Civilian Coup Advocacy

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Summary

Available scholarship on civil-military relations, and coup politics in particular, tends to treat military coups d'état as originating purely within the minds of military officers. That is, the overwhelming bulk of scholarship assumes that the idea to seize power stems from officer cliques. To the extent that societal factors (e.g., polarization, economic decline, party factionalism) explain coups, they merely account for why *officers decide* to seize power. Most research that discusses civilian support for coups does so within single case studies—almost entirely drawn from the Middle East and North Africa. Building on a vibrant wave of studies that disaggregates civil-military institutions, a small body of recent research has begun to systematically and comprehensively consider the theoretical and empirical importance of civilian involvement in military coups. This perspective de-emphasizes the military's possession of weapons and instead focuses on ideational sources of power. Civilians have more power and resources to offer military plotters than existing scholarship has given them credit. Civilian elites and publics can legitimate coups, organize them, manipulate information on behalf of the plotters, and finance coups for their own economic interests. In short, to fully understand coups, we must seek as much knowledge as possible about their formation, including where the idea for each plot originated. Such detailed analysis of coup plots will give us a clearer picture about the motivating factors behind coups.

Keywords
Coups d'état, militaries, civilians, coup advocacy, civil-military relations (CMR)

Introduction
Civilians have long been portrayed as powerless victims of military takeovers, but they often perpetrate coups. Scholars of civil-military relations generally acknowledge that civilians support coups, but this behavior has until recently not been studied in any systematic or comprehensive fashion. Civilian involvement in coups, however, is an important topic to study because encouraging soldiers to launch coups violates socio-political norms and places parliamentarians and their constituents at risk of bodily harm, death, exile, and imprisonment. Moreover, when civilians extend their socio-political legitimacy to armed agents of the state, they offer soldiers the moral authority to continue to interfere in politics. A new research agenda has therefore begun to ask questions about this puzzling behavior under the rubric of civilian *coup advocacy*, which is when civilians willingly promote a coup to further some political aim.

The study of civilian *coup advocacy* is the topic of this chapter, which proceeds as follows: The next section discusses the near absence of discussion on civilian coup-involvement in the existing literature on military coups d'état. The concept of civilian coup advocacy is then introduced in the following section. The subsequent section offers four reasons why civilian *coup advocacy* is an important topic for comprehensive theoretical and empirical examination: (1) the puzzle of civilian support for coups; (2) the power that civilians have to support coups; (3) the fact that civilians sit at the nexus between international and domestic politics; and (4) how civilian support for coups interacts with research on military rank. Next, the chapter explains how civilian *coup advocacy* can be studied within the context of research on coup dynamics. More specifically, the section highlights how we can learn from studying the germination of coup plots from start to finish—

avoiding teleological approaches that trace backward from the interests of officers who physically seize power.

The chapter's final substantive section offers additional avenues of research on civilian *coup advocacy*. Aside from conducting more research on *coup advocacy* outside the Middle East and North Africa (e.g., Zimbabwe, 2017; Venezuela, 2019; Bolivia, 2020; Peru, 2020; Jordan, 2021), there are at least six topics worth of additional study: (1) how often *coup advocacy* backfires on its perpetrators; (2) how often civilian support for coups decisively tips the scales in favor of a coup; (3) when civilian *coup advocacy* is rejected by a country's armed forces; (4) whether the target (e.g., regime-type) of civilian coup advocates is consequential; (5) the conditions in which we expect to observe each sub-type of co*up advocacy* (more on those types below); (6) the relative weight of each of the sub-types of *coup advocacy* on a coup's success.

Civilians in Coups

Available scholarship on civil-military relations literature tends to treat military coups d'état as originating purely within the minds of military officers. That is, the overwhelming bulk of scholarship assumes that coup plots develop within officer cliques. Viewing civil-military relations "through the lens of the liberal-democratic principle that *elected civilian officials must be supreme over the military*" (Esen and Gumuscu 2017, 60), researchers and policymakers struggle to imagine a scenario in which civilians would ever invite soldiers into politics. Indeed, civilian *coup advocacy* is puzzling behavior because it violates socio-political norms and is physically dangerous.

