to support regime change, thanks to the coalition's unity and willingness to accommodate military interests. Ultimately, even President Kérékou and his loyalists had to accept regime change.

In Togo, President Gnassingbé Eyadéma took power with an army already in the hands of northern ethnic groups, particularly his own group – the Kabye. He rapidly purged the armed forces of his military and civilian rivals. This favouritism was also reflected in the recruitment and promotion of his own ethnic group, and particularly his family and close associates, known as the Pya circle.

Kabye military personnel were more than willing to use force to defend President Eyadéma's regime when he was challenged by opposition forces in 1990-1993. A minority of military personnel – the non-Kabye – did show some signs of disloyalty in the early days of the civic resistance campaign. However, as the opposition forces became increasingly divided and radicals publicly condemned the army and made calls for major security reforms, a large-majority of non-Kabye officers rallied to President Eyadéma's side. By the fall of 1991 President Eyadéma used his dominance over security forces to overpower of the transitional government appointed by the National Conference and to regain control over Togo.

In this concluding chapter I begin by looking at the two alternative explanations identified in chapter two: economic resources and the role of France. After exploring these alternative explanations, I look at the significance of my results for other research. Finally, I suggest new avenues of research hinted at by my results. More research will be needed on the effects of coup-proofing on civil-military relations in both authoritarian and democratic regimes.

6.1: Alternative explanations

6.1.1: Economic resources

Some analysts might expect defection to be the consequence of straightforward financial trouble for a regime: the inability to pay troops (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). Thus, lack of revenues could influence military actions as "unpaid state officials are less likely to follow orders" (Levitsky & Way 2010, 60). Benin and Togo were each facing a major economic crisis in the late 1980s. After 1984 the Nigerian regime had increasingly cracked down on illegal smugglers, leading to major economic distress in 1988-1989 for Benin. Most importantly, in 1988 the three state-owned banks in Benin collapsed (Seely 2001, 91). In Togo, revenues from phosphate exportation – the country's main economic sector – dropped between 1980 and 1987 from 28 billion to 7 billon CFAs (Decalo 1990, 210).[91] Still, thanks to its phosphate industry, the *Rassemblement du peuple togolais* (RPT) government could secure loans – in exchange for the implementation of structural adjustments – which enabled the regime to maintain parts of its patronage networks and its security budgets. Even though Togo may have been in a better financial position than Benin, it was still in a financially difficult enough position to call into question military loyalty, so that the fact that the military remained loyal in the lead-up to and during the crisis needs to be explained.[92]

It must be acknowledged that this difference in available funds between the two countries did influence military defections in the years before their respective regime

[91] Similar drops were evident in coffee and cocoa exports.
[92] See Figure 6, p.81.

crises. Between 1985 and 1989, every time Benin's President Kérékou announced budget cuts, there were rumours of coup attempts. At the same time, Togo's President Eyadéma could pay the salaries of his soldiers in advance and even give them raises (Nwajiaku 1994, 432). In fact, Theodore Holo mentioned in his interview that the *Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin* (PRPB) regime began to be in trouble once it stopped having sufficient funds to service the military (Interview, Porto-Novo, February 13, 2013). Togo's economic resources did not prevent military disloyalty as there were still coup plots in 1977, 1985, and 1986, instigated by southern officers. Similarly, in 1991, when they had no major financial grievances, some of the non-Kabye military personnel either refused to repress the opposition forces or began to plot for a military coup (Thiriot 1999, 295-6; Degli 1996, 38). In contrast, some of Togo's military personnel who had financial grievances against the regime remained loyal to President Eyadéma. A group of subaltern officers publicly expressed their economic grievances on June 28, 1991 – they felt that they did not receive a fair wage nor acceptable housing – only to afterwards assure President Eyadéma of their loyalty to him (Thiriot 1999, 296). In 1993, when Togo's economy spiralled down as international aid was drastically reduced and labour strikes paralyzed the country, the military remained fully loyal – with the exception of a few soldiers who participated in a failed assassination attempt against President Eyadéma in March of 1993.

Access to economic incentives might still be a factor in patterns of defection and the willingness to side with the regime's opposition, but it is not a sufficiently important one. Coup-proofing techniques provide a complementary explanation to economic conditions, shedding new light on the vulnerability of regimes to economic crises. Namely,

economic incentives only work to temporarily alleviate the grievances of marginalized officers. In Benin, counterbalancing techniques meant that the regime was vulnerable to economic downturns as there was a majority of non-loyalists within the armed forces. As long as financing lasted, it did keep disgruntled officers from launching coups. But once these funds began to dwindle around 1985, marginalized cliques began to express their grievances about the uneven distribution of military equipment, preferential promotion procedures, and a political structure they disagreed with. Thus, once the money ran out, Benin was vulnerable to military defection because the implementation of coup-prevention strategies left large segments of the army in the hands of marginalized cliques. In contrast, Togo's pattern of defections did not obey the logic of economic marginalization but rather the logic of favoured and marginalized cliques. The officers involved in the attempted coups of 1977, 1985, and 1986 were southerners, a group quite marginalized by President Eyadéma's coup-proofing policies. Similarly, officers among the small group of military democrats were not Kabye and hence not preferred by the regime. In other words, marginalized cliques defected even if the regime had the resources to pay – and even increase – their wages. Still, decades of ethnic favoritism made sure that a large majority of the army, the Kabye within the officer corps and the rank-and-file, would not defect even if the regime was in economic distress. In other words, coup-proofing strategies and not economic incentives were the main factor driving the behaviour of the different military factions in both countries in the studied period.

While the economic situation did influence the ignition of the regime crises and the two governments' abilities to contain military grievances, it did not determine military

responses during these crises. Rather, economic incentives can only help to assure the short-term compliance of non-loyalist officers and soldiers, while loyalists do not need these economic benefits as they are convinced that their long-term fate depends on the maintenance of the regime. Thus, a specific coup-prevention strategy – counterbalancing – is more vulnerable to economic downturns than a second one – reliance-on-loyalists – because the former technique involves the presence of a large group of marginalized officers.

6.1.2: Ideology and foreign patrons

Another explanation provided in the literature involves Benin's and Togo's main foreign patron – France. Foreign patrons can, through threats of military intervention or denial of financial and technical support, influence military actions vis-à-vis the current regime (Clark 2006, 131-2). Furthermore, foreign patrons can help stabilize regimes by providing much needed funding in times of crisis (Brooks 1998, 29). Does this approach explain the difference in military behaviour between the two cases?

