

With a new introduction by **Jay Stanley**

THE MAN ON HORSEBACK

The Role of the
Military in Politics

Samuel E. Finer



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Military in Politics**

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In recognition, gratitude and love
to
my great teacher and constant guide
my brother
HERMAN



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Contents

<i>Introduction to the Transaction Edition</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xxiii
1 The Military in the Politics of Today	1
2 The Political Strengths of the Military	6
3 The Political Weaknesses of the Military	14
4 The Disposition to Intervene (1) Motive	23
5 The Disposition to Intervene (2) Mood	61
6 The Opportunity to Intervene	72
7 The Levels of Intervention	
(1) Countries of developed political culture	86
8 The Levels of Intervention	
(2) Countries of low political culture	110
9 The Levels of Intervention	
(3) Countries of minimal political culture	129
10 The Modes of Intervention	140
11 The Results of Intervention – The Military Régimes	164
12 The Past and the Future of Military Intervention	205
<i>Bibliography</i>	245
<i>Index of persons</i>	259
<i>Index of countries</i>	262
<i>Index of subjects</i>	266



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*Introduction to the Transaction Edition*¹

THE opportunity offered to me by Professor Irving Horowitz to write the introduction for the reissuance of this civil-military relations volume was especially welcomed because of the additional exposure Finer's work would be likely to receive. Despite being extensively referenced within academic works, from my perspective, this work has never received the attention or recognition it deserves from the "general reader" for whom Finer said that he wrote, or the wider spectrum of military scholars for whom the work is clearly applicable. I see this work as a classic statement in civil-military relations, which continues to hold considerable relevance to the contemporary student. Professor Horowitz's decision to reissue the book is insightful, and it is my hope that as a result, the work will serve as a stimulus to the interested student, and enjoy a much wider exposure than that which occurred during its initial release.

One option for the presentation of this introductory essay is to provide the reader a quick start by offering a brief biographical sketch, and a summary paragraph or two about Finer's thesis. The alternative is to present a more detailed account of Finer and his manuscript. I elected to pursue the latter with the idea of advancing a more complete skeletal portrait. Consequently, my objective is to offer some observations of Samuel Edward Finer, the man; the time period in which the work *originally appeared*; and the general *thesis he advanced*.

FINER, THE MAN

Samuel Finer,² the youngest of six children, was born September 22, 1915 to Romanian immigrant parents in Islington, England. He died June 9, 1993 at the age of seventy-seven. As a child, he was informed

early and often by his parents, especially his mother, that he was poor, Jewish, and would always have to work hard. Indeed, he spent his life pursuing this advice with diligent effort. His voluminous publication record, and reputation as an enormously respected lecturer and professor, evolved from his eclectic scholarly reading that he was able to do within a variety of languages. Despite the meager means of his family, his early application of his intelligence enabled him to secure scholarships for his education at Trinity College, Oxford.

The direction of his academic pursuits was influenced by his brother, Herman, eighteen years his senior.³ Herman Finer had also benefited from academic scholarships and became a respected political scientist. He served as a lecturer at the London School of Economics, and subsequently occupied the chair of the political science department at the University of Chicago. Observing the early success of his brother's academic efforts, Samuel declared, at the age of seven, that he wanted to be just like his brother Herman.

Following his graduation from Trinity, Samuel responded to England's involvement in World War II by serving six years in the Royal Signals, rising to the rank of Captain. After being discharged, he began his academic career on the faculty of Balliol College. This appointment was followed in 1950 by a professorship of political institutions at Keele, the first of Great Britain's post-war universities. In 1966 he became professor of government and public administration at Manchester University, and returned to Oxford in 1974, where he held the Gladstone Chair and Professorship of Government and Public Administration. At various times, and beyond these positions, Finer held visiting professorships at the Institute of Social Studies at the Hague, Cornell University, the Hebrew University, the Simon Fraser University in British Columbia and Florence, and Columbia, Stanford and Hong Kong Universities.