In the study of civil-military relations, and coup politics in particular, there is widespread recognition of the empirical fact of civilian involvement in coups (Janowitz 1964/1977, 49; Luttwak 1979, 9; Ferguson 1987, 113; Svolik 2009, 478-480; Casper and Tyson 2014; Albrecht 2015, 660; Powell and Thyne 2011, 252; 2016; Derpanopoulos, Frantz, Geddes and Wright 2017). Despite this empirical acknowledgment, current scholarship does not examine the topic in any detailed or systematic fashion (see Kinney 2019 for an extended discussion of this literature). To the extent that civilians are discussed in coup politics, they are more often than not portrayed as passive, powerless victims of small groups of discontented or ambitious officer cliques. These army coteries are almost always assumed to have taken the initiative for a given coup (e.g., Halpern 1962; Rustow 1959; Finer 1962; Huntington 1968; Nordlinger 1976; Luttwak 1979; Feaver 1999; Horowitz 1980, 6, 12; Aléman and Saiegh 2013; Kandeh 2004; Woddis 1977; Wolpin 1978, 245-64). For instance, when Samuel Huntington claimed that, "Military explanations do not explain military interventions," (1968, 194) what he meant was that societal factors explain why *officers choose* to stage coups. This removes the possibility that societal (i.e., non-military) actors were themselves responsible for dreaming up and plotting a coup.

Only a small amount of literature has seriously considered the important role that civilians play in military coups. Much of that work, however, is empirically oriented: it focuses on single case studies, and all from the Middle East. There are three English-language studies of civilian coup involvement, and one Arabic-language study: Adel Beshara's (2005) description of the Lebanese PPS/SSNP's failed 1961 coup; Özgür Ulus's (2011) study of the 1970s-era Turkish left; Stephanie Cronin's (2010) study of Iranian social movements, which discusses the 1921 coup; and Iraqi Laith

Abdul Hassan Al-Zubaidi's (1979) study (in Arabic) on the July 1958 coup, in which he argues existing accounts ignore the Free Officers's alliances with civilian organizations.

A small body of recent scholarship has begun to systematically study the theoretical importance and empirical reality of civilian involvement in military coups d'état (Kinney 2019; 2021). This research is based within a dynamic literature that examines elite civil-military dynamics and disaggregates the military and civilian political class (Schiff 1995; Svolik 2009; Casper & Tyson 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a; 2015b; Koehler & Albrecht 2021; White 2021). The study of civilian involvement in coups de-emphasizes weapons as the main source of power in coup-prone states and instead reorients our attention toward the sources of power and the ideas that civilians can lend to coup perpetrators. To fully understand coups, students of coups must seek as much knowledge as possible about the formation of coup plots, including where the idea for each plot originates. For instance, if a coup plot originated among officers that are unconnected to any civilian faction, then we would seek to understand the identities and interests of those officers. If a left-wing civilian grouping infiltrate the military academy and then later recruit loyal officers for a coup, then we would conclude that the coup had some motivation related to the interests of that civilian grouping, even if the officers who executed the coup had idiosyncratic personality traits or interests.

In short, in order to understand coups we must go beyond teleological approaches that work backward from the interests of officers who end up in power. The concept of civilian *coup advocacy* offers researchers the tools to conduct such analyses. The following section introduces this concept as *coup advocacy* and describes the term in greater detail.

