Is There an Autocratic Civil Peace?
Authoritarian Regimes and Civil War, 1971 - 2001[*]

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Abstract

Does the risk of civil war vary among different types of authoritarian regimes? This article uses a new data set compiled by Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell to examine the occurrence of civil war in four types of authoritarian regimes - military, monarchy, single-party and multiparty autocracies - from 1973 to the present. The answer to the above question is affirmative.Compared to military and limited, multiparty authoritarian regimes, single-party authoritarian regimes have a lower risk of armed conflict. The association between military regimes and civil conflict cannot be attributed to a higher risk of military coups in these regimes. There is thus a substantial variation in the risk of conflict associated with characteristics of the different authoritarian regime types. This suggest the need for a more sophisticated notion of authoritarianism than what we find in existing research on civil conflict.

1   Introduction

During the last decades, much effort has been devoted to understanding how political institutions influence the likelihood of violent conflicts between governments and armed insurgents. Much of this literature has centered on the finding that inconsistent regimes, i.e. regimes intermediate between the most harshly autocratic systems and the institutionally consistent democracies, exhibit a higher risk of civil conflict than either of the extremes (Hegre et al., 2001, Muller and Weede, 1990, Sambanis, 2001, Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Recent research has questioned this result by showing that the Polity dataset, on which the empirical evidence is based, partly defines inconsistent regimes by the presence of political violence (Vreeland, forthcoming, Strand, 2007). After correcting for this endogeneity, these studies find no evidence for an inverted U-shaped relationship between political institutions and civil conflict.

These results not only suggest that the frequently used Polity index is unsuitable for studies of political violence. They also illustrate the pitfalls of relying on regime classifications where most substantial information about the type of political institutions is lost in the aggregation of the data. This problem is particularly profound when it comes to the treatment of the non-democratic regimes, since the academic study of politics in these regimes have been far less systematic than the study of democracy. In the civil war literature, for example, several studies have examined the effect of particular institutional configurations within democracies, thus complementing the more aggregate studies (Reynal-Querol, 2005; 2002b). Meanwhile, the relationship between authoritarianism and civil war remains far less understood.

This lack of knowledge is remarkable, given that authoritarianism has proved to be such a durable state of affairs in many countries. A quarter century into the third wave of democratization, more than half of the world's states are still ruled by some form of non-democratic government.[1] These countries are also where a far majority of the world's armed conflicts occur.

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[1]The figure is based on Hadenius and Teorell (2007b) regime classification. It shows that 60% of the 153

Approximately 83% of the armed conflicts recorded by the UCDP/PRIO armed conflict dataset in the time period 1973 - 2001 have taken place in a authoritarian regime. It is thus important to move beyond a comprehension of these regimes as being simply authoritarian so as to provide a better understanding of the institutional determinants of civil war within this heterogenous category,

In this article I use a new data set compiled by Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell to examine the occurrence civil war in four types of authoritarian regimes - military, monarchy, single-party and multi-party systems - from 1973 to 2001. The article proceeds as follows. I first review previous research, and conclude that the impact of authoritarian institutions remain inadequately conceptualized and investigated in the existing literature on civil conflict. I proceed to outline the argument for how the different types of authoritarian political institutions influence the likelihood of civil conflict, focusing on the comparison between military, single-party and multiparty electoral autocracies. Using logit regression, I test these expectations on a global cross-sectional time series dataset. I find that military regimes are particularly prone to violent challenges to their authority. This effect cannot be attributed to a higher risk of coups among these regimes. Authoritarian regimes holding multiparty elections also have a significantly higher risk of armed conflict than single party regimes. The presence of one party rule is, however, associated with a lower risk of armed conflict. I do not discern any statistically significant relationship between the monarchical regimes and their risk of armed conflict.

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countries that the present study covers had some form of non-democratic government in 2001, which is the last year covered by this study.

2 Previous Research

There is by now a large empirical literature on how political system influence the likelihood that governments and rebel groups resort to violence against each other. The results are inconclusive, but much of the literature has centered on the finding that inconsistent regimes, i.e. regimes intermediate between the most harshly autocratic systems and the institutionally consistent democracies, exhibit a higher risk of civil conflict than either of the extremes (Hegre et al., 2001, Muller and Weede, 1990, Sambanis, 2001, Fearon and Laitin, 2003, Reynal-Querol, 2002a).