During his lectures he often made comments that suggested a strong self-concept. Credited as being the architect of the excellent reputations enjoyed by the politics departments at Keele and Manchester, he once said of himself: "I was a brilliant young man." Another illustrative remark was provided in one of his lectures when he said: "Politicians are not as clever as you or me—particularly me." Based on remarks of this nature, which became known as Finerisms, it is reasonable to suggest that modesty was not a strong component of his persona.

Samuel Finer has been characterized as being energetic and passionate about life and his academic pursuits. These traits were evi-

denced, not only by his writing and lecture posts, but in his four years (1965-69) service as chairman of the Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom, and his nomination for vice president of the International Political Science Association.

Clearly, Samuel Finer was a brilliant scholar of virtually unlimited potential. Perhaps this is an unfortunate label for anyone. If one is so classified, regardless of the quality and quantity of contributions to knowledge one makes, the criticism of unfulfilled promise seems to be inevitable. Indeed, Finer was the recipient of such comments suggesting that, despite his impressive record of scholarship, he had not lived up to his promise. Nevertheless, the Social Science Citation Index provides a sufficient volume of entries for his works to justify his being considered a giant of post-war British political science. Indeed, he was referred to by *The Guardian* as an “intellectual machine gun.” His many works included: *A Primer of Public Administration* (1950), *Life and Times of Sir Edward Chadwick* (1952), *Anonymous Empire* (1958), *Comparative Government* (1970), *Five Constitutions* (1979), and *Britain's Changing Party System* (1980). At the time of his death he was completing a work on the definitive history of government through the ages.

Despite his recognition as a political scientist, he adamantly dismissed the idea of a pure political science. His substantial intellectual diversity is illustrated by his emphasis on the importance of history in providing a basis for perspective, judgment, context, and knowledge. Further, he was significantly influenced sociologically by Vilfredo Pareto—to the point of having edited the volume *Pareto: Sociological Writings*, which was published in 1966. *The Man on Horseback* specifically reflects Pareto's influence on Finer in terms of social change, especially vis-a-vis the circulation of elites. Thus, his “political science” was broad and comparative in scope whereby he incorporated social economics and cultural factors. Further, a review of his published work reveals a philosophical shift from the political Left to the Right as he grew older. His thought reflects a rejection of Marxism and American behavioralism because he believed they tended to confuse conditions with causes. Finer emphasized two significant themes throughout his work: to constitutionalize the exercise of political power and not separate the study of institutions and ideas. Ultimately, his work can be seen as largely comparative—with an acute perception of linkages within data, and the construction of models and typologies.

Given his interests in multiple disciplines, it is not surprising that he would author a classic thesis on civil-military relations, a

field of study that is clearly interdisciplinary. The student of civil-military relations has long recognized significant contributions from history, sociology, political science, and policy analysis.

As Feaver⁴ noted, with the publication of *The Man on Horseback*, Finer served as an intellectual leader of institutional examination of post-colonial civil-military relations in developing countries, focusing primarily on military coups. By virtue of his election of this pursuit, and with the publication of this book, he became a leader of the political science path and the earliest critic of Huntington's⁵ seminal work.⁶ Indeed, Huntington and Finer addressed the disposition of military institutions to perpetuate a coup.

In sum, his range of work is encyclopedic. His wide knowledge base, which incorporated so many academic disciplines, and his acknowledged familiarity with diverse methodologies, identify him as a seminal thinker from, what I would argue, was a more enriched period of scholarship.