Historically, France had favoured Togo over Benin. More specifically, Benin's adoption of Marxism-Leninism was not well received in France, particularly as the regime often portrayed France as the main supporter of the "international bourgeoisie" which attempted to crush Benin's socialist revolution. In fact, France and Benin cut all official ties between 1977 and 1981, in the aftermath of the adoption of Marxist-Leninism by the Beninese regime. In contrast, France came to the defence of Togo's regime, such as when it was attacked by a small guerilla force in 1986 (Nwajiaku 1994, 440-2).

The relationship between France and Benin, however, later returned to normal when, in 1982, France began to train officers again and to provide financial support to the regime (Martin 1986, 73). In fact, French aid to the two countries reached similar numbers per capita by 1987 (Seely 2001, 79). This change can be attributed to two factors. First, Benin turned unofficially away from radical socialist policies after 1982 when it became clear that its economic policies were not successful. There was instead an opening to the free market in order to attract foreign aid from Western countries (Martin 1986, 72). This change of policy was often called "Laxist-Beninism" as the PRPB was a Marxist-Leninist regime in name only (Banégas 2003, 44). Second, François Mitterrand and his socialist party came to power in France in 1981. The new French government was "in general friendlier to a Marxist-Leninist Benin and more critical of Togo's right-wing regime" (Seely 2001, 108). In fact, new French foreign policies would be equally critical of both regimes. The *La Baule* declaration in June 1990 marked the integration of demands for deeper democratization at the heart of French foreign policy (Houngnikpo 2001, 54). Both regimes were thus asked to slowly transition towards multiparty elections and greater individual and group freedoms if they wanted to maintain their access to French foreign aid.

What about military behaviour in the period? In November 1991, President Mitterand declared at the Chaillot conference that France would no longer put political liberalization at the center of its foreign policy. A week later, the Togolese army launched a coup against the transitional government. While it would seem that the Togolese army's decision to end the transition process was influenced by French foreign policy, military

personnel never showed any willingness to accept political liberalization before the Chaillot declaration either. Military representatives walked out of the National Conference in the first few days and the army tried to end the conference by force on August 27th, 1991. In the meantime, weapons were stockpiled around Lomé as the army was preparing a counter-offensive against the opposition (Thiriot 1999, 389). Elements of the presidential guard tried to kidnap Prime Minister Joseph Koffigoh on two occasions in October 1991 and had publicly called for the dissolution of the transitional government (Ameganvi 1998, 152-3). In other words, the military had been unwilling from the start to work with the opposition forces and was preparing to use force to take back control of the country before the French government stopped prioritizing political liberalization in is foreign policy. In contrast, military cliques in the Beninese armed forces expressed their preference for regime change before France demonstrated any clear willingness to support political liberalization (Adoun & Awoudou 2011, 96). In fact, the armed forces publicly expressed their support for regime change and for the reform process instigated by the National Conference before the *La Baule* declaration (FFS 1990, 7-8). Differences in military attitude were thus determined by longer trends, as the dominant loyalist faction in Togo opposed regime change while marginalized officers in Benin favoured regime change even before France got involved in the two states' regime crises.

Both regimes could thus be seen as client-states of France with no clear reason to suppose that the French would be less likely to defend the Beninese than the Togolese regime. Furthermore, there is no evidence in either of the cases that the attitude of military personnel was decisively influenced by French foreign policy. Instead, military behaviour

was determined by government-military relations established by different coup-prevention policies.

6.2: Significance of findings

This dissertation's findings contribute to debates in fields dealing with transition from authoritarianism to democracy; authoritarian resilience against opposition movements more generally; and civil-military relations. First, the results of this research cast doubt on the link between military prerogatives and regime change. This dissertation focuses, in the first instance, on explaining military defection in response to uprisings from below, and its key contribution is an understanding of military responses. However, while this finding can potentially apply to uprisings of different kinds, it is noteworthy that both cases studied involve pro-democracy movements, and the results of this study can shed light on an important debate in the literature about the democratization and military reform. There is an important debate in this literature between the need for military-opposition *entente* – known as pacted transition – and the need to reduce the military's power before any regime change is possible (Albertus & Menaldo 2012; Mayfield, Bruneau, Matei, Weece & McCaskey 2013; Stepan 1988). According to the authors who favour the latter theory, the reduction of the military's political and societal role is a prerequisite for the stability of democratic institutions, as military prerogatives give the armed forces the ability to resist democratization processes and even reverse them (Stepan 1988, 93-8). This idea has been used by other authors to explain when democratization processes have been launched or why some processes are stalled – although in principle this could help explain regime responses to different kinds of opposition movements, not just to pro-democracy

movements.[93] For the proponents of pacted transitions, the military needs to be accommodated rather than neutralized. Accordingly, a powerful military could play a key role in processes of regime change if opposition forces are willing to make reasonable offers to military representatives (Karl 1990, 10).

My results, stressing the importance to officers of guarantees, indicate that regime change is possible even when the military has important political and economic prerogatives. In Benin, for instance, five of the nine members of the politburo were military officers, key ministries like the interior and education were still in the hands of military officers, and military representatives had reserved seats within the *Assemblée nationale révolutionnaire* (ANR); there was also an increase in the number of troops two years prior to the democratic transition. In Togo, the military was the core of President Eyadéma's regime and many military officials occupied crucial positions within the ruling RPT. A key difference between the two regimes, however, was the opposition forces' capacity for credible commitment. Benin's opposition forces were highly credible and convinced Benin's armed forces to rally to their call for regime change. In contrast, Togo's opposition forces did not seriously try to accommodate military interests and the military favoured the repression of the civic resistance campaign. In summary, accommodation of military interests thus appears to be more likely to induce the military to cooperate with an opposition movement than attempts at reduction of military prerogatives.

[93] See, for instance, Albertus & Menaldo (2012, 157); Mayfield *& al.* (2013, 6-8).

However, I argue that this kind of accommodation is much more likely under some circumstances than others, particularly with factionalized coup-proofing and an opposition capable of making credible commitments. In Benin, the opposition forces' attempts to reach a deal with military elites were facilitated by three conditions. First, by 1989 many military officers and rank-and-file soldiers were already on bad terms with President Kérékou's government. Second, the opposition rallied around economic grievances that were also shared by a majority of military personnel. Third, no serious opposition group called for major military reforms. Thus, opposition and military representatives found common ground comparatively easily. By contrast, the Togolese opposition faced steep challenges in reaching an agreement with the Togolese armed forces. Any attempt by moderate opposition leaders to reach a deal with the regime reinforced radical groups who called for a street revolution against President Eyadéma's regime. At the same time, any new political regime would need to reform Togo's armed forces as they were controlled by President Eyadéma's close associates and presumably these loyalists thus had strong reasons to oppose any such reform. It was thus nearly impossible for the opposition to provide reasonable promises to the military without putting their political project in jeopardy in the long run (Harkness 2016, 598-9). I suggest that pacted transitions are possible, even necessary, where authoritarian regimes use counterbalancing within their armed forces but that they can be nearly impossible when autocratic rulers use ethnic stacking to control their armed forces.