Theoretically, the expectation of an inverted U-shaped relationship between civil conflict and political regime is a function of two counteracting influences argued to jointly determine the opportunity costs of engaging in armed rebellion against the state. On the one hand, the feasibility of organizing a rebellion declines with the adeptness of the leader to outlaw opposition and to deter violent dissenters through high levels of threat and coercive behavior. On the other hand, the desirability of mounting violent insurgencies declines with the ability of political institutions to accommodate popular participation, and facilitate a substitution to non-violent political means (Muller and Weede, 1990, Hegre et al., 2001). Countries in the middle range between being fully autocratic and democratic are expected to be the most conflict prone because their relative openness create an opportunity structure for violent mobilization around joint grievances, but still do not provide real avenues for popular influence that facilitate a substitution to non-violent forms of mobilization (Gleditsch and Ruggeri, 2007).

The empirical evidence to support this argument has mostly relied on the Polity scale to measure a country's degree of democracy (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995). Recent research has questioned this evidence by showing that the inverted u-shaped relationship between the Polity score and civil conflict is an artifact of how the Polity project codes inconsistent regimes (Strand, 2007, Vreeland, forthcoming). The Polity scale is a composite measure, generated from the

values the country receives on different subcomponents of the scale. Two of the components, 'competitiveness of participation' and 'regulation of participation', are partly defined by whether a country is experiencing large scale political violence. According to Vreeland (forthcoming), the inverted u-shaped relationship between level of democracy and civil conflict is primarily established on the basis of these two variables. Similar endogeneity concerns are raised by the way many researchers treat observations where the Polity index is given a particular code (-66, -77, -88) because the political institutions could not be classified in terms of thenormal criteria. In particular, the recommendation from Jaggers and Gurr (1995) to ascribe the value of '0' to periods that are coded as 'interregnum' and given the value of -77 in the Polity data has proved to be problematic, since countries can be defined as being in interregnum precisely due to political violence and instability (Vreeland, forthcoming, Gleditsch and Ruggeri, 2007). Once these potentially endogenous aspects of the Polity scale are corrected for, there seems to be little support for the curvilinear relationship between level of democracy and the risk of civil war onset (Strand, 2007, Vreeland, forthcoming).

These results not only suggest that the frequently used Polity index is unsuitable for studies of political violence. They also illustrate the pitfalls of relying on regime classifications where substantial information about the type of political institutions is lost in aggregation of the data. Gleditsch and Ward (1997) show how the additive nature of Polity implies that there are numerous ways that a country can arrive at the same score, i.e. very different configurations of authority characteristics can add up to the same value. This is illustrated by the fact that the communist single-party regime in China, the military junta in Burma, the monarchical rule of the United Arab Emirates, and the Paraguayan system of competitive authoritarianism all are recorded with the same value of -8 on the Polity scale. In empirical research these political institutions are thus treated as constituting a similar institutional environment for government interaction with potential rebel groups. Moreover, political transitions between these types of

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systems will not show up in the Polity data, despite significant institutional changes.

The problem with aggregation is particularly profound for the study of non-democratic governance. While the study of democracy is well developed, authoritarian regimes tend to be regarded as a residual category, defined primarily by the fact that they are not democratic. In all previous cross national studies of civil conflict, the impact of particular types of non-democratic regimes have been masked in the aggregation of the data.[2] Meanwhile, a growing literature in comparative politics claim that institutional differences between authoritarian governments are important determinants of economic and political outcomes (c.f. Geddes, 1999; N.d., Wintrobe, 1990; 1998, Davenport, 2007).[3] Are institutional differences among authoritarian regimes a source of variation for the risk of civil conflict? Previous research cannot answer this question because the data used to measure political institutions mask significant differences in institutional characteristics between authoritarian regimes.

This article makes two contributions to the existing literature. First, it advances our empirical knowledge of the institutional determinants of civil conflict by examining how the risk of conflict varies between different types of non-democratic regimes. It uses a new data set compiled by Axel Hadenius and Jan Teorell to examine the occurrence of civil war in four types of authoritarian regimes - military, monarchy single-party, multiparty autocracy - from 1973 to 2001. Second, this article provides an alternative empirical examination of the theoretical argument that civil conflict is most likely in polities where opposition cannot be efficiently restricted, but the political institutions are not able to accommodate the political energies of the population. The regime classification relies on a comprehensive qualitative assessment of the type of authoritarian system. The data thus avoids the endogeneity concerns raised in relation to the Polity index.[4]

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[2]This is not equally true of the treatment of democratic polities, see e.g. (Reynal-Querol, 2002b; 2005)

[3]There is for example a growing body of literature on the impact of specific authoritarian institutions on their foreign policy behavior (Lai and Slater, 2006, Peceny, Beer and Sanchez-Terry, 2002)

[4]The initial classification of authoritarian regime types is partly based on the Polity data. Hadenius and Teorell

3 Authoritarian Regimes and the Risk of Civil Conflict

Previous research claim that civil conflict is most likely in polities where opposition cannot be efficiently restricted, but the political institutions still are unable to accommodate political discontent in a non-violent manner (Henderson and Singer, 2000, Hegre et al., 2001). Among non-democratic states it is thus primarily the capacity of the regimes to restrain dissent that determines their ability to stay unchallenged in power. How autocrats differ in their capacity to curb opposition is, however, a matter of some contention. The answer depends on whether you hold the military or the political party to be the institution most capable of enforcing social control and securing elite cohesion.