Civilian Coup Advocacy
After witnessing a successful coup, we cannot assume that the entirety of the civilian political class is at the mercy of their country's soldiers. After any coup, we must ask if one or another faction of the civilian elite participated in the operation in order to advance their interests. This is called civilian *coup advocacy*, which describes a broad range of coup-supporting activities. Advocacy has a number of synonyms, all of which suggest the willing promotion of a cause. In attaching the term coup, advocacy is qualified to include the encouragement of the coup itself as well as the advancement of its underlying cause. In order to qualify as *coup advocacy*, agents must take active steps to make a *military* takeover materialize *in support of some wider political cause*. A military intervention is "the use, actual or threatened, of force by *members of the military*, either alone or *with civilian actors*, in an attempt to change the executive leadership of the state" (emphasis added, Taylor 2003, 7). Civilian *coup advocacy* narrows in on the civilian side of civil-military coup coalitions and conspiracies.

An earlier iteration of research on *coup advocacy* too narrowly focused on instances in which civilians approached officers with the idea to seize power (Kinney 2019). The problem with this approach is that it ignores the puzzle of civilian support for coups. The field of civil-military relations rightly assumes that civilians should want the military out of the halls of power so that they can monopolize power for themselves (see, e.g., Feaver 1996). The ideal-typical example of civilian *coup advocacy* is when a civilian politician dreams up a conspiracy and initiates the process of coup formation by approaching and enlisting soldiers in a plot. Excluding situations in

which coup plots originate in the minds of civilian politicians, however, there are still many ways that civilians can actively support the army's entrance into political power. For example, in 1949 witnesses in Damascus spotted leftist party leaders Akram al-Hawrani and Faydi Atassi with submachine guns engaged in an assault on the Ministry of Defense alongside soldiers of the Syrian Army (Serres 1949e). Is this not an example of like-minded civilians and soldiers cooperating toward the success of a coup attempt?

To capture the nuances of civilian coup encouragement, the concept of *coup advocacy* should include: (1) *coup-seeking*, or recommending/proposing a coup to army partisans; (2) *coup-plotting*, or championing a coup by scheming with co-conspirators to advance an existing plot; (3) *coup-recruitment*, or assisting in the formation of an existing plot, no matter where the idea originates; (4) *coup-participation*, or aiding and abetting soldiers in their attempt to seize power (e.g., delivering an ultimatum, organizing supportive demonstrations, engaging in combat alongside armed partisans); (5) *coup-backing*, or lending socio-political capital and/or material resources after a coup, with advance knowledge of the coup and prior intent to support it after its realization; (5) *coup-incitement*, or (privately or publicly) urging armed partisans to seize power on behalf of one's cause; (6) *coup-justification*, or justifying violations of the coup taboo with reference to one's cause or the iniquity of one's opponents; and (7) *coup-legitimation*, e.g., claiming the action was a revolution, dressing the coup in legalese.

With these types of behaviors in mind, researchers can use a historiographical approach and/or process-tracing to assess instances of *coup advocacy*. Students of the subject can examine each of these behaviors as constituting civilian *coup advocacy* or study each type of activity (e.g., legitimation versus formation) separately. As will be noted in the discuss of future research avenues, because the area of study is so new there have been no studies of how frequently civilian coup advocates use one or another of these strategies—each of which could pose different levels of risk or political exposure.

It is important to note that the underlying reason why civilians are backing a coup may differ from what motivates those soldiers who civilians enlist in a plot. What matters is that civilian coup advocates promote some underlying political goal. For example, in December 1949, Syrian politician Akram al-Hawrani sought to prevent a Syrian-Iraqi merger by engaging in *coup-seeking*. Hawrani approached Major Amin Abu Assaf and Captain Fadlallah Abu Mansour and played on their nationalism by telling them, "you alone are responsible for *saving the country* and putting an end to this decay" (emphasis added, Abu Mansour 1959, 95-6). Likewise, in July 2013 Egyptian General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi's goals were to seize power on behalf of members of the ancien régime, while many in the street simply wanted to remove President Mohamed Morsi. "A lot of people woke up to the fact that they participated in the coup," lamented one activist, "but didn't understand it that way…when they were demonstrating" (interview with anonymous activist, September 10, 2020). The latter were unwitting civilian coup advocates.