Finally, this dissertation's data indicates that military behaviour during regime crisis is not as unpredictable as past research has found. Regime crises have been portrayed

as unpredictable by past researchers, as specialists failed to predict the ignition of such events (Goodwin 2011; Kuran 1991, 1995; Nathan 2013). According to the same specialists, regime members' responses would be similarly unpredictable. As Karl puts it, "During regime transitions, all political calculations and interactions are highly uncertain" (1990, 6). One key aspect of this unpredictability is, according to Kuran, the lack of access to information that would allow specialists to correctly measure the population's and regime members' attitude towards regime change (1991, 47). This problem is so important that it explains in large part the selection of ethnic stacking strategies by leaders as it "provides relatively long-lasting information about preferences […] and maintains cohesion among in-groups" (McLauchlin 2010, 339).

While there is always a good dose of unpredictability during regime crisis, my results do highlight that military responses are more predictable than what past research concluded. The Togolese case demonstrates that armies dominated by loyalists are unlikely to reach an agreement with anti-government forces.[94] I also found that armies subjected to counterbalancing are likely to favour regime change as marginalized factions will either overpower military loyalists or paralyze the security apparatus. Both of these dynamics can be assessed *a priori* thanks to the indicators of coup-prevention techniques identified in this research. In loyalist armies, the officer corps or the presidential guard tend to be dominated by a single identity group and there have generally been major purges of unreliable groups in the past. In armies subjected to counterbalancing, there are multiple paramilitary forces, frequent command shuffles or multiple ethnic groups recruited to the

[94] A point also made by McLauchlin (2010); and Harkness (2016).

armed forces. These indicators will help future research more easily predict military behaviour during regime crises.

6.3: Avenues for future in-depth research

This Ph.D. dissertation focuses on the impact of authoritarian government control and opposition characteristics on military responses during regime crises. This dissertation suggests several new lines of research. At a basic level, it is important to test my hypotheses beyond the two cases I study here. Future research should still look at additional cases beyond Benin and Togo in order to test the generalizability of my own research. For example, a more in-depth examination of Bratton and van de Walle's thirteen cases of military intervention during regime crises between 1989 and 1994 would certainly be a good way to proceed (1997, 211). Recent political crises in Burkina Faso, Burundi, and Guinea are also interesting potential case studies for application of my theoretical framework. As an interim goal, given the importance of identity groups in Togo's loyalist coup-proofing strategy, such research could enable us to construct a database on the ethnic composition of African armies; such a database could be used not only for quantitative analysis of military dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa but also for cross-regional comparisons.[95]

My research only tests two causal paths: (i) counterbalancing alongside highly credible commitment among the opposition; and (ii) reliance on loyalists alongside less

[95] Such a database for the Middle East and North Africa is already being constructed; see Johnson & Thurber (2015). Another database is being built on Sub-Saharan African cases; see Morency-Laflamme & McLauchlin (2016).

credible commitment. This leaves out a third potential combination: (iii) counterbalancing alongside less credible commitment. New analysis should assess the latter combination in order to test the validity of my theorized outcomes. While I predict that the third combination should result in the repression of opposition forces, it is necessary to test this with factual data. In such a case it is also possible that the army uses the opposition mobilization to topple the government and replace it with an alternative more to its liking.[96] I also theorize that a loyalist army would remain unaffected by opposition characteristics. Still, armies subjected to ethnic stacking did come to terms with opposition forces in Niger and Burundi. In both cases, however, the process was long and uneven. There have been multiple coups in Niger, and while the 2000 peace agreement in Burundi ended seven years of civil war, there was recently a failed military coup. Future research should look at such cases in order to understand how loyalist armies can be convinced to accept regime change.

My research also points to new hypotheses, beyond the ones I test in this dissertation. While I do not have any definitive results for the topics I will mention below, my results hint at certain dynamics in regards to other coup-prevention techniques, the origin and legacy of coup-proofing policies, the influence of authoritarian institutions on military faction coordination, the preferences of moderate factions, and the influence of state violence on opposition radicalization.

[96] The Egyptian crisis between 2011 and 2013 does point to such a possibility, as does the 2008 coup in Guinea.

6.3.1: Coup-proofing techniques

I have only tested two larger coup-prevention techniques, namely reliance on loyalists and counterbalancing. Quinlivan and Brooks counted ten techniques, which may have different effects on the formation of out-of-favour and loyalist cliques (Quinlivan 1999, 133; Brooks 1998, 9). Alternative strategies have been used by African leaders. In the Ivory Coast, Houphouët-Boigny could count on the presence of French troops permanently stationed in the country. As N'Diaye noted, these troops were the best defence the Ivorian leader had against military coups (N'Diaye 2000, 254). In the first twenty years of his rule in Zaire, Mobutu built a largely modern army which acquired a certain degree of professionalism; it was only when one of his generals became too popular that he began a process of ethnic stacking within the army (Emizet 2000). A third strategy, the provision of individual incentives, has been used by many leaders: President Museveni in Uganda integrated senior officers within his own circles, while Kenyatta and Moi in Kenya provided land titles to middle-rank and senior officers (Rwengabo 2013, 545; N'Diaye 2002, 626). As these coup-prevention techniques are different from those employed in the two cases studied in this dissertation, it is necessary to assess how the latter techniques influence the presence, and relative strength, of marginalized military cliques within the army.

Additionally, previous research found a link between military splits during rebellions/civil wars and coup-prevention techniques (McLauchlin 2010). Regime crisis did lead to splits in the security forces and intramilitary fighting recently in two countries, namely Libya and Yemen. Under certain circumstances, coup-proofing measures and

opposition mobilization do not lead to either repression or toleration of the opposition but leads, rather, to intramilitary fighting. The possibility that such confrontations lead to civil war is very real as even in the Beninese case there were fears at the end of the National Conference that if President Kérékou decided to refuse the conference's conclusions there would be a civil war. The Yemeni and Libyan cases point out that such a threat is real (Makara 2013, 350-3; Albrecht & Ohl 2016). A potential explanation comes from the various institutional channels which existed in Benin between the regime and the many segments of the armed forces; President Kérékou might have been more aware of the military factions' preferences than President Saleh and President Kaddafi were. Future research should compare these cases.