Military dictatorships are sometimes argued to have a comparative advantage when it comes to overt repression, because the expertise of the military as an institution is to enact violence (Wolpin, 1986, Wintrobe, 1990; 1998, Davenport, 2007).[5] The ability of military regimes to enact extreme sanctions for disobedience and use repression to curb dissent should increase the opportunity cost of violent mobilization.

Other scholars claim, however, that capacity for social control does not primarily derive from the use of the military coercive apparatus. Compared to co-optation, political concessions or other non-forceful methods to secure cooperation, repression is the more risky strategy to create compliance because of the risk of long-term backlash (Wintrobe, 1990). Furthermore, there might be segments of the society that are difficult to repress, such as the bureaucracy. Instead, scholars argue that institutional power that is vested in an invasive party apparatus,

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define as authoritarian all regimes that fall below 7.5 on a combined version of the Polity index and Freedomhouse scale, both of which are normalized to range between 0 and 10. All authoritarian countries are thereafter classified according to their source of political authority, based on a qualitative judgement of their institutional structures.

[5]Some scholars disagree and argue that when the military is holding office they tend to shy away from using violent repression because of organizational norms within professional militaries(Linz, 2000, Geddes, N.d.) and because the use of coercion could exacerbate internal disunity within the ruling military elite.

increases a dictator's ability to curtail dissent (c.f Lai and Slater, 2006).

Compared to military dictatorships, single-party regimes exhibit greater capacity to mobilize the citizenry into a wide array of pro-regime political organizations. Comprehensive networks of party cells generate political compliance, and facilitate a mobilization of the population, as well as the society's resources on behalf of the political leadership. Single-party regimes have been efficient in establishing strong civilian control over the military (Peceny, Beer and Sanchez-Terry, 2002), but also in developing a large non-military intelligence apparatus with far-reaching tentacles into society (Brooker, 2000, Lai and Slater, 2006). This intrusiveness of the party institution into all aspects of civil, military and political life provides single party regimes with a forceful infrastructure for controlling political opposition within society and within the state apparatus itself (Slater, 2003).

Party organizations are furthermore argued to be effective purveyors of regime patronage. In the words of Gandhi and Przeworski (2006, p.15) the party 'offers individuals willing to cooperate with the regime a vehicle for advancing their careers within the stable system of patronage. In exchange for perks and privileges and prospects of career advancement, members of a single party mobilize popular support and supervise behaviors of people unwilling to identify themselves with the dictator.' According to Geddes (1999) single party dictatorships thus tend to be particularly successful in facilitating elite cohesion. The large pay-offs to be derived from association with the incumbency serves as a deterrent to the shifting of loyalty for all factions. This co-optation of rival elites facilitates elite cohesion and increases the dictator's societal control by aggravating collective action problems in the organization of opposition.

Military regimes, on the other hand, tend to lack institutional power in the form of a party organization that can manage elite factionalism and control social mobilization. First, several scholars note the vulnerability of military regimes to internal splits within the ruling elite

- particularly between the political leadership and professional officers (Geddes, 1999). [6] Second, military regimes tend to lack successful mass-parties to channel political mobilization into pro-regime activities (Nordlinger, 1977). Stepan (1971, p.263) asserts that military regimes place such a high value on internal order that they do 'not easily tolerate a normal level of dissension and debate needed to build and maintain coalitions with civilians'. Popular mobilization is associated with political turbulence and the possibility of violence. Hence, contrary to single-party regimes, the population is seldom a source of mobilization of resources for the regime.