THE TIME

Military intervention into the civil politics of the world has been a long-standing component of history. Engagement in the Cold War by military "superpowers"⁷ and the continued military coup attempts in less developed countries combined to make the late 1950s and early 1960s particularly appropriate for the appearance of Finer's work. *The Man on Horseback* was published originally in 1962. That year witnessed four unsuccessful military uprisings or revolts in Lebanon, Portugal, Turkey, and Venezuela. Additionally, 1962 saw three successful coups in Burma, Argentina, and Syria.⁸

In the preceding year, successful coups occurred in El Salvador and South Korea and Egyptian officials were driven out of Syria. Additional military interventions were observed in Algeria, Brazil, and Ecuador. These developments were but extensions of 1960 revolts registered in Turkey, Laos, El Salvador, Ethiopia, and the mutiny of the Congolese Force Publique.⁹

During this brief illustrative interval, multiple uprisings were observed in Turkey and El Salvador, and all of these incidents occurred in countries that would fall under the general category of developing or "Third World" countries. Subsequent comments will address Finer's postulates regarding the greater vulnerability of countries with lesser developed or less mature governments. The military efforts during these years were not reflective of a unique period of history. Indeed, intervention by military forces into the internal af-

fairs of a country has been "...frequent, widespread and long standing."¹⁰

It should be noted, however, that coups have become less frequent and the rate of success has declined more recently.¹¹ Nevertheless, the persistent nature of political activity by military forces virtually demands that armed forces continue to be considered as a critical political entity.

In that light, students of civil-military relations have been confronted historically with two perennial questions. The first is, at what point will the military elite of a society exercise undue influence on the policies of the government and the organization of the society? A significant response to this issue has been offered by Harold Lasswell vis-a-vis his developmental construct of the garrison state.¹² Although related, a different question is, when might the military overthrow the civilian government?

The first question may be more applicable to the more democratic polities. Despite the fact that military leaders have become an undeniably powerful pressure group within Western democracies, the garrison state hypothesized by Lasswell has not materialized. Indeed, an inverse relationship has emerged in that as industrialism has advanced, the threat of military intervention has declined.¹³

Conversely, the question of attempts by the military to overthrow the civilian government has been more operative in developing countries. It is for these acts and in these political environments that Finer's thesis is most useful. It is important to emphasize that this reference is to a general orientation, and not a severe dichotomy between democratic and non-democratic societies. Therefore, as Finer posits, it is where civilian governmental structures are *less* developed, or are *less* "mature," that a greater vulnerability exists for a military coup. This condition is exacerbated by an increasing ambiguity of the meaning of the concept of nation-state. Fewer than one-third of the current nation-states are perceived as such whereby their citizens see themselves as belonging to a state with its government functioning as their government.¹⁴ These states are composed of diverse populations of ethnic and religious subsections that desire political independence and this serves as a major contributor to the fragmentation of the principle of a nation-state. Self-differentiation based on ethnic identity, individual language, and separate religious practices is a process identified by Walker Connor as ethnonationalism¹⁵ Inevitably, ethnic conflict becomes symptomatic of, and contributes to, a weakening of a nation-state. This process not

only supports the importance of ethnic consideration in global interaction, but in internal conflict.¹⁶

An inherent issue of government, especially within democracies, is to be sufficiently strong to protect the citizenry, but not strong enough to introduce tyranny. While perhaps not as acute, the same push-pull factors are evidenced within authoritarian regimes and military dictatorships. As Feaver states: "wearing the same uniform does not prevent those who stay behind from worrying about whether the fighters are adequate to defend them or whether the fighters are liable to turn around and unseat them."¹⁷

Given that military and political factors are so inextricably intertwined that simplistic separation is defied, these considerations seem to register Finer's thesis regarding military intervention into civilian politics of contemporary importance. Ultimately, any hopes that are pinned on the notion of democratic peace presume a stable and democratic political culture. The fragility of new democracies is such that they are vulnerable to military interventions of the kind that Finer describes. If so, then, world politics are more volatile than the mavens of the democratic peace literature would allow. More to the point, we can, and should, read Finer with profit today to gain an understanding of the challenges with which we are currently confronted.

THE BOOK

The Man on Horseback represents a pioneering effort to comprehensively look at the global phenomenon of intervention efforts by armed forces into civil affairs. It is an examination of the subject not undertaken by others. Finer reviews motives, causes, methods, consequences, and factors that may stimulate or preclude such intervention. He has presented a wide variety of case studies which serve to illustrate strong, weak, and divided civilian organization, while others point to little or no civilian governmental and political structure.