6.3.2: The selection of coup prevention strategies

Past research listed a large number of different coup proofing techniques, from providing individual incentives to the military personnel to the use of external guarantors (Brooks 1998, 9; Quinlivan 1999, 133; N'Diaye 2000, 253-4; McLauchlin 2010, 339). While coup-prevention techniques all reduce the ability of military cliques to stage coups and/or effectively lobby incumbent governments, they have different effects on military factionalism. Certain strategies reinforce the power of loyalist forces while others heighten factionalism and create powerful out-of-favour military cliques. As both factionalism and the preferences of military cliques can explain military actions during regime crises, understanding the reasoning behind the selection of such techniques is vital. While it was not the focus of my dissertation, it does seem that previous military recruitment and promotion strategies are both a source of constraint and inspiration for new autocrats. There

is also some evidence that external shocks could push autocrats to alter their control strategies. Furthermore, coup-prevention techniques have long-term influence on military dynamics, even after new regimes are put in place.

As I outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, existing military dynamics limit autocrats' selection of coup-prevention policies (Svolik 2013, 86). Still, leaders can manage to alter the composition of the military (Horowitz 1985, 487-92). In fact, the internal dynamics of the military are not static but can evolve depending on alliances – often involving civilians – and coup/countercoup dynamics. In Benin, for instance, the armed forces were at first dominated by military factions from Abomey but northern military factions were preponderant after 1967 (Decalo 1973b, 461-2). Leaders can alter the military composition either through innovative strategies, often influenced by past policies, or by using crises to alter their alignment with military factions.

New autocrats who have to move quickly to assure their control over the army often look to the past as a source of inspiration. As Harkness argues, "colonial military practices provided a ready model of ensuring loyalty through racial and ethnic manipulations" (2016, 594). The 1975 crisis in Benin, when many officers refused to come to the regime's defence after students and labour unions went on strike following Captain Aikpé's death, demonstrated to President Kérékou the need to build his own loyal following within the army's ranks so he could push all his rivals out. President Kérékou's use of paramilitary forces in response to this crisis was directly inspired by President Maga's use of the

gendarmerie.[97] Thus, past military politics can also be a source of inspiration for current leaders.

Crises can also alter military alliances and thus lead to alteration of the relative dynamics of favoured or marginalized cliques. The nature of the crisis, potentially challenging the regime, seems to explain the influence of coup-proofing techniques. In Benin, the 1977 mercenary attack demonstrated that the immediate threat to the regime came from external foes, and also demonstrated that non-Ligueurs in the army were willing to come to the regime's defence, as seen their refusal to side with the mercenaries demonstrated. In the aftermath of the mercenary attacks, southern military factions returned to President Kérékou's good graces. In Togo, however, the three attacks against the regime between 1977 and 1986 led to the purge of many southern officers, as it was feared that they could have ties to the backers of these attacks, namely the exiled southern political elite who rallied around the son of former President Sylvanus Olympio. Thus, the nature of the threat may help explain how regimes alter their coup prevention strategies in the aftermath of crises. Authoritarian leaders are more likely to shore up the power of loyalist factions and purge other factions when they fear that the latter may use similar crises in the future to act against the regime's interests. Factions who have fallen from grace can use such crises to either back the regime – and potentially return to the good favour of the autocrat – or enact regime change; this can also provide an opportunity for autocrats to

[97] Maga, the first president of the Republic of Dahomey – Benin's original name – was a northerner and feared the power Fons had within the army. He used the gendarmerie, inherited from the French colonial administration, as a counterweight to the Fon-dominated army by filling it with Baribas – a northern tribe.

remove ‘undesirable’ elements within the armed forces. Future research should look how regime crises affect coup-prevention policies among other cases.

Finally, the implications of my central hypothesis could go beyond authoritarian regimes, where coup-proofing is most often studied, and could be applied to more democratic regimes as well. In Benin, rivalries prevented the success of two coup attempts against the new democratic regime in 1992 and 1996 (Magnusson 2001, 224; Adjovi 1998, 45). In Lesotho, the army was seen as in favour of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy, the main opposition party in 2014, while the police were portrayed as in favour of the All Bashoto Convention, the ruling party at the time. This divergence in political allegiance may have led to the confrontations that occurred between the army and the police in 2014, and the decision of the army to disarm the police during the failed coup attempt that occurred in Lesotho that year (Booysen 2015, 431). Similarly, in Mali, prior to the 2012 coup, certain military cliques accused President Amadou Toumani Touré of favouritism towards his Red Berets over other units, and as Captain Amadou Sanogo’s Green Berets took over Bamako, Red Beret paratroopers attempted to stage a counter-coup (McGregor 2013). Coup-proofing thus seems to have lasting effects on military composition and can influence military policies through extended periods, even after the establishment of democratic regimes. Future research should look at how democratic regimes are affected by, or use, coup-proofing techniques.

6.3.3: Military moderates and professionalism

O’Donnell and Schmitter argued that military swingmen could play an important role in regime transitions (1986, 25). I integrate military swingmen into my theoretical

framework and find that swingmen were quite important in Benin. While this is not the focus of my dissertation, my research suggests a new understanding of military swingmen and how they differ, as moderates, from hardliners and softliners. They are not only more politically neutral but their political stance is particularly reflective of values in regard to military professionalism and political interference in military affairs.

My results seem to indicate that military moderates tend to fit more easily into the concept of military professionals than softliners or hardliners do, as they value the integrity of the armed forces over the choice of regime. They often rise within the ranks because of their competence and not simply because of their political allegiance. In Benin, for instance, Colonel V. Guezodje (a Fon from Abomey) is portrayed by most research as a moderate and he was chief of staff of the armed forces at the time of the National Conference (Martin 1986). In Togo, General A. Bonfoh also took moderate stances during the regime crisis and was one of the four non-Kabyes to be promoted to the rank of general.

Moderates seem to place a higher value on military institutions than other groups do, and thus are more likely to favour a return to the barracks as a means to avoid intramilitary conflict. For instance, regime hardliners are willing to launch repression campaigns during a regime crisis even when there is a high risk of intramilitary fighting. Unlike what Geddes has argued, it seems that not all military factions value the integrity of the military above all else, but moderates do tend to do so (1999, 126-7). Because they value the integrity of the military institution, moderates require significant guarantees from the opposition forces. In Togo, moderate officers were alarmed by demands for drastic military reforms and the constant denunciations of human rights abuses, while in Benin

they were swayed by the respect for military autonomy, consideration of the military's own views, and integration of the military representatives into the CN committees. Future research should determine if military moderates in other countries also place such a high value on the integrity of the military institution.