To be certain, if civilians are brought onto television at gunpoint to offer a fearful, half-hearted public statement in support of a junta, then this does not count as *coup advocacy*. Often times, however, civilians play an integral role in supporting a coup operation. The Egyptian *Tamarod* (Rebel) movement's support for General Sisi's coup is again a relevant example. *Tamarod* received backing from business and media oligarchs, political parties, religious figures, and labor

leaders (Kinney, forthcoming). All of these interests played some role that, when aggregated, transferred public legitimacy to General Sisi and allowed him to merely issue an ultimatum to force out President Morsi. While it may seem that civilian activities in support of a coup are less important than the military side of the operation, the next section elaborates on the important power and resources that civilian conspirators offer to their military counterparts.

The Importance of Civilian Coup Advocacy

Civilians should be central to our understanding of military coups. The role of civilians is important for several theoretical and empirical reasons. First, understanding the puzzle of *coup advocacy* fundamentally re-imagines what constitutes "normal" civil-military relationships. That is, civilians and soldiers should not necessarily be seen as distinct in every circumstance. Their private identities and interests can overlap in ways that supersede their public identities and interests. Second, civilians have particular skills and resources that lend themselves to coup politics. Third, civilian elites sit at the nexus between domestic and international politics (see Aslan in this volume). The study of civilian coup advocates can therefore help us understand how power, resources, and interests sometimes span national boundaries in support of coup efforts, such as the networks of British, American, and Iranian agents behind the 1953 coup against Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq. Finally, an understanding of civilian *coup advocacy* is consistent with newer accounts of coup politics that disaggregate militaries by rank and resources (Singh 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a). For example, civilian coup advocates can enhance the power of lower-resourced officers by orchestrating mutinies and/or "coups from below" (Kandeh 2014). The following four sections discuss these three points at length.

The Puzzle of Coup Advocacy

Based on a state-society binary (corresponding to the Habermasian notion of the public-private spheres), Samuel Huntington's seminal *Soldier and the State*, which has significantly shaped the study of civil-military relations, erected an analytical boundary between public officials and the public soldiers that they seek to control. This is nicely captured in Peter Feaver's (1996) summary of the motivating question behind much research in civil-military relations: who will guard the guardians? In a world full of states, societies need armies to safeguard their sovereignty, but who will protect society from the state's soldiers?

This ideal-typical boundary between institutions of public/state and private/society that underlies current conceptualizations of civil-military relationships implicitly assumes that those who enter into state institutions—those who become agents of the state, such as soldiers or bureaucrats—adopt an attachment to a *public* identity. Mitchell (1991) has instead argued that rather than re-producing disputed understandings of the state, researchers should instead continuously (re)-interpret the evolving social relationships that define and re-define the mutually co-constitutive boundary that marks the *public* and the *private*. In other words, there is no state and society; as feminist scholarship has long argued, there is only a society that discursively constructs and is constructed by the concept of distinct *public* and *private* spheres (e.g., Tickner 1989; Epstein 2013).

Relationships between civilians and soldiers are likewise at once *public* and *private*. Depending on socio-historical circumstances, social agents retain greater or lesser degrees of attachment

and/or commitment to their private identities when they become bureaucrats, police, or soldiers. Across time and space, variations in partisanship, family values, ethnic ties, and other identities, influence each new cadet's level of attachment to his/her prior ideological commitments. Politicians and soldiers in post-colonial Iraq and Syria, for instance, demonstrated greater attachment to their own ideological groupings than to public institutions like the state, parliament, or national army. Ba'thist, Arab Socialist, Communist, and Arab Nationalist soldiers were party members first and soldiers second. The story becomes even more complicated if one includes ethnic ties. Similarly, in Egypt in 2013 civilian economic and political elites demonstrated greater affinity to secular elite officers than they did to their civilian Muslim Brotherhood counterparts.