Furthermore, contrary to single-party regimes, military dictatorships rarely employ regime ideologies to justify their long-term authoritarian rule. Military regimes often claim to be apolitical, portraying the internal security mission as the single most important concern (Peceny, Beer and Sanchez-Terry, 2002). Ideology is, however, not only a powerful tool for legitimizing otherwise intolerable policies, but also to forge political loyalty and trust in the leadership, and hence generate cooperation (Wintrobe, 1990, Keefer, 2007). Compared to single party regimes, military dictators thus have less institutional capacity to mobilize coercive and ideological resources on behalf of incumbent leaders (Lai and Slater, 2006). It is thus not only the monopoly of force, but the use of party institutions as a vehicle of co-optation and societal control that explains why single party regimes should be better able to thwart violent challenges to their authority. Based on this observation I expect:

Hypothesis 1 *Military regimes have a higher risk of civil conflict than single-party authoritarian regimes.*

The expectation that military dictators are more vulnerable to violent challenges to their authority than are single-party dictators builds on the premise that institutions are more

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[6]Consistent with this, military regimes have been found to secure far shorter leadership tenure (Geddes, 1999) and be more short-lived (Hadenius and Teorell, 2007b) than single-party regimes.

than mere window dressing in non-democratic states. The party institution in single-party regimes is a vehicle for elite cooptation and social control. Does further institutionalization of the political bargaining process by allowing multiple political parties to participate in national elections enhance non-democratic regime's resilience to armed conflict? Some scholars suggest that it does. Gandhi and Przeworski (2006; 2007) emphasize the dictators need for political support, and contend that 'institutions are crucial for any cooptation strategy that involves political compromise' (2006:3). They argue that nominally democratic institutions, in particular a multiparty legislature, allow dictators to solicit cooperation from larger segments of the society. Dictators thus maintain institutions such as legislatures, elections and parties to encapsulate the opposition and thwart the risk of rebellion.

The argument of Gandhi and Przeworski (2006; 2007) raises the question whether such institutional concessions, short of democratic transition, is sufficient to co-opt opposition against the autocrat, and facilitate a substitution to non-violent means. Multiparty elections provide the opposition with an institutionalized channel of political influence. Nevertheless, the demands that the opposition make are rarely met within the de facto limited governmental channels(Henderson and Singer, 2000). These regimes are still classified as authoritarian because the nominally democratic institutions they maintain are degraded by frequent and systematic violations of democratic procedures (Levitsky and Way, 2002, Diamond, 2002). They fall short of being democracies because the incumbent is able to routinely manipulate the democratic rules, through electoral fraud, by controlling the media, buying electoral commissions, banning parts of the opposition, or failing to comply with election results. The incumbents ability to sidestep the democratic process results in a highly unequal playing field between the incumbent and the opposition. The introduction of multiparty elections per se does not erode the motivations for violence.

At the same time, the opportunities for violence is higher than in single-party author-

itarian regimes. The opposition do not have to fear the extreme sanctions for upheaval as in single-party regimes. Opposition tends to be legal and perceived domestically as being legitimate, thus limiting the repertoire of extrajudicial means available to the leadership to curb opponents, both within society at large and within the state apparatus (Levitsky and Way, 2002). Political pluralism dissolves the incumbent's monopoly power over which form political organization take. Political parties serve less as vehicles for control from above - as in single-party regimes - but rather invite political mobilization and empowerment of elites outside the realm of the dictator's control. Some scholars also suggest that the sheer presence of democratic institutions in authoritarian regimes signals windows of opportunity to challenge the incumbent regime. Fearon and Laitin (2003, p.85) argue that the co-existence of democratic and autocratic institutions indicates that the autocratic leader is too weak to impose full-fledge authoritarian rule and contain contending groups with force.These regimes thus invite violent protest.

If the presence of multiparty authoritarianism mirrors political contestation among competing political forces, uncertainty about the future outcome of this power struggle might precipitate a turn to violence. Gates et al. (2006) show that regimes that mix democratic and autocratic institutions are inherently unstable. In these regimes neither the incumbent nor the opposition hold the *institutional means* to translate their first preferences into policy.The leadership is not sufficiently strong to successfully monopolize the state's coercive and political infrastructure, nor is the opposition able to shift the institutions in a fully democratic direction. From the point of view of the opposition, this uncertainty about the future distribution of power reduces the value of political concessions that fall short of institutionalized democracy, since the autocrat have incentives to renege on such promises once the threat of rebellion is out of sight. This problem of credible commitment is likely to contribute to the attractiveness of violent political means in multiparty authoritarian regimes. Based on this argument I expect:

Hypothesis 2 *Multiparty authoritarian regimes have a higher risk of civil conflict than single-party authoritarian regimes.*

4   Data and Research Design

The Dependent Variable

To examine the impact of authoritarian institutions on armed conflict I rely on conflict data from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, v.4-2006 (Gleditsch et al., 2002). The country year dataset includes all internal armed conflicts between a government and an organized opposition group that caused at least 25 annual battle deaths.[7] Since I am focusing on the onset and not the prevalence of conflict, I use a dichotomous variable taking on the value of 1 in the year a conflict breaks out, and 0 in years with peace. Consecutive years of conflict are dropped from the dataset. If the conflict intensity falls below the casualty threshold for two consecutive years, the next observation of the conflict is treated as a new onset.