6.3.4: Coordination and authoritarian institutions

Previous research on the effect of coup prevention techniques during regime crises has found that marginalized cliques leave the regime and defect in the wake of large-scale civic resistance campaigns (Makara 2013; Albrecht 2015; Lee 2005, 2009). However, my own results seem to indicate that marginalized cliques do not exit the regime but, instead, voice their concerns, if the regime has already put in place certain consultative institutions. Hirschman, in his seminal work on the expression of discontent within organizations, concluded that unhappy "customers" have three options to express their discontent: remain loyal, voice their concerns, or leave the company (1970, 3-4). If defection is thought of as the equivalent of "exit," authoritarian institutions, particularly single parties and legislatures, can provide opportunities for "voice." They can prevent defection among civilian and military regime members by allowing them to express their concerns without challenging the regime (Gandhi & Przeworski 2006, 14). The actions of a large majority of marginalized military factions in Benin – namely the voicing of their opposition to repression and their desire for political reforms – hint that authoritarian institutions like the ANR (Benin's former authoritarian legislature) and the National Conference can prevent the security forces' defection during regime crisis. However, in such contexts consultative institutions only prevent defection if government representatives use the same institutions

to gather information on the coalition members' preferences and, presumably, respond to this distribution of preferences and to these potential effects in particular kinds of ways – e.g. partially addressing military grievances. When the ANR allowed Benin's military factions to express their grievances and potentially influence the government, there were few cases of military defection – as demonstrated by the relative calm in military politics between 1978 and 1985. After 1988, the regime could not meet the demands of military factions. When these factions began to call for regime change (in some cases), or when it became clear that there were not enough resources to implement the policies demanded by these same factions, the authoritarian institution stopped working and those factions turned once again to coup attempts. In other words, voice is only an effective means to prevent defection if regime representatives make rational decisions based on it.

Consultative institutions, however, can also work against the regime as they reduce the coordination costs among disgruntled military cliques. As I mention in Chapters 1 and 4, one of the main obstacles to military coups is that they require the coordination of various factions who, first, have to identify potential participants; second, to negotiate the terms of their co-operation; and third, do so without being exposed by agents of the regime (Singh 2014). Autocrats use the coordination problem to their advantage in counterbalancing strategies, reducing the likelihood of coordinated actions by increasing rivalries among military personnel not tied to the autocrat. As the 1988-1989 failed coups in Benin demonstrate, an autocrat using counterbalancing strategies can stay in power even if there are many disgruntled factions formed around senior officers. One key element in the Benin scenario was that the command structure was so divided that only President Kérékou and

his closest associates were in contact with all segments of the security forces; as a consequence, other commanders and junior officers could rarely have contact with one another to speak about their common grievances against the regime.[98] However, these same military factions participated in the election of military representatives in the ANR. As one interviewee mentioned, "soldiers could go to the ANR and discuss ideas with other representatives, even when *they disagreed with their commanders and senior officers*" (Interview, retired military officer 2, Abomey-Calavi, March 5, 2013).[99] Authoritarian legislative institutions can thus become meeting points for marginalized cliques who now know which groups also disagree with the regime's military policies, among other aspects. These same Beninese factions – who launched four failed coups between 1988 and 1989 – effectively banded together in the pre-National Conference meetings and imposed their position in the military memorandum, i.e. their desire for regime change and a return to the barracks. In other words, consultative institutions helped to greatly reduce the autocrat's hold on the military by facilitating contact among less loyal factions. The very structures that are used to prevent military defection and to coordinate members of the authoritarian coalition can be effectively used by disgruntled partners to push forward regime change. While more research on this subject is necessary, it seems that authoritarian institutions have an interesting effect in the context of factionalism: while authoritarian legislative can indeed offer opportunities for the regime to channel and defuse opposition through the mechanism of voice, when the regime does not adequately respond to its coalition

[98] Especially since, like in Togo, there was an organization in charge of internal surveillance and detection of potential defectors/coup-plotters.
[99] Emphasis mine.

members' grievances, such institutions can also permit coordination among factions and undermine the regime.

6.3.5: Loyalist armies and the "creation" of non-credible opposition forces

In this dissertation, I have developed my theory as though opposition characteristics and coup-proofing techniques were separate independent variables. However, my results possibly point out that there is some association between the two. My results seem to indicate that loyalist armies might sever any potential ties between moderates and opposition forces and make them unaware of what demands might work. A key mechanism through which opposition forces can, at the very least, create the possibility for military defection is social ties (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 46). Appeals to social ties are successful when they either facilitate communication between both groups or create sympathy for the protesters' demands within opposition groups. Autocrats can manipulate social ties by using selective recruitment in order to eliminate this possibility (McLauchlin 2010, 338). In the context of regime crisis, social distance pushes officers to oppose regime change as they believe winning ethnic groups will attack their privileges by either reshuffling the command structure to favour their own groups, or by creating an ethnically inclusive army (Harkness 2016, 598). While such a dynamic was present in the Togolese context, another mechanism could also have been potentially at work: making information on military dynamics inaccessible to opposition leaders. As a National Conference representative in Togo declared:

> *We did not understand the army*, the few who did and perceived a problem with the general strategy were shut down. This traumatized certain officers who could have

> otherwise negotiated with us (Interview, National Conference Representative 2, Lomé, November 19, 2013).[100]

The lack of knowledge of military dynamics meant that many opposition leaders miscalculated President Eyadéma's control over the military. In consequence, opposition leaders in Togo failed to consider the possibility of a large majority of officers being willing to defend the regime at any cost. In general terms, such a lack of knowledge might mean that opposition forces demand military reforms that push moderate officers towards favouring military repression.

A second way by which loyalist armies might influence opposition characteristics is through the creation of insurmountable rifts based on the need for military reforms or military consent. Such a dilemma is illustrated by the contrast between the previous quotation and the following, from the same interviewee: "*President Eyadéma had such a control on the army* that no one [in the army] would dare go against his will" (Interview, National Conference Representative 2, Lomé, November 19, 2013). This assessment reflects the idea that loyalist armies need to be reformed, as they might be dangerous potential spoilers of regime transitions. However, the same interviewee's belief that the opposition did not adequately understand military sensitivities suggests just how difficult these reforms can be: it suggests that the army is unlikely to favour the opposition if the latter proposes these reforms. Faced with such a dilemma between (1) the need for military reforms, and (2) the need for military consent, opposition groups can find themselves

[100] Emphasis mine.

divided on which option they prefer. This lack of unity can greatly reduce the power and credibility of the opposition movement.