Early accounts of post-colonial Middle East coups tended to argue that the region's militaries intervened to provide order in societies with otherwise disorganized, corrupt, and/or illegitimate civilian institutions. The story of the region's post-colonial coups was not one of ambitious officers acting on behalf of organizationally coherent militaries to end their countries's political crises and establish order. Middle East officers with which students of the post-colonial era are familiar were aiders and abettors of crises they helped produce as partners in revolutionary civil-military alliances. Coup cascades in Iraq and Syria were not due to *exogenous* forces, i.e., feeble institutional structures external to the actors operating within them. Disaggregating post-colonial Iraqi and Syrian armies reveals that they were not unitary organizations with high institutional capacity but divided by the same social cleavages which afforded factions of the civilian political class the opportunity to infiltrate their respective military academies. In a vicious cycle, party infiltration further factionalized already divided armies.

One upshot of our focus on public-private identities is that we cannot assume civilian control over the armed forces is weak in places where soldiers routinely seize power. Even in coup-prone states, factions of the civilian political class, on the basis of their ideological appeal and the sources of their authority, may be in command of those soldiers who we watch seize power on television. The distinction between ideational power and material power (i.e., possession of weapons) is an important one that is elaborated in the next section.

Civilian Power
Civilians have long been portrayed as passive victims of coups, but this is problematic because it reduces our understanding of power to the possession of weapons. A country's civilian elite (e.g., businesspersons, politicians, labor organizers) and masses have overlooked sources of power based on their available resources. A useful heuristic for understanding elite sources of power is Jeffrey Winters's (2011, 12) "individual power profile," which categorizes power resources with the following groups: (1) formal political rights, which all citizens possess in theory; (2) official state positions, such as cabinet portfolios or parliamentary seats; (3) the means of coercion; (4) the capacity to mobilize large groups, including crowds, soldiers, or militias; and (5) material power, i.e., economic resources. Civilian elites can extend all of these power resources to their army allies.

While soldiers are best suited for the physical seizure of power, civilian political elites possess tools well-suited for socio-political advocacy. This advocacy may occur before, during, and/or after a coup operation in order to imbue a coterie's military conspirators with the authority to violently occupy the seat of executive authority. The civilian conspirators can disseminate ideas and propaganda, organize demonstrations in support of coups, co-opt or neutralize the

bureaucracy, finance operations and propaganda against the incumbent regime, manipulate information publicly and privately (an important factor in coup operations—see Luttwak 1979), and draw on their extensive party networks to recruit civilian or military participants into coup plots. Some civilians command the allegiance of armed agents, especially lower-ranked soldiers, if they have a strong enough ideological following.[1] Syrian politician Akram al-Hawrani, as mentioned above, was known to have a loyal bloc of army supporters (Nahlawi 2010).

Research on coups finds strong support for the notion that the relative legitimacy of the coup perpetrators and their target regime is an important factor in coup politics (e.g., Finer 1962, 18-20; Powell 2012, 1021; Seligson and Carrión 2002, 59-60; Roberts 1975, 19-36; Luttwak 1979, 57; Belkin and Schofer 2003; Londregan and Poole 1990; Singh 2014, 45; Grewal and Kureshi 2019). Juntas cannot rely solely on force and thus need civilian elites to transfer to them the legitimacy that is associated with their sources of authority, whether it is traditional, ideological, or charismatic. Importantly, political leaders and the ideas they espouse offer unknown generals greater socio-political capital than they themselves possess. In short, officers must exact civilian cooperation or approval to legitimate their takeovers—or at least guarantee civilian inaction. This is why coup perpetrators have often wrapped themselves in a party banner, thus carrying with them a social constituency and the semblance of ideological legitimacy. Many military rulers, including Syria's Hafez al-Assad and Iraq's Hassan al-Bakr, sought to legitimate their regimes with such a façade of civilian rule (Be'eri 1982, 75).