These issues are approached by identifying the military against the politics of the day: their political strengths and weaknesses, their disposition and opportunities for interventions, and levels, modes, and results of intervention. He concludes the work with a review of the past and an examination of the potential for future military intervention into civilian affairs.

Finer recognized a distinct class of countries in which the governments have been repeatedly subjected to the interference of their

armed forces. Despite this regularity or pattern, he acknowledged that the military often works on governments from behind the scenes. Indeed, he argues that even when armed forces intervention is successful, the military will frequently generate some quasi-civilian facade of government behind which it will retire as rapidly as possible.

Historically, there has existed a somewhat common assumption that it is “natural” for the military to obey the civil power. Nevertheless, the very nature of civil-military relationships is inevitably and seemingly self-contradictory. That is, the military, as an institution, is created to provide protection for the society—primarily against external threats, but secondarily for internal or domestic purposes. In so doing, it is provided sufficient power to become a threat. The potential for such conflict is unavoidable within society as multiple agencies and/or institutions must be relied upon to provide for a diversity of needs.

In contrast, Finer argues that civilian control of the military is not natural. He suggests that the issue is how civilians exert control. It is the disposition of the military that provides the answer. That is, in order to intervene, the military must have occasion and disposition, that being the combination of a conscious motive and a will or desire to act.¹⁸ Thus, where adherence to civilian institutions remains strong, military intervention will not occur or will be weak.

Finer posits then, rather than inquire as to why the military engages in politics, it should be asked why they ever do otherwise. He identifies three major advantages of the military: superiority in organization, highly emotionalized symbolic status, and a monopoly of arms.¹⁹

Given these advantages, the leading questions to which Finer responds throughout the work are: why is military intervention in politics or military government the exception rather than the rule? And, how and why do civilian rules persist?

A central response to these questions is reflected in the political weaknesses of the armed forces, i.e., the technical inability to administer, and lack of legitimacy to do so. Finer notes that, in less developed economies, it is easier for the military to function as administrators in that the provision for law, order, and communication is all that is required. However, as societies become more complicated, with an expanded economy and increased division of labor, the technical skills of the military lag further behind.

In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington argued that, since the French Revolution, professionalism is the key factor in keeping the

soldier out of politics. For Huntington, professionalism is a composite of expertise, social responsibility, and corporate loyalty. It is his position that this combination will result in a politically neutral professionalized force that remains ready to act on the wishes of a legitimate civilian authority.²⁰

However, as Finer notes, professionalized officer corps have intervened into the political realm with the Japanese and German cases being among the most recognized.²¹ Finer presented three potential scenarios for such intervention to occur. The military may perceive itself as a defender of the state versus the sitting government; the military may believe, as specialists, that they are uniquely capable of determining size, organization, recruitment, and equipment of forces, and thereby be in contradiction with the perspective of the civilian government; and the armed forces may be resistant to mandating compliance among domestic opposition.²²

Finer discusses the generation of action from these political motives in terms of the concept of "Consciousness of Kind." This was a principle introduced by Franklin Giddings, although with an acknowledged indebtedness to Adam Smith. Giddings believed that the explanation of social behavior rested in volition whereby persons commonly recognize others who share similarities, i.e., a sense of self-awareness has evolved.²³ This sharing, coupled with a grievance, can result in a sense of power. In a complementary fashion, Max Weber argued that the struggle for power is continuous in all societies, with the use of military force a central method for achieving such, especially in traditional or developing countries. Assuming that a culture's army shares such an awareness and grievance, it may energize their power to affect a major social change in the governmental structure. Beyond the degree to which he was influenced by Pareto then, Finer presents a potential model for social change in the same theoretical vein as that offered by Giddings and Weber.²⁴

FINER'S PARADIGM

From this backdrop of political weakness of military forces on one hand, and the potential for intervention on the other, Finer has developed a theoretical paradigmatic design that can be interpreted as the core of his thesis. Recognizing that societies are not static, the model results in the formation of continua for the development of the two dimensions of military intervention and political culture, with each reflecting four levels. As is generally the case for theoretical constructs that deal with societal variables, objective quantita-

tive assessment is not possible. Societies are not static, and each of the continuum locations can be illustrated with a range of countries.