Loyalist armies also permit regimes to use selective violence, and thus split and polarize the opposition. Loyalist armies are more likely to have units that willingly carry out regime maintenance operations and thus fire on protesters (Albrecht 2015, 48). In turn, this violence has a second, more important effect, namely to create rifts among opposition forces. My results suggest that selective repression can be used to reduce the opposition forces' unity by radicalizing certain groups. The radicalization of certain groups can greatly reduce the power of the opposition forces and decrease even more the possibility of a military-civil society agreement. The Togolese armed forces' ability to radicalize certain groups depended, however, on an opportunity structure; as the literature on the use of violence in nationalist movements argues, radicalization is only possible when certain groups are willing to take bolder stances in a bid to overpower other groups (McLauchlin & Pearlman 2012, 44; Lawrence 2010, 90). When the structures that support an opposition movement are crumbling, and when certain groups are willing to espouse radical agendas in order to promote their own leaders, repression can be used to divide the opposition. In the Togolese case, troops loyal to President Eyadéma in the months preceding the *Conférence nationale souveraine* (CNS) targeted certain opposition groups, particularly youth groups, in order to reduce the hold that the *Front des associations du renouveau* (FAR)/*Collectif de l'opposition démocratique* (COD) leaders had on them. This strategy became effective only after FAR was disbanded and a new leader, Gilchrist Olympio, returned to the country and stayed outside the opposition coalition. Youth groups began to

publicly denounce moderate opposition leaders as collaborators and to favour a street revolution based on youth militias. These same groups were behind the most radical demands during the CNS, including major military reforms and the arrest of some of President Eyadéma's closest associates. The April-May 1991 repression campaign in Togo demonstrated that selective repression can reduce an opposition leader's hold on his own movement as radical groups will arise in the reaction to that repression. Repression, in other words, can help to strengthen the regime by disrupting opposition unity when there is a structure of opportunity that allows the creation of divisions within the opposition coalition. However, this strategy seems only to be effective when the government can use a loyalist army that will not defect *en masse* as it is being used in repression operations. Future research should thus look at how loyalist armies influence the opposition forces' credible commitment capacity.

6.4: Conclusions

The aim of this dissertation was to understand military behaviour during regime crises. The argument developed suggests that the interplay of regime and opposition characteristics influences military behaviour, particularly patterns of defection and the willingness to use violence against civilians.

Observers of current uprisings will have a better understanding of the army's response by using the theoretical framework I developed in this thesis. Loyalist armies in current uprisings, like the one in Syria, are unlikely to favour regime change even if the regime comes to terms with the opposition forces. In contrast, armies subjected to counterbalancing techniques, like the one in Burkina Faso, are far more likely to stay

neutral or favour regime change, if the opposition provides certain crucial guarantees. Researchers studying these uprisings should take seriously the coup-prevention policies implemented by previous governments.

Similar interplays of military behaviour, opposition, and government characteristics might also affect many other phenomena. Authoritarian governments can enact policies that possibly have long-term effects on the military's composition and patterns of loyalty/disloyalty. The composition of the army also potentially affects the opposition's traits, as loyalist armies could exacerbate rifts between opposition groups. It also seems like democratic regimes might possibly use coup-prevention techniques, theoretically when military professionalism is not feasible in the short-run. In any case, recent events in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali suggest that that the armed forces remain pivotal actors in African states. My framework may help understanding their actions during periods of regime crisis. More than fifty years after decolonization, African militaries remain the kingmakers on the continent.

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Appendix A: Interview Report

Interview Date	Name	Location
December 17 2012	Former Civil Society Leader #1: Togo	Montreal (phone interview)
February 5 2013	Civil Servant #1: Benin	Cotonou, Benin
February 5 2013	Civil Servant #2 : Benin	Cotonou, Benin
February 6 2013	Professor Victor Topanou : Benin and Togo	Abomey-Calavi, Benin
February 13 2013	Theodore Holo : Benin	Porto-Novo, Benin
February 14 2013	Paramilitary Forces' Officer : Benin	Cotonou, Benin
February 15 2013	Retired Paramilitary Forces' Officer : Benin	Cotonou, Benin
February 19 2013	Retired Military Officer #1 : Benin	Abomey-Calavi, Benin
February 20 2013	Revolutionary National Assembly Representative : Benin	Cotonou, Benin
February 25 2013	Journalist #1: Togo	Lomé, Togo
February 25 2013	Journalist #2: Togo	Lomé, Togo
February 26 2013	Journalist# 3: Togo	Lomé, Togo
March 5 2013	Retired Military Officer #2: Benin	Cotonou, Benin
March 5 2013	Retired Military Officer #3: Benin	Abomey-Calavi, Benin
March 6 2013	Retired Military officer #4: Benin	Cotonou, Benin
March 7 2013	Civil Society Leader: Benin	Abomey-Calavi, Benin
March 7 2013	Robert Dossou: Benin	Cotonou, Benin

March 8 2013	ex-PRPB Dignitary: Benin	Porto-Novo, Benin
March 12 2013	Retired Military Officer #5: Benin	Cotonou, Benin
November 12 2013	ex-RPT Dignitary: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 14 2013	Jean Yaovi Degli: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 14 2013	Civil Society Leader #1: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 15 2013	Professor #1: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 18 2013	Professor #2: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 19 2013	Journalist #4: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 19 2013	National Conference Participant #1: Togo	Lomé, Togo
November 19 2013	National Conference Participant #2: Togo	Lomé, Togo

Appendix B : Consent Forms

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Titre de l'étude : Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa: A study of the Armed Forces' influence

Chercheur : Julien Morency-Laflamme, doctorant au département de Science Politique, Université de Montréal.

Sous la direction de : Diane Éthier, professeure titulaire, département de Science Politique, Université de Montréal

1. Objectifs du projet

Ce projet vise à approfondir la compréhension des dynamiques des transitions démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne. Il examinera plus particulièrement l'influence des décisions prises par les forces armées nationales face aux processus de transition politiques. À cette fin, le chercheur désire rencontrer plusieurs personnes qui ont participé aux processus de transition, particulièrement aux conférences nationales & aux gouvernements de transitions.

2. Votre participation

Le chercheur vous rencontrera, à la date & au lieu de votre choix, pour une entrevue où nous vous poserons différentes questions sur votre perception & vos observations sur le rôle & les décisions des forces armées durant la période de 1960 à 1994. Vous pourrez choisir de ne pas répondre à l'une ou l'autre des questions ou nous indiquer que l'une ou l'autre de vos réponses doit demeurer confidentielle. Il est prévu que ces rencontres dureront environ 30 minutes. Ces entrevues feront l'objet d'enregistrements sur cassette audio.

