

They focus on the United States and show how each of the military services has distinctive approaches to diplomacy and the exercise of power. The authors contrast military to civilian diplomacy, and argue that a myriad of activities, from war colleges to training and assistance programs, constitute diplomacy. These and other activities help to maintain an extensive network of security governance that involves interstate and intermilitary cooperation and the socialization of foreign military and civilian actors to U.S. norms and practices.

The final chapter of this part, by Ole Sending, explores the relationship between diplomats and humanitarian actors. The diplomatic community is organized and held together by states and constitutes a thin culture distinguished by the special privileges and repeated interactions of its members. Humanitarian actors are a thicker community, held together by shared values and closer collaboration. Diplomacy nevertheless informs humanitarian practice even as humanitarian actors attempt to transcend the sovereignty and territoriality so central to it.

The conclusion to the volume, by Rebecca Adler-Nissen, seeks to explain the difficulties of diplomats and IR scholars in understanding one another. She contends that the most fundamental reason is their two different worldviews. International relations theorists subscribe to “substantialism,” which is abstract, reductionist, rationalistic, and macro in its explanations. Diplomats subscribe to “folk relationalism,” which describes peoples’ representation of their worlds in the form of stylized facts and patterns of relations. If realists construct the national interest in a top-down manner, diplomats do so in a bottom-up fashion that emphasizes the role of diplomacy in constructing those interests. For diplomats, the national interest is in practice never fixed prior to negotiations.

Collectively, these essays shed light on the diverse facets of modern diplomacy. They extend our understanding of the variety of activities that constitute diplomacy and the kinds of actors that conduct it. They convincingly demonstrate the role that diplomacy now plays in governance, not only in representation. The changing nature of diplomacy reflects and helps to shape the current practice of foreign policy and international relations. International relations theory must take diplomacy into account as a powerful force in its own right, not merely a mechanism for states to reach agreements and publicize and justify their policies.

The Dictator’s Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes. By Caitlin Talmadge. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015. 320p. \$79.95 cloth, \$26.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S153759271600270X

— David M. Edelstein, *Georgetown University*

In her important new book, Caitlin Talmadge examines the causes of variation in military effectiveness on the

battlefield. In Talmadge’s view, material, ideational, and institutional factors alone cannot account for this variation, and so she offers an alternative theoretical explanation that focuses on the threat environment that states and their leaders confront. When leaders face internal threats, they pursue coup-proofing steps that tend to undermine those practices—merit-based promotion, regular and effective training, sensible command arrangements, and efficient information management—that are necessary for battlefield effectiveness. When such internal threats are absent, states are more likely to adopt practices that allow them to respond effectively to external military threats. Talmadge then tests her argument against alternative theoretical arguments through a series of masterful case studies of the battlefield effectiveness of authoritarian regimes, in particular. *The Dictator’s Army* is clearly and convincingly written. The logic of the argument is generally sound. And the contribution is significant to both the theoretical study of military effectiveness and the practical challenge of confronting authoritarian regimes and their militaries.

For all its virtues, important questions arise about both the generalizability of the theoretical claims and the internal logic of the argument contained in Talmadge’s monograph. On generalizability, the author limits her empirical analysis to authoritarian regimes. This is obviously an important subset of cases, and in recent years, a variety of contributions have been made that explain variation within and among authoritarian regimes. Moreover, from a policy perspective, confrontations between democracies and authoritarian regimes are relatively common; thus, understanding the sources of variation in the battlefield effectiveness of authoritarian regimes is consequential. That said, explaining the military effectiveness of regimes other than authoritarian governments is also critically important, and Talmadge’s argument is likely to be of limited use for such cases. The argument relies centrally on variation in the level of internal threats to political leaders. While such threats may be relatively common in authoritarian states, they are far less present in democratic regimes. To the extent that the level of internal threats tends to be low in democracies, her argument may be less useful in accounting for variation in their military effectiveness.

Beyond the generalizability of the argument, there are a number of questions that arise within the logic of it. Most importantly, in Talmadge’s logic, the need to coup-proof a regime undermines those practices that enable militaries to be effective. But it seems conceivable that the causal relationship could work in the opposite direction. If a regime pursues unsound military policies and play favorites rather than rewarding merit, then it may make itself more likely to be the target of a coup attempt. Such potential endogeneity raises the question of whether coup-proofing leads to poor military performance or, rather,

whether poor military practices lead a regime to confront potential coups.