The Independent Variables: A Typology of Authoritarian Government

The dataset on authoritarian regime types is collected by Jan Teorell and Axel Hadenius. They start by defining as authoritarian all countries that fall below 7.5 on a combined Polity and Freedom House scale (both normalized to range between 0 and 10).[8] For more information see Hadenius and Teorell (2005; 2007a;b) Following this definition, roughly 2/3 of the country year observations are recorded as having an authoritarian form of government.

The authoritarian regime types are in turn classified according to the source of their

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[7]See also the Uppsala Conflict Data Program homepage at http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/

[8]The cut off point of 7.5, used to make the initial separation between democratic and authoritarian regimes, is decided by taking the mean of the cutoff points used to separate democracy and autocracy in five well known categorical measures of democracy, those of Freedom House, the Polity project, and the studies of (Przeworski, 2000, Mainwaring, Brinks and Pérez-Linán, 2001, Reich, 2002).

political authority. The data separates between; (1) *military regimes*, where a group of officers exercise influence over politics and decides who will rule; (2) *single-party electora regimes*, which hold elections for the parliament or executive office, but all parties but one are prohibited (3) *limited, multiparty regimes*, where parliamentary or presidential elections are held in which at least candidates are able to participate that are independent of the ruling elite and (4) *monarchical regimes*, where a person of royal descent has inherited the position of head of state in accordance with accepted practice and/or the constitution. For the latter category I propose no general theoretical expectation, since these constitute a particular subset that is small in size and is dominated by the oil-rich states in the Middle-East.

Many of the authoritarian systems exhibit characteristics of more than one category. I use a simplified version of the original typology where all military regimes with amalgams, such as the military one party regime of Siad Barre in Somalia between 1979 and 1990, are treated as military, all monarchical regimes with amalgams are treated as monarchies etc.. Lastly, there is a group of countries that is not properly accounted for by either of these main characteristics. These include for example; the theocratic rule in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 1979 to present and in Afghanistan under the Taliban; the transitional rule of post conflict Burundi between 2001 and 2004; and Gaddafi's rule in Libya from 1973 and onwards. These countries make up a residual category that is labeled as (5) *other* regimes.

In addition to this set of five mutually exclusive authoritarian regime dummy variables, I also construct a dummy variable for consistent democracy that takes the value of 1 if the country is above 7.5 on the combined Freedom House and Polity scale.

The Control Variables

To detect spurious relationships, I include control variables that we know from previous research influence the risk of armed conflict, and that could also be expected to be associated

with our main independent variables of interest. I control for *per capita income*, which previous research has identified as one of the most robust predictors of civil peace. Many studies have also discussed the relationship between form of government and level of economic development (Przeworski, 2000, Boix, 2003). GDP pc is measured using the expanded GDP dataset v.4.1 from (Gleditsch, 2002). I control for *population size* using data from the World Bank (Bank, 2007). I take the natural log of both GDP per capita and the population estimate to reduce the effect of extreme values. I control for ethnic diversity using the updated *ethnic fractionalization index* (ELF) that ranges between 0 and 1 and denotes the probability that two randomly drawn people in a country belong to the same group. The variable is taken from Fearon and Laitin (2003) and I refer to their article for further details on the sources and the construction of this data. To model the expectation that the relationship between ethnic fractionalization and conflict is likely to be curvilinear, I also include the squared term of the ELF index. Previous research has found that the risk of armed conflict is associated with political change (Hegre et al., 2001) and and that some authoritarian regime types are more durable than others (Hadenius and Teorell, 2007*b*, Geddes, 1999) . Hence, to be able to parse out the impact of regime type from the effect of political instability, I include a control for *time since last regime change*. This variable is constructed as a decay function of the time since last transition from one regime category to another, which is given by 2 to the power of -(time since last onset/α), where α is the half-life parameter (Raknerud and Hegre, 1997). After comparing the log-likelihood of different models I choose a functional form where the influence of last regime change decays over time with a half-life of three years.

Method

I use multivariate logit regression to estimate the impact of authoritarian regime types on the risk of civil conflict, and report robust standard errors, clustered on country. To address the

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problems associated with time dependence in binary time-series cross-sectiona analysis, I add a variable to the model that record the time since the last onset of armed conflict or, in the case of no armed conflict, the first year of independence. Since the influence of and onset of armed conflict is not stationary, but can be assumed to decay over time I specify this variable as a decay function. The exponential function of the time that has passed without the onset of armed conflict is given by 2 to the power of -(time since last onset/α), where α is the half-life parameter (Raknerud and Hegre, 1997). I choose a functional form where the influence of an onset of armed conflict decays over time with a half-life of two years.