3. Avantages & inconvénients

Ce projet vise à approfondir la compréhension des dynamiques de transitions démocratiques en Afrique subsaharienne. Ce projet ne comporte ni inconvénient ni bénéfice personnel pour les participants.

4. Caractère confidentiel ou public des informations

Seul le chercheur aura accès aux enregistrements. Toutes les données seront détruites 7 ans après la fin du projet. Si votre nom ou des extraits de l'entrevue dévoilant des

renseignements de nature personnelle devaient apparaître dans une publication du chercheur, celui-ci vous transmettrait au préalable ces informations & vous demanderait si vous acceptez qu'elles soient publiées. Vous pourriez alors prendre connaissance du texte & les informations vous concernant ne seraient publiées que si vous donniez votre consentement écrit. Vous pourriez, à la même occasion, indiquer si vous acceptez ou non que votre nom apparaisse à la section des remerciements aux différentes personnes ayant contribué à la recherche. Vous êtes tout à fait libre de consentir ou non à la publication de ces informations.

5. Participation volontaire

La participation à cette recherche est entièrement volontaire. Chaque participant est libre de se retirer sans préjudice & en tout temps, sans devoir justifier sa décision. Si vous décidez de vous retirer de l'étude, vous n'avez qu'à m'en aviser verbalement. Si vous vous retirez de l'étude après l'entrevue, l'enregistrement de l'entrevue sera détruit.

Consentement

Je, (nom & prénom en lettres moulées du participant) ....
déclare avoir pris connaissance des informations ci-dessus, en avoir discuté avec le responsable du projet, Julien Morency-Laflamme, & comprendre le but, la nature, les avantages, les risques & les inconvénients de l'étude en question.

Après réflexion, je consens librement à prendre part à cette étude. Je sais que je peux me retirer en tout temps sans préjudice.

Je consens à ce que les données recueillies dans le cadre de cette étude soient utilisées pour des projets de recherche subséquents de même nature, conditionnellement à leur approbation par un comité d'éthique de la recherche & dans le respect des mêmes principes de confidentialité & de protection des informations.

oui : non :

Signature du participant...Date ....

Signature du chercheur... Date ....

Julien Morency-Laflamme, doctorant au département de Science Politique, Université de Montréal

Courriel : julien.morency.laflamme@umontreal.ca

Toute plainte relative à votre participation à cette recherche peut être adressée à l'ombudsman de l'Université de Montréal, au numéro de téléphone (514) 343-2100 ou à l'adresse courriel suivante: ombudsman@umontreal.ca (l'ombudsman accepte les appels à frais virés).

Un exemplaire signé du formulaire de consentement doit être remis au participant

Appendix C :

Questionnaire for Officers in Benin's Security Forces

1- Pour commencer, vous êtes né dans quelle région du pays? Comment qualifieriez-vous la situation financière de vos parents durant votre enfance?
2- Une fois que vous avez joint les forces armées, êtes-vous retourné fréquemment dans votre région natale?
3- En quelle année avez-vous rejoint l'armée? Vous rappelez-vous ce qui vous a poussé à vous enrôler?
4- Où avez-vous reçu votre entrainement? Avez-vous étudié dans une académie militaire ou une université civile?
5- Avez-vous tissé à l'époque des liens avec d'autres cadets béninois? & d'autres pays?
6- Pourriez-vous nous parler un peu de votre entrainement après l'académie?
7- Pourriez-vous me parler de votre carrière, des différents postes que vous avez occupés? (quand il racompte.. est-ce que vous avez toujours occupé le même poste? Comment cela se fait?)
8- Dans les années 1980, le Bénin a subi une crise économique. Comment est-ce que les forces armées ont été affectées? Y avait-il une inquiétude face aux nécessités budgétaires?
9- À votre avis, est-ce que les ressources octroyées aux forces armées à l'époque étaient suffisantes pour que vous puissiez remplir votre mission? Est-ce que la situation a changé durant les années 1990 & si oui comment?
10- Quels sont les principaux devoirs des forces armées par rapport à la nation? (Comment il met en œuvre sa profession? Est-ce que cela correspond à sa vision des forces armées? & les autres, face à lui, font-ils différemment?)
11- Comment décrieriez-vous le rôle des militaires dans le gouvernement béninois à l'époque du PRPB? Est-ce que les forces armées se sentaient représentées & écoutées par le gouvernement?
12- Est-ce que vous sentiez que le régime & l'armée ne faisait qu'un? Ou est-ce qu'il y avait des divergences, des distinctions?
13- À la fin des années 1980, il y avait de plus en plus de manifestations dans les rues de Cotonou. Est-ce que certains membres de l'armée exprimaient une certaine sympathie pour les demandes des manifestants?
14- En 1989, le président Mathieu Kérékou a autorisé la presse indépendante & le retour au multipartisme. Quel était le sentiment général du corps des officiers par rapport à ces mesures? & vous, qu'elle était votre opinion?
15- Vous m'avez mentionné la (satisfaction/insatisfaction) des forces armées face aux différentes réformes politiques de l'époque. Sentez-vous que l'opinion du corps d'officiers a eu une influence sur les décisions du gouvernement de l'époque sur la poursuite des réformes?

16- Y avait-il des officiers qui étaient plus pessimistes sur la tenue de la conférence des forces vives? Si oui, Pourquoi?
17- Quelles étaient les réactions des officiers face à la déclaration de Souveraineté de la conférence?
18- À votre avis, quelle a été l'influence de la présence des représentants des forces armées sur la conférence nationale?