The continuum of political cultural development begins with fourth order countries of *minimal political culture*, e.g., Haiti and Paraguay, where there are so few citizens with political ideas or the conviction to act upon them that public opinion virtually can be ignored. Military intervention would not require any assistance or public endorsement, but would simply assume and maintain control. This is followed by third order or *low political cultures*. In general, the public in these countries has little attachment or understanding of the political institutions, giving rise to a public that is relatively narrow and weakly organized. However, there exists a considerable hierarchy of political development between countries at the upper end of this level, e.g., Argentina and Brazil, when contrasted to countries such as Sudan and Pakistan at the lower end of this category. As one might hypothesize, those at the upper end represent a much more difficult challenge for the military to gain and maintain power.

The second order, *developed political cultures*, have highly developed civil institutions and procedures and well organized associations. However, the transfer of power and who constitutes the proper authority may be disputed. Finer cites Germany, from the empire to Hitler's accession, and Japan, between the two World Wars, as examples.

Occupying the antithetical polemic in Finer's paradigm are the most developed, or *mature political cultures*. Countries representing this end of the continuum include the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and the Scandinavian countries. At this stage of development, in addition to the characteristics noted for developed political cultures, there is widespread public approval for the transfer of power, and recognition of what constitutes sovereign authority. Large scale and well-organized associations such as labor unions, political parties, and churches are important components of the culture.

Intersecting the levels of political cultural development is a continuum of four levels of military intervention. The first level of *influence* on civil authorities is constitutional, legitimate, and consistent with civilian control. This level is relatively benign and represents an absence of military threat. This is followed by a level reflecting increased pressure, or even *blackmail*. That is, hints of action, intimidation, or threats can be levied against the civilian government, which would clearly violate constitutional considerations.

A more severe military threat is signaled by *displacement*, whereby a ruler or entire political cabinet may be removed in favor of another. Extreme displacement occurs with *supplantment*, the final level of military intervention, which occurs with the removal of the civilian government and the establishment of military control. Displacement and/or supplanting of a civilian government can occur through a threat to revolt or refusal to defend the government against external enemies; a refusal to defend the government from civil disorder; or through the use of violence, most commonly expressed as a coup.

It is the confluence of these two dimensions which predicts the when, or the likelihood, of coup attempts, and those that are most likely to be successful. Finer complements his paradigm of the interaction between the cultural development levels and the levels of military intervention with his identification of *six modes of intervention*. In turn, these modes are related to and reflect considerable overlap with the levels of military intervention.

The initial two modes—the normal constitutional channel and collusion or competition with civilian authorities—reflect the intervention level of “influence.” However, confusing the issue are the modes of intimidation of the civilian authorities and threats of not cooperating with or registering violence towards the civilian authorities. These can be interpreted at the “influence” level as well, although they are more applicable to the level of “blackmail.” The modes of failure to defend the civilian authorities from violence, and the exercise of violence against them, are most illustrative of the levels of “displacement” and “supplantment.” Again, however, Finer introduces complexity to the model in that these modes can be seen as “blackmail.”²⁵

It is apparent, then, that the overlapping between the “modes of intervention” and the “levels of intervention,” juxtaposed with the levels of political cultural development results in a quite complex schematic.²⁶ Given this complexity, one would not expect unilateral results from military intervention efforts. Inevitably, some attempts will fail, and those that are successful will result in varying forms of government. In broad terms, Finer identifies three potentially rather general result possibilities.