Along similar lines, one also wonders about the relationship between internal and external threats, which Talmadge tends to treat as wholly independent of one another. In fact, though, one might examine whether the presence of a strong external threat makes a regime more or less susceptible to a potential coup. If an external threat leads a state and its military to “rally around the flag,” then it might reduce the possibility of a coup. In fact, this might incentivize leaders to provoke diversionary threats that minimize the internal threats to their rule. On the other hand, if a state’s military is unhappy about the external threat and holds leadership accountable for that threat, then it might conceivably lead to a higher coup threat. The point is that internal and external threats do not exist in isolation from each other, but rather the interrelationship between the two generates strategic incentives for different actors to manipulate those threats.

Acknowledging that external and internal threats are related leads to a subsequent question about how external actors might attempt to manipulate the threat environment in potential adversaries. If a high likelihood of a coup leads to practices that undermine a state’s effectiveness on the battlefield, then external actors might have an incentive to attempt to increase the probability of a coup in a would-be adversary. As I just suggested, this could be done simply by posing a threat that affects a military’s view of the regime, or it could be done by providing support to military leaders who might be tempted to launch a coup against the regime. Of course, there are limits to what any book can consider in its pages, but future research could also consider how other states are likely to behave if Talmadge’s argument is correct. What kind of incentives does it provide all actors to manipulate the threat environment of a state?

Talmadge’s case studies are models of effective qualitative research. The author sheds new light on familiar cases, such as Vietnam, while offering comprehensive analysis of less studied cases, such as the Iran—Iraq war. The cases are meticulously researched, and the empirical chapters are clearly and cogently structured in order to consider the merits and flaws of alternative theoretical arguments. My most significant discomfort with the case studies is the ease with which states seem to move from more or less effective military practices to some alternative. To maximize the effect of her theoretical analysis, Talmadge highlights within case variation—both regionally and temporally—but the transition from sound to unsound military practices seems to occur more seamlessly than one might expect. The practices that form the foundation of an effective military are difficult institutions to establish and only slightly less difficult to tear down. Her analysis would have benefited from more attention to the substantial friction that attends the processes she examines.

None of these criticisms should be read as undermining the significant contributions of this book. In fact, all of them suggest questions for future research that the book provokes, rather than fundamental flaws in the logic or empirical analysis. More generally, beyond the intrinsic merits of her work, Talmadge is to be praised for bringing attention to the important, but still understudied, topic of military effectiveness. As the field of security studies has understandably shifted over the last decade to the study of terrorism and insurgency, *The Dictator’s Army* is an important reminder that conflict between states remains not only possible but likely in coming years and decades. To the extent that this is true, and to the extent that such conflicts are likely to involve authoritarian regimes, it is critically important to consider why some militaries from authoritarian states perform better than others. Beyond the study of military effectiveness, the book also joins a growing body of literature that investigates the dynamics of authoritarian regimes, not as a single unvariegated type but, rather, as a set of states facing varying internal and external threats.

For all of these reasons, Talmadge is to be praised for writing an important, provocative book that is sure to find its way onto the desks of scholars, policymakers, and military leaders.

Brokering Europe: Euro-Lawyers and the Making of a Transnational Polity. By Antoine Vauchez. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 264p. \$99.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592716002711

— Deval Desai, *Harvard Law School and Overseas Development Institute*

“[T]he researcher is compelled not to choose *one* level of analysis over the others . . . but rather to pay special attention to what lies precisely *in-between* them” (p. 10; emphasis original here and throughout the review). So begins Antoine Vauchez’s *Brokering Europe*. As for the researcher, so for the reader, for this is a book that challenges the reader on multiple levels, moving between them in allusive, enriching, and ultimately frustrating ways.

At one level of analysis, this is a book about “the manner in which ‘Europe’ has initially come to be defined in *legal* terms . . . and how this particular path was actually chosen” (p. 4). Rather than taking Europe’s legal character for granted, or ascribing its legal character to some other black box behind it (e.g., an “*economy* or *logic*”; p. 5), the author explains Europe’s constitution through law as “the contingent and conflictual *historical* process of symbolic, cognitive, and practical unification” or the process of uniting laws and peoples into “one single *order*” (p. 5). The key explanatory variables are, for Vauchez, “EU law’s historically acquired ‘brokering capacity’” (p. 6)—or how it holds a “complex, disjointed, and multilevel polity” together—and, linked to this, its emergence as a “weak [transnational] field” (p. 9).