5   Empirical Results

In Table 1, I report descriptive statistics for each of the regime dummy variables. In total, 63% of the 3266 country year observations on which I have data on all the control variables have an authoritarian form of government between 1973 and 2001. The military, the single party, and the limited multiparty authoritarian regime categories are roughly equal in size - respectively 27, 28 and 29 percent of the authoritarian sample. The number of civil conflicts vary considerably between these regimes, however. Even though they are no more prevalent, both the military and the limited multiparty authoritarian regimes each experience more than two times as many onsets of armed conflicts than the single-party regimes. The monarchical regime is the least common authoritarian regime type and constitutes only 12 % of the observations, the majority of which are found in the Middle East. Only three armed conflicts takes place in monarchical regimes during this time period.

Table 2 presents the result for the empirical model that examines how the risk of civil war is related to authoritarian regime characteristics. In Table 2, Model 1 single party regimes

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Authoritarian Regime Variables

	Country year observations	% - authoritarian sample	No. of onsets civil conflict
Military regime	563	27%	30
Single-party authoritarian	578	28%	12
Limited, multiparty authoritarian	608	29%	27
Monarchy	237	12%	3
Other	87	4%	4
Democracy	1193	-	16
Total	3266	-	92

is the excluded reference category, so the reported coefficients shows the risk conflict in different authoritarian regimes in relation to single-party regimes. In line with my first hypotheses, military regimes have a higher risk of experiencing a civil conflict than single party regimes. The estimates for the effect is significant both in a statistical and substantive sense: holding all control variables at their mean value, a military regime has a 4.2% predicted probability for a conflict outbreak, compared to a 1.8% predicted probability of conflict in a single party authoritarian regime.Our second hypothesis is also confirmed by the results reported in Table 2, Model 1. Multiparty authoritarian regimes have a higher risk of civil conflict than single-party authoritarian regimes. Holding all control variables at their mean, the risk of civil conflict more than doubles - from 1.8 % to 4.1% - moving from a single-party to a multiparty authoritarian regime.

The estimates of conflict risk for multiparty and military regimes, reported in Table 2, Model 1, are not statistically different from each other. Both these regime types hence have a similar estimated risk of conflict outbreak, in spite of very different institutional configurations. When compared to single-party regimes, I detect no statistically significant relationship between the presence of monarchical rule and the risk of civil conflict. Nor is the risk of civil conflict significantly different between democracies and single-party regimes.

In Table 2, Model 2 and 3, I interact the decay function of the time since last regime

Table 2: Logit Analysis, Authoritarian Regime Types and Civil Conflict

	Onset UCDP/PRIO	Onset UCDP/PRIO	Onset UCDP/PRIO
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Military$_{lag}$	.903**	.941***	.929 **
	(.375)	(.361)	(.377)
Military*time		-1.465**	
		.681	
Limited multiparty$_{lag}$	.864**	.776 **	.770**
	(.365)	(.357)	(.382)
Multiparty*time			.819
			.686
Democracy$_{lag}$	.236	.152	.244
	(.442)	(.428)	(.446)
Monarchy$_{lag}$	.26	.247	.238
	(.656)	(.643)	(.659)
Other$_{lag}$	1.043	.92	1.095*
	(.649)	(.652)	(.65)
GDP per capita$_{lag,log}$	-.469***	-.433***	-.467***
	(.151)	(.148)	(.152)
Population$_{lag,log}$	.263***	.254***	.26 ***
	(.079)	(.079)	(.079)
Ethnic fractionalization	4.639***	4.689***	4.773***
	(1.65)	(1.66)	(1.656)
Ethnic fractionalization sq	-4.478**	-4.563**	-4.633**
	(1.856)	(1.859)	(1.861)
Time since regime change$_{lag}$	.219	.658*	-.022
	(.338)	(.371)	(.41)
Time since conflict	-.129	-.136	-.142
	(.306)	(.304)	(.305)
Constant	-5.461***	-5.707***	-5.371***
	(1.917)	(1.899)	(1.912)
(N)	3266	3266	3266
Countries	149	149	149

transition with the military regime dummy and with the multiparty regime dummy respectively. The interaction effects allows me to examine how the risk of civil conflict is dependent on the regime's duration in office. Some scholars argue that institutional transitions are endogenous to the political bargaining between the opposition and the leadership (c.f. Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006, Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006). If the existence of military regimes or the presence of multiparty elections are reflections of strategies to co-opt or thwart opposition, we should expect the probability of conflict to be highest immediately after the transition into these regime categories.