Appendix D:

Questionnaire for Other Interviewees in Benin

1- est-ce qu'il y avait, durant les grandes manifestations & la tenue de la conférence des forces vives, une certaine crainte par rapport aux possibles actions des forces armées?
2- Est-ce que vous sentiez que le régime & l'armée ne faisait qu'un? Ou est-ce qu'il y avait des divergences, des distinctions?
3- Est-ce qu'à votre avis, les forces armées obéissaient pleinement aux ordres du président Mathieu Kérékou ou ces derniers avaient leurs propres agendas?
4- À votre avis, est-ce que l'opinion des représentants des forces armées a eu une influence sur les résultats de la conférence nationale? Pourriez-vous me donner des exemples?
5- Y avait-il un effort pour ménager les forces armées dans les réformes adoptées durant la conférence? Auriez-vous des exemples?
6- À la fin des années 1980, le Bénin n'était pas dans la meilleure santé économique. Est-ce qu'il y avait, à votre avis, une certaine insatisfaction parmi les officiers & les soldats?
7- Est-ce qu'il y avait certains signes plus public, ou plus secret, de cette insatisfaction?
8- Si oui, est-ce que cette insatisfaction a eu une influence sur les décisions de Mathieu Kérékou d'apporter des changements dans ces politiques?
9- Y avait-il, avant 1991, certaines dissensions au sein de l'armée quant aux choix du président Kérékou face aux coupures budgétaires & ces autres politiques face à la crise économique?
10- Quand Kérékou a annoncé le retour au multipartisme & la fin du marxisme-léninisme, est-ce que vous pensiez qu'il avait le support de plusieurs membres de son gouvernement? & de l'armée?
11- Par rapport à la question précédente : Y avait-il des opposants plus farouches à votre avis?
12- Les représentants des forces armées se sont déclarés en faveur du processus de réforme durant la conférence, est-ce que cette déclaration a eu une grande influence sur la poursuite du processus de réforme?
13- À votre avis, est-ce que les forces armées avaient une relation privilégiée avec le gouvernement de l'époque?
14- Trouvait-on plusieurs ex-militaires dans les compagnies d'état & dans la bureaucratie?
15- Comment cette situation a évolué? Est-ce que vous croyez que les militaires & le pouvoir se sont distancés avec les années? Pourquoi?
16- Comment expliquez-vous la différence entre les officiers, & soldats, qui sont restés le plus loyaux aux régimes & ceux plus en faveur des réformes?

Appendix E :

Questionnaire for Officers in Togo's Security Forces

1- Pour commencer, vous êtes né dans quelle région du pays? Comment qualifieriez-vous la situation financière de vos parents durant votre enfance?
2- Une fois que vous avez joint les forces armées, êtes-vous retourné fréquemment dans votre région natale?
3- En quelle année avez-vous rejoint l'armée? Vous rappelez-vous ce qui vous a poussé à vous enrôler?
4- Où avez-vous reçu votre entrainement? Avez-vous étudié dans une académie militaire ou une université civile?
5- Avez-vous tissé à l'époque des liens avec d'autres cadets togolais? & d'autres pays?
6- Pourriez-vous nous parler un peu de votre entrainement après l'académie?
7- Pourriez-vous me parler de votre carrière, des différents postes que vous avez occupés?
8- En regardant en arrière, pensez-vous que les changements de poste & les promotions dans l'armée avant 1991 était dû aux mérites & aux compétences ou à d'autres facteurs?
9- Dans les années 1980, le Togo a subi une crise économique. Comment est-ce que les forces armées ont été affectées? Y avait-il une inquiétude face aux nécessités budgétaires?
10- À votre avis, est-ce que les ressources octroyées aux forces armées à l'époque étaient suffisantes pour que vous puissiez remplir votre mission?
11- Quels sont les principaux devoirs des forces armées par rapport à la nation?
12- Comment décrieriez-vous le rôle des militaires dans le gouvernement béninois à l'époque du RPT? Est-ce que les forces armées se sentaient représentées & écoutées par le gouvernement?
13- Est-ce que vous sentiez que le régime & l'armée ne faisait qu'un? Ou est-ce qu'il y avait des divergences, des distinctions?
14- À la fin des années 1980, il y avait de plus en plus de manifestations dans les rues de Lomé. Est-ce que certains membres de l'armée exprimaient une certaine sympathie pour les demandes des manifestants?
15- En 1987, le RPT a annoncé la création de la commission nationale de droit de l'homme. Est-ce que cette décision a été reçue positivement par le corps des officier? Est-ce que certains étaient plus positifs/ou négatifs que d'Autres? Pourquoi à votre avis?
16- En 1991, le président Gnassingbé Eyadéma a autorisé la presse indépendante & le retour au multipartisme. Quel était le sentiment général du corps des officiers par rapport à ces mesures?
17- Y avait-il des officiers qui étaient plus pessimistes sur la tenue de la Conférence Nationale Souveraine? Si oui, Pourquoi?

18- Quelles étaient les réactions des officiers face à la déclaration de Souveraineté de la conférence?
19- À votre avis, quelle a été l'influence de la présence des représentants des forces armées sur la conférence nationale?

Appendix G :

Questionnaire for Other Interviewees in Togo

1- est-ce qu'il y avait, durant les grandes manifestations & la tenue de la conférence des forces vives, une certaine crainte par rapport aux possibles actions des forces armées?
2- Est-ce que vous sentiez que le régime & l'armée ne faisait qu'un? Ou est-ce qu'il y avait des divergences, des distinctions?
3- Est-ce qu'à votre avis, les forces armées obéissaient pleinement aux ordres du président Gnassingbé Eyadéma ou ces derniers avaient leurs propres agendas?
4- À votre avis, est-ce que l'opinion des représentants des forces armées a eu une influence sur les résultats de la conférence nationale? Pourriez-vous me donner des exemples?
5- Y avait-il un effort pour ménager les forces armées dans les réformes adoptées durant la conférence? Auriez-vous des exemples?
6- À la fin des années 1980, le Togo n'était pas dans la meilleure santé économique. Est-ce qu'il y avait, à votre avis, une certaine insatisfaction parmi les officiers & les soldats?
17- Est-ce qu'il y avait certains signes plus public, ou plus secret, de cette insatisfaction?
18- Si oui, est-ce que cette insatisfaction a eu une influence sur les décisions de Gnassingbé Eyadéma d'apporter des changements dans ces politiques?
19- Quand Eyadéma a annoncé le retour au multipartisme, est-ce que vous pensiez qu'il avait le support de plusieurs membres de son gouvernement? & de l'armée?
20- Par rapport à la question précédente : Y avait-il des opposants plus farouches à votre avis?
21- Est-ce que la décision des forces armées de ne pas retourner à la conférence nationale, après leur départ, a eu une grande influence sur la poursuite du processus de réforme?
22- À votre avis, est-ce que les forces armées avaient une relation privilégiée avec le gouvernement de l'époque?
23- Trouvait-on plusieurs militaires à la retraite dans les compagnies d'état & dans la bureaucratie?
24- Comment cette situation a évolué? Est-ce que vous croyez que les militaires & le pouvoir se sont distancés avec les années? Pourquoi?
25- À votre avis, est-ce que la forte présence de Kabiye dans les forces armées a joué en faveur d'Eyadéma? Si oui, de quelle façon?
26- Comment expliquez-vous la différence entre les officiers, & soldats, qui sont restés le plus loyaux aux régimes & ceux plus en faveur des réformes?