The first is *indirect rule*, where intervention is limited to the blackmail level—a form of displacement occurs whereby one civilian government is replaced by another. A contrasting result is *direct rule*, which occurs when the military becomes the controlling agent, or a quasi-civilianized form of government evolves where the military may utilize a civilian cabinet. Between these two extremes is what Finer labeled the

dual rule. In this format the government rests on two pillars—the military and civilian—with both under an oligarchic control.²⁷

Despite the specificity of dimensions, and the more or less definitive points within them, the potential range of interactive results is extreme. Throughout this work, the reader will enjoy Finer's selection of specific cases to illustrate the variety of configurations that may result from the interactions of the respective dimensions and their levels.

CONCLUSION

By offering a sound theoretical paradigm, accompanied by extensive illustrative case studies, Finer has offered an important panoramic description of the centrality of the push-pull nature of civil-military relations.

Despite the complexity and breadth of Finer's thesis presented with the benefit of historical perspective, we are not provided an idiographic explanation of military intervention into civilian governmental affairs. Indeed, this idealized objective is most likely outside the scope of possibility. Societies are not static, nor are the political structures that govern them. Predictions of intervention, then, must remain in the realm of plausibility versus probability. The absence of precision is exaggerated when shifting global political alliances and adversaries are considered. History suggests an irregular and undulating pattern of coup attempts, a pattern that bears considerable resemblance to the potential for garrison states. Just as the possibility for the evolution of garrison states, or garrison-political-police states continues to exist, the potential for military intervention into civilian political affairs remains. Indeed, attempted military coups are ongoing, albeit at a reduced incidence level.

With Lasswell's garrison state developmental construct providing insight into the question of the military elite of a society exercising undue influence on governmental policies, Finer's thesis offers a level of understanding of when the military might attempt to overthrow a civilian government. These questions have assumed additional importance with the extended concerns of ethnic and religious conflicts within many cultures, and the global increase of concern with terrorism. Contemporary students of civil-military relations, attempting to expand nomothetic explanations, will clearly benefit by exposure to Finer's classic statement.

Jay Stanley
Towson University

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Professors James Burk and Sandra Stanley for their review and suggestions of an earlier draft of this essay.
2. Finer's death was acknowledged by any number of obituaries, including those of *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph Limited*, *The Independent (London)* and *The Times Newspapers Limited*. These are available from LEXIS-NEXIS Academic, and I have leaned on them in writing this biographic section.
3. A salute to Herman's influence is offered by Samuel Finer's dedication of *The Man on Horseback* to his brother.
4. Peter D. Feaver, "Civil-Military Relations," *Annual Reviews Political Science* 2 (1999): 212.
5. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957).
6. Feaver has noted that Finer's political science perspective on civil-military relations was complemented by Janowitz's sociological insights. See Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1960).
7. Perhaps most dramatically symbolized in 1962 by the attempted nuclearization of Cuba, i.e., the Cuban Missile Crisis, which pitted the former Soviet Union against the United States in a poignant confrontation between Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy.
8. Samuel Edward Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, (New York: Praeger, 1962), 1.
9. *Ibid.*, 1-2.
10. *Ibid.*, 3.
11. Peter D. Feaver, "Civil-Military Relations," 218.
12. For a more detailed discussion see Jay Stanley, ed., *Essays on the Garrison State* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1997).
13. Morris Janowitz, *The Reconstruction of Patriotism: Education for Civic Consciousness* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 14-15.
14. Joseph R. Rudolph, Jr., "Intervention in Communal Conflicts," *Orbis* (Spring 1995): 260.
15. Walker Connor, Ethnonationalism: *The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), in Rudolph, *ibid.*, 260.
16. For a detailed discussion of the importance of ethnic group inclusion to understanding the dynamics of global interaction and the central reasons for the development of a theory of explanation for ethnic conflict see: Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
17. Peter D. Feaver, "Civil-Military Relations, 215.
18. Samuel Edward Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, 23.
19. *Ibid.*, 6.

20. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 82-85.
21. Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, 25.
22. *Ibid.*, 25-30.
23. *Ibid.*, 61. For a further discussion see Nicholas S. Timasheff and George A. Theodorsen, *Sociological Theory* (New York: Random House, 1976), 80-81.
24. Jonathan H. Turner, Leonard Beeghley, and Charles H. Powers, *The Emergence of Sociological Theory* (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1995), 228-229.
25. See Finer's diagram, p. 140 and the discussion presented in chapter 10.
26. Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, 168.
27. *Ibid.*, 164-184.