For the military regimes this expectation does not bear out. The interaction term is negative and significant. Since the decay function is largest immediately after a regime transition, this suggest that the risk of conflict increases with the time that has passed since the military takeover. The size of the interaction effect suggests that immediately after the military regime takes over, military regimes actually have a lower risk of armed conflict - compared to single-party regimes. But the resilience of military regimes to violent rebellions decrease with time. With the inclusion of the multiplicative term, the separate estimates for the two component variables (i.e. regime change and the military regime dummy variable) no longer refer to average effects, but to contingent effects when the value of the other component term is equal to zero. To ease interpretation I have centered the decay function for the time since last regime change around its mean. The coefficient for regime change hence suggest that when excluding military regimes, proximity to last regime change is a positive and significant determinant of the risk of civil conflict. But for the military regimes, the opposite holds.

For the limited multiparty regimes the multiplicative term is positive, as expected, but not significant. Hence, with this specification of the time dependence, I cannot assert that the impact of competitive authoritarianism on the risk of civil conflict is conditioned by the duration of the regime in office. The estimated effect of multiparty authoritarian regimes - that in this interaction model is computed on the basis of all observations, but refers to the estimated effect

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when the time since regime change is on its mean - remains positive and significant.

The results for the control variables largely support prevailing theories about the determinants of internal armed conflict. Economic development is associated with a reduced risk of armed conflict across all models. This even holds when I exclude the democratic countries, which encompass a disproportionate share of the most developed and politically stable countries in the world. I find larger populations to be a robust predictor of armed conflict, a finding that is sometimes explained by the difficulties of implementing efficient governance in large countries (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Ethnic fractionalization is positively associated with conflict outbreak across all models, whereas the squared term is negative. Jointly this suggest a curvilinear relationship between ethnic fractionalization and armed conflict: very homogenous countries, as well as the very fractionalized countries have a lower risk of armed conflict than polarized countries where a smaller number of large ethnic groups face each other. [9]

In the main model I do not find a statistically significant effect of political instability. This is not in line with previous research. The results reported in Table2, Model 2 and 3 shed some further light on why this is the case. The impact of recent political transitions is conditioned by the type of regime. For the military regimes, the risk of conflict actually seem to increase with the time since military take over. The impact of time since regime change for all regime types, except military regimes, is estimated in Table 2, Model 2.[10] Here the effect of *time since regime change* is positive and significant at the .10 level. Hence, among non-military authoritarian regimes the risk of civil conflict is highest immediately after a regime take-over. Note also that since I control for political instability the higher risk of armed conflict in military and multiparty

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[9]Since we know that the post-Cold War era has been marked by a proliferation of hybrid regimes, as many authoritarian governments adopted more liberal political arrangements (Diamond, 2002), I have also tried to add a Cold War dummy variable to all models in order to make sure that the observed relationships between political regimes and conflict are not driven by particular Cold War effects. Furthermore, the results are not sensitive to a control for oil dependence. Neither of these control variables were significant.

[10]Here *time since regime change* is a composite term in the multiplicative term *military *time since regime change* and hence refers to the effect when the military regime dummy is equal to zero.

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regimes are not simply accounted for by the possibility that these are transitional regime types. [11]

Extending the Analysis

In Table 3, I proceed to examine two alternative specifications of the dependent variable. First, I employ a more restrictive definition of civil conflict, including only those conflicts between a government and an opposition group that caused at least 1000 annual battle deaths. Apart from the intensity threshold the specification of the dependent variable remains the same as above.

The results, which are reported in Table 3, Model 1, are similar to the result reported above.[12] Military regime is associated with a higher risk of civil conflict. The substantive effect remains significant, even though the predicted probability of civil war of high intensity is generally lower. Compared to single party regimes, the military regimes have a more than three times higher risk of experiencing a civil war: the predicted probability of civil war outbreak increases from 0.34% to 1.15%. The multiparty regime type is not associated with a higher risk of civil war than is the single-party regime type. Multiparty authoritarian rule thus seems to be associated with minor armed conflicts claiming at least 25 battle related casualties per year. Conflicts in military regimes tend, however, to claim more casualties and escalate to full-fledged civil war. None of the other regime dummies have statistically significant effects.

The finding of a positive association between military rule and armed conflict is a novel result in the quantitative literature on armed conflict. This relationship could only be disclosed by disaggregating the authoritarian regime category. Next, I examine whether the heightened risk of armed conflict in military regimes is explained by the higher risk of military coups in these systems (see Nordlinger, 1977, Brooker, 2000). Coups imply that discontent within the military

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[11]The results are also robust to two alternative controls for political instability. First, I have tried to include a dummy variable that takes on the value of 1 if the country has experienced a transition from one regime type to another in any of the three years prior to the country year in question. Second, I have tried to add a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if there anytime during the past three years has been a change ¿3 in the combined Freedom House and Polity index that is underlying the regime classification. The results remain largely unaltered.