There is even evidence that soldiers consider their relative political support before attempting coups. British Ambassador Archibald Clark Kerr correctly noted that Iraqi General Bakr al-Sidqi could not have seized power in 1936, "unless he had been sure of the support of such men as [civilian politician] Hikmat Sulaiman…*who could carry with them a large volume of public opinion*" (my emphasis, Kerr 1936, 202).[2] In 1957, the leader of Turkey's Republican People's Party, Ismet İnönü, squarely rebuffed conspiratorial army officers who sounded out his support for a coup. Failing to secure İnönü's support, these soldiers decided they had no choice but to "wait for *the civilians to take the lead* in creating an environment destructive of the political system" (my emphasis, Harris 1970, 444; and 1965, 172; Karpat 2004, 247). Once Inönü changed his mind, he gathered retired officers in his home on April 17, 1960, and told the soldiers that "it was up to them, and to the military, to protect the soundness of Turkish society and the ideals of Turkish progress and development" (Lerner and Robinson 1960, 43). The result of this meeting and subsequent coup advocacy was the May 1960 coup d'état. In short, the skills and resources needed for political advocacy make civilians powerful allies for the conduct of coups. This is true to such an extent that some military conspirators do not move without civilian support for their actions.

The same tools that civilians use to market coups as revolutions (see, e.g., Grewal and Kureshi 2019) reveals their utility as partners in civil-military alliances. As noted above, a main theme of research on civilian *coup advocacy* is that power does not flow from the barrel of a gun. Another way that civilians encourage coups is to promise public support, perhaps through media contacts or ownership, to ideologically aligned soldiers. This valuable socio-political capital reassures their army partisans that if they seize power they will not be left on their own in the unfamiliar political

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[1] On the various resources available to soldiers by rank see Singh 2014.

[2] For a similar argument about the July 2016 coup in Turkey see Esen and Gumuscu 2017, 60.

sphere. What this means, in short, is that we cannot tautologically assume that the presence of coups reflects a vague notion of civilian weakness. Even in coup-prone states, where we observe heaps of military coups, party ideologues may still be exercising ideational control over and commanding the allegiance of one or another armed faction. In that sense, coups may actually reveal the presence, not absence, of civilian control.

Civil-Military Networks and Military Rank
Studying civilians also informs a recent trend in research on coups that, rightly, dissects military coup plotters by rank (Singh 2014; Bou Nassif 2015a). Singh (2014) argues, for instance, that high-ranking officers operate within elite networks that are close to power, and thus they tend to orchestrate coups via public or private ultimatum; mid-ranking officers have command over security forces, and thus seize power by taking over the radio station and presidential palace—the stereotypical coup; lower-ranking officers have fewer resources but can stage mutinies by refusing orders. Bou Nassif (2015a) notes that higher-ranking officers must balance the interests of rank-and-file soldiers.

Civilians with little political power (i.e., an opposition group that has been systematically excluded and/or repressed) can use to their advantage the power resources of these variously ranked officers. In the 1940s, Syrian politician Akram al-Hawrani, a leftist, infiltrated the Homs Military Academy in order to establish a base of mid- to lower-ranking officers who would be loyal to him when necessary. Hawrani could win a seat in parliament on the basis of his support for Hama's peasantry. Even so, he lacked allies in parliament because the left-wing opposition was systematically repressed in the postwar period. Hawrani could not make contact with upper-ranking officers because they were embedded within the incumbent elite establishment in Damascus. Anyway, a majority of elite officers would not have been sympathetic to Hawrani's revisionist message. The socialist did, however, cooperate with his loyal mid-ranking officers to violently seize power three times in 1949. Likewise, Hawrani's strong base of support among the rank-and-file allowed him to lead the so-called Qatana Mutiny/*'Isyan Qatana* in 1957 (Kinney 2019). The Syrian high command was effectively neutralized. Consistent with Bou Nassif's (2015a) research on Tunisia, top-ranking Syrian officers could do little but try to keep the Syrian Army intact by balancing the various civilian-aligned factions. This gave Hawrani what he wanted: the state's security apparatus could not stand in the way of leftist ambitions in Syria.