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Acknowledgements

This essay grew out of a short paper I presented to the British Political Studies Association. The more I thought about the subject, the more important it seemed to me. Since nobody else seemed to have examined it – at least, in the way I thought it ought to be examined – I felt compelled to do so myself. I hope I have done so competently enough not to have spoiled the field for others better qualified. I by no means offer the book as the last word – for this will not be written for a long time to come – but as a first one. I shall be disappointed if it does not lead to further research in this field, however critical of my own standpoint it may prove to be.

I have written it for the general reader rather than for my professional colleagues, though I trust the scholarship will not prove any the worse for that; but this explains why I have cut down the usual apparatus of citations and references, and limited the bibliography.

Colleagues have given me great help and encouragement. I would particularly thank Mr. F. G. Carnell of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Oxford; Professor George Fischer of Cornell University; Professor John Lewis, also of Cornell University; my friend, Professor W. J. M. MacKenzie of Manchester University; my old colleague, Mr. A. P. V. Rolo, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Keele; and, finally, my crony of undergraduate days at Trinity College, Oxford, Brigadier Peter Young, D.S.O., M.C., M.A., of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, who used to beat me in a fascinating *kriegspiel* which we invented together. All these colleagues read my typescript and offered valuable comments and corrections which have much improved the book.

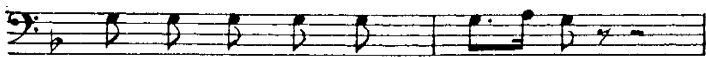
I must also thank Mr. S. O. Stewart, the Librarian of the University of Keele, and his staff, for the help they have given me in obtaining the very wide range of books and other materials that was necessary to carry out my research.



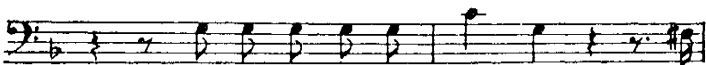
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CHAPTER ONE

The Military in the Politics of Today

THE year 1962 opened with brisk outbursts of military revolt. Four risings—those in the Lebanon, Portugal, Turkey and Venezuela—were unsuccessful, but the month of March witnessed three victorious revolts in quick succession. In Burma, General Ne Win deposed the government and established direct military rule. In Argentina the armed forces removed President Frondizi and set up a Provisional President in his place. In Syria, exactly six months after the 1961 coup, military factions first swept away the civilian régime and then, quarrelling among themselves, restored it.

The date of the unsuccessful Lebanon rising, between the last day of the old year and the first day of the new, was symbolical: in all this military activity, 1962 was but continuing where 1961 had left off. For 1961 was also a busy one for the armed forces. They overthrew the provisional government in El Salvador in January. In April the 'Four Generals' staged their unsuccessful coup in Algeria. In May it was the turn of the South Korean army; it overthrew its government and established a thorough-going military dictatorship. In August, the Brazilian armed forces strove to prevent Vice-President Senhor Goulart's accession to the Presidency (which had been vacated by the resignation of President Quadros). In September the army of the Syrian province of the U.A.R. revolted, drove the Egyptian officials out, and established a government for an independent Syria. In November Ecuador's army and air forces clashed as to who was to succeed the President – who had himself resigned as the result of a military revolt.

Nor was 1961 very different from 1960. That year had seen the Turkish army revolt of May, and the establishment of General

Gürsel's dictatorship; the mutiny of the Congolese Force Publique in July and the subsequent rapine and carnage throughout the new-born Republic; the Laotian coup of Captain Kong Lee in August – the move that sparked off the civil war; the bloodless coup by which Colonel Osorio ousted President Lemus of El Salvador in October; and finally, the revolt of the Palace Guard against the Emperor of Ethiopia in December.