[12]I drop ongoing conflict years in all models, and since the number of country years with conflict varies dependent on the specification of the dependent variable, the number of observation varies between the models.

takes the form of a violent revolt and the conflict parties are really two fractions of government fighting each other. If these coups claim at least 25 battle related deaths, they are recorded in the UCDP/PRIO conflict data set.

To examine whether it is in fact military coups that are driving the results reported in Table 2, I employ data collected by Cunningham (2006) that records whether the conflict in the UCDP/PRIO data was a coup or not, and use this variable to exclude the 23 onsets of armed conflict from the UCDP/PRIO data where the challenger to government authority comes from within the military. In Table 3, Model 2, I report the results when using this recoded version of the dependent variable. Even when coups are excluded, the military regime category remains a significant predictor of armed conflict. The same also holds for the multiparty regime category.

Last, I consider whether the form of authoritarianism matters for the type of conflict we observe. I use information from the UCDP/PRIO dataset on whether the conflict incompatibility concerns governmental power or territorial claims, i.e. whether the groups are seeking to overthrow the current regime or have separatist or autonomy demands relating to a territory of the state. These results are not reported in the Tables. Compared to the single-party regimes, military and multiparty authoritarian regimes are more likely to experience conflict over governmental power. They are not more likely, however, to be engaged in armed conflicts relating to territorial claims. In fact, none of the autocratic regime types emerge as significant predictors of territorial conflicts, even though the signs of the coefficients are in line with the above findings. This is in line with Buhaug (2006) finding, that political institutions are significant predictors of armed conflict over government, whereas separatist conflicts tend to be determined by other factors.

Table 3: Logit Analysis, Authoritarian Regime Types and Civil Conflict

	Onset War UCDP/PRIO	Onset, no coups UCDP/PRIO
Military$_{lag}$	1.645**	1.055**
	(.682)	(.462)
Multiparty$_{lag}$	.968	1.061**
	(.738)	(.428)
Monarchy$_{lag}$	1.203	.482
	(.872)	(.662)
Democracy$_{lag}$	.447	.599
	(.791)	(.491)
Other$_{lag}$	.198	1.678***
	(1.154)	(.525)
GDP pc$_{lag,log}$	-.494***	-.502***
	(.176)	(.158)
Population$_{lag,log}$	.344***	.511***
	(.101)	(.088)
Ethnic fractionalization	5.72***	6.407***
	(2.151)	(1.788)
Ethnic fractionalization sq.	-5.823**	-6.038***
	(2.472)	(2.07)
Time since regime change$_{lag}$	1.011 **	-.508
	(.449)	(.33)
Time since conflict	.767	2.279***
	(.541)	.395
Constant	-8.472	-10.378
	(2.551)***	(1.732)***
(N)	3693	3310
Countries	152	154

6 Conclusion

Previous research has emphasized the importance of political institutions for explaining cross-national variations in political violence. To the extent that the more general regime categories have been disaggregated, however, the focus has primarily been on how constitutional arrangements within democracies influence the risk of armed conflict (Reynal-Querol, 2002*b*; 2005). The existing literature has thus largely ignored the diversity that exists within non-democratic regimes. Autocracy has largely remained a residual category. Addressing this lacuna, this article has aimed to contribute to scholarly knowledge about the institutional determinants of armed

conflict by differentiating between different types of authoritarian regimes.

Applying a qualitative typology of institutional types naturally imply forsaking some of the parsimony of the more general and aggregate measures of democracy from previous research. By moving beyond a unidimensional measures of political regime we can increase our understanding of the workings of particular political institutions. The typology enables us to answer the question of whether the risk of armed conflict varies between different types of non-democratic systems. The answer is affirmative. I find that regimes in which the highest government executives come from the military are particularly exposed to violent challenges to their authority. I cannot say, however whether they are more at risk than the multiparty regimes. Among the electoral regimes I find strong support for the notion that the presence of liberal institutions in the form of multiparty elections increases the likelihood of armed conflict. I find that the single-party regimes are the authoritarian regime type that has the lowest probability of experiencing armed challenges to its political authority. The monarchies seem to fall somewhere in the middle between these regime types, but since the these regimes are rare, there is not sufficient information in the data to detect a statistically significant effect for the impact of monarchical rule on the risk of armed conflict.

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