There is at least one other way that civilian *coup advocacy* pairs well with research on military rank and resources. Civilian political factions that are in power—or at least are close to the establishment, say if they are in the parliamentary minority—may be able to make contact with higher-ranking officers to clear out their rival elite opponents. Like Hawrani, members of the systematically excluded opposition will be more inclined to align with lower-ranking officers. This will matter especially during moments of regime change. Members of the old regime establishment will have extensive contacts with the upper echelons of the military hierarchy. They can draw on this network to align with officers against demands from below for real revolutionary change. Such was the case in Egypt in July 2013. Egyptian economic and political elites who benefitted under Hosni Mubarak's regime aligned with higher-ranking elite officers to oust and repress the Muslim Brotherhood, which sought to carve out a space for itself among Egypt's elite establishment (Kinney, forthcoming).

Civilian Coup Advocacy and Coup Dynamics
The study of civilian *coup advocacy* fits nicely with research on coup dynamics, or the *processes* of military takeovers (Singh 2014) such as coup recruitment (Ferguson 1987; Luttwak 1979). To fully understand coups and their motivations, we must learn as much as possible about their germination, including where the idea for the plot originated and who was involved in its planning and execution. In short, to understand the origin of a given coup we must go beyond teleological approaches that work backward by focusing on the motivations of the officers who end up in power after a coup.

There are at least five important questions to ask when piecing together the story of any coup plot. First, we can ask if the officers who end up in power after a coup are connected to any civilian group, political and/or economic. This would inform us about the motivation for the takeover but would not tell us the direction of the coup, i.e., whether civilians band-wagoned on an existing plot or played an integral role from the beginning.

Thus, second, we need to ask about the direction of influence: civilians to soldiers or soldiers to civilians. In other words, who came up with the idea to plot a coup and who convinced whom to go ahead with the plan? Did the officers get fed up with their lack of pay, and then offer a group of politicians the chance to run parliament if they seize power and raise their pay? Or did a group of politicians sell the officers on the idea that they would be saving the nation from their mutual rivals? The answer to these questions matters because it paints a firmer picture of the main motivating factors for the coup.

On the basis of our first two answers, we may find out that a plot originated solely among officers that are unconnected to any civilian faction. We would then study those officers in order to understand their identities and interests. If instead we find that a left-wing civilian grouping infiltrated the military academy and later requested its groomed loyalists stage a coup, then we would conclude the coup had some motivation related to the interests of that left-wing group. This would be true even if the officers who physically executed the coup had idiosyncratic personality traits or separate interests.

Third, research on civilian *coup advocacy* should try to identify which conspirators, soldier and/or civilian, allocated what resources to make the coup possible. It is difficult, but not impossible, to measure the relative value of each contribution to any given coup operation. Qualitative approaches, especially process-tracing, may be well suited for the task. For instance, Kinney (forthcoming) uses process-tracing to assess the relative contribution to the July 2013 coup of Egyptian business elites, politicians, and officers.

Fourth, while we can ask who benefitted from the coup and who lost out, this is a crude way to assess civilian *coup advocacy* and should be used cautiously. At best, an assessment of which political constituencies benefitted from a coup will lend support to what we already suspect and could in some cases disconfirm our suspicions. The problem is that army partisans may turn on their civilian backers once they are in control of executive authority. Suppose we suspect that Liberal Party X backed a military coup, and then the military perpetrators rounded up all parties except Liberal Party X. This would lend some support to our existing knowledge base about this coup event. However, now suppose that the military junta imprisoned all parties including Liberal

Party X. This does not rule out that the party's gamble simply backfired. In short, information about who benefitted from a given coup is necessary but insufficient to help us understand a coup movement.