In every case the armed forces had defied or indeed used violence against the government of the state. In May 1960 on the occasion of General Gürsel's revolt, *The Times* commented: 'It has been a good year for Generals'; but this was not only belated but quite misleading. For 1959 had witnessed an unsuccessful rising in Iraq, an unsuccessful military plot in Cambodia and a successful coup in the Sudan, while 1958 was – for the military – an *annus mirabilis*. That was the year when Marshal Sarit abrogated the constitution of Thailand and made himself dictator; in which Generals Ayub Khan, Kassim and Abboud seized power in Pakistan, Iraq and the Sudan respectively; in which, also, General Ne Win was raised to power in Burma and General de Gaulle in France.

Yet perhaps this period 1958–61 is exceptional? Hardly so. Consider the sovereign states that are at least seven years old, i.e. those created in or before 1955. Leaving aside small states of nominal sovereign status such as Liechtenstein, San Marino or the Trucial States, 79¹ sovereign states existed in or before 1955: 15 came into being between 1945 and 1955, and of these 9 have suffered from military coups (including the Lebanon). Another 13 states came into being between 1918 and 1944 (including the 3 Baltic States, now absorbed into the Soviet Union). Of these 6 experienced military coups, and one of them (Jordan) may fairly be said to be a royal military dictatorship. The three states created between 1900 and 1917, i.e. Albania, Cuba and Panama, have all witnessed military revolt and dictatorship since 1918; and so likewise have the two – Bulgaria and Serbia – which became fully independent between 1861 and 1899. 46 states have been independent for more than a century. Since 1918 no less than 26 of these have suffered from some form or other of military intervention in their politics, usually of a violent kind.²

¹ Properly, 76. The figure of 79 includes Esthonia, Lithuania and Latvia, now absorbed into the U.S.S.R., but independent from 1918 to 1940.

² China falls outside this classification. It was a prey to incessant civil war and military turbulence until 1949.

Thus the military coups of 1958–61 were certainly not exceptional. Of the 51 states existing in or before 1917, all but 19 have experienced such coups since 1917; while of the 28 created between 1917 and 1955, all but 15 have done so. Independent political activity by the armed forces is therefore frequent, widespread, and of long standing.

Nor are its effects transitory. On the contrary. At the moment of writing some 11 states are military dictatorships: Thailand, Pakistan, Egypt, the Sudan, Iraq, Spain, Portugal, South Korea, El Salvador, Paraguay and Nicaragua. In addition, in a large number of countries the army alone guarantees the régime: e.g. in Jordan, the Congo, Persia, Honduras. In many other countries, e.g. Indonesia, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador and Guatemala, the régimes must needs court the armed forces' goodwill – a favour which may be suddenly withdrawn, as in the past.

Finally, this political activity of the military is *persistent*. In certain areas of South America, earthquakes are so frequent that the people date great events from the years when by rare chance no earthquake has occurred. Likewise with the political activity of the military; there are areas where it can fairly be described – by virtue of its recurrent and its widespread nature – as endemic. Such an area is Latin America, where the phenomenon has persisted for a century and a half; the Middle East; and likewise South East Asia. A fourth such area lay in Europe (up to the communization of most of its countries) in the strip connecting the Baltic, the Balkans and Turkey.³

From what has been said so far we may draw two conclusions. In the first place there is a distinct class of countries where governments have been repeatedly subjected to the interference of their armed forces. They are certainly not liberal democracies of the British or American kind wherein the military are strictly subordinated to the civilians. Nor are they despotisms or autocracies of a totalitarian type, where, we must emphasize, the military are subordinated to the civilians as much as or even more than in the liberal-democratic régimes. These régimes of military provenance or military rule are *sui generis*. They constitute a large proportion of those sovereign states which are neither communist nor liberal-democratic, and will soon comprise most of them; for the two other main types of government in the world, the colonial oligarchies (like Angola or Kenya) are disappearing, and so likewise are the proto-dynastic régimes like

³ For the significance of this geographical spread see Chapter Twelve.