Fifth and relatedly, in rare instances we may have documents that demonstrate without a doubt that some political party backed a coup. We can then use this information to assess whether or not the party's army partisans remained loyal after they seized power. We can research whether or not the interests of this party were met by access to office, execution of favorable legislation, the signing of international agreements that the party supported, and so on. More importantly, documents that show strong support for civilian coup advocacy may tell us whether or not civilian plotters extended a guarantee to military plotters that they would receive political support in the event of a successful coup. This is important because, as noted above, soldiers in some cases may not execute a coup without such a guarantee.

Future Research Avenues
Because it is a new area of inquiry, future research on civilian *coup advocacy* is necessary in all of the above five areas of coup dynamics (but is not limited to those five questions). Related to the first two questions, we simply need more research on civilian involvement in coups d'état. Studies of *coup advocacy* have so far only been conducted in Middle East cases. We may find that *coup advocacy* is commonplace in other regions, as well. There have been recent cases of civilian *coup advocacy*, for instance, in Zimbabwe (2017), Venezuela (2019), Bolivia (2020), and Peru (2020), and Jordan (2021).

There are at least six additional areas of research on civilian coup advocacy that would be useful. First, future research could ask how often *coup advocacy* backfires on its perpetrators. We should know more about this strategy of political competition. If coup advocates knew that they could expect to end up dead or in jail after promoting a coup then maybe they would think twice about pursuing the strategy.

Second, if there is an abundance of evidence demonstrating *coup advocacy*, then this information could be leveraged to assess how often civilian support for coups decisively tips the scales in favor of a coup. We may find that officers seize power only 25% of the time without guarantees of civilian support. The implication is that if anti-coup norms were more firmly inculcated among *civilian* constituencies then the overall rate of military coups may decline because officers would find fewer supporters for their normatively transgressive behavior.

Third, there has yet to be a study on when civilian coup advocacy is rejected by the armed forces. For instance, one might compare instances of successful advocacy to instances in which military officers publicly condemn a civilian party leader for his/her *coup-incitement*. This would teach us the factors that produce successful coup advocacy and give us a baseline rate at how often military leaders seize power when called on by their civilian counterparts.

Fourth, the target (e.g., regime-type) of civilian coup advocates may be consequential. For instance, civilian coup advocacy might look different in monarchies, where advocates might seek to stage "palace coups," such as the alleged plot by Jordan's Crown Prince Hamzah in April 2021.

Fifth, there should be additional research on the conditions in which we expect to observe each of the above-mentioned seven types of co*up advocacy*. One might speculate, for example, that *coup-seeking* or *coup-incitement* are less likely in highly repressive regimes with extensive spy networks and restricted access to public communications. *Coup-legitimation*, however, may still be common in such scenarios since this activity can occur following a successfully executed coup d'état.

Sixth and finally, while researchers can use process-tracing to demonstrate the importance of civilian coup advocacy in instances of coup-seeking and coup-legitimation (e.g., Kinney 2019; 2021), it is more difficult to assess the relative weight of coup-incitement. A research approach based on interviews or memoirs might be able to overcome this problem if participants are willing to discuss an issue as sensitive as military takeovers. For instance, scholars might ask officers if they planned to orchestrate a coup prior to receiving public support from prominent civilian voices for such a course of action. Singh's (2014) work on coup dynamics is a successful example of this type   of   research   application.

Conclusion

Until recently few studies have systematically and comprehensively accounted for the role of civilians in military coups d'état. More research on civilian *coup advocacy* is necessary because it is an important topic of study. Civilians have power and resources that they can offer to officers in furtherance of coup conspiracies. Politicians and diplomats, moreover, link domestic and international political interests. New research on military rank and resources would also benefit from a better understanding of civilian *coup advocacy*. Civilian support for coups may assist existing coup plots succeed and, in some circumstances, may encourage coup plots to develop. The field of civil-military relations, however, tends to assume that civilians want to keep officers sidelined so that they can monopolize power for themselves. Indeed, civilian coup-backing is puzzling. When civilians help soldiers seize power, they violate socio-political norms and put society at risk of physical harm. This puzzle underscores why civilian support for coups must be taken more seriously by scholars of coup politics.

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