Varieties of Authoritarianism and Peace through Trade, 1950-1999

Abstract

Weeks (2012) finds that one type of authoritarian regime, civilian-based party machines, may be as disinclined to launch military crises as are democracies. Weeks identifies three classes of mechanisms that may account for this finding. The next step in this literature should be to test for the operation of these causal mechanisms. We begin this process by examining the sensitivity of democracies, machines, and other types of authoritarian regimes to trade integration as they decide whether or not to initiate militarized interstate conflict. Only democracies consistently and substantially reduced their likelihood of initiating military conflict as a result of trade dependence. These results highlight the need for additional research into the relatively pacific behavior by machine regimes. They also cast doubt on whether the development and expansion of trade ties with authoritarian regimes--including machine-based systems such as that in China-- will prevent those regimes from resorting to military force.

Introduction

Recent scholarship at the intersection of International Relations and Comparative Government has identified and explored the "varieties of authoritarianism" in world politics and how different types of authoritarian regimes may behave differently in world politics. This new literature builds upon but in some measure departs from the main thrust of scholarship on the role of domestic regime-type on foreign policy and world politics, which has generally placed domestic regimes on a single dimension stretching from highly democratic to highly autocratic. This new literature includes among its most interesting arguments the proposition that at least some types of authoritarian states may be constrained by domestic political dynamics that are similar to the constraints that operate in democratic states. As a result, these autocracies may be compelled to behave in their foreign relations in ways that are similar to that of democracies (Weeks 2008, 2012; Brown and Marcum 2011; Weiss 2014).

Most prominently, Weeks (2012) has found empirically that one particular type of authoritarian regime, civilian-based party machines (hereafter termed machines), may be as disinclined to launch military crises as are democracies, with both presenting materially lower propensities for conflict initiation than three other types of authoritarian regimes, namely, bosses, juntas, and strongmen. Weeks identifies three broad categories of mechanisms that might cause machines to be no more likely than democracies to inaugurate external conflicts. These three categories of mechanisms involve the costs of engaging in military conflicts regardless of their outcome, the costs of losing military conflicts, and the value of peace. Weeks does not investigate whether one or another specific mechanism within these three categories produces the empirical regularity.

Weeks's discovery of a new statistical regularity linking machines and democracies is indisputably important both from a scholarly and policy perspective. However, to date her

empirical result is theoretically overdetermined. That is, Weeks proposes multiple distinct theoretical mechanisms, each of which from a logical viewpoint is individually sufficient to explain her empirical finding. Thus, we do not know which individual mechanism, or combination of mechanisms, or even possibly other as-yet unidentified causal factors are actually producing the manifestly interesting finding she reports.

The problem of theoretical overdetermination of a robust empirical result is not new to the study of international relations. In particular, many scholars have noted that the democratic peace literature has been plagued by theoretical overdetermination, which has hampered our understanding of regime-type, foreign policy, and international relations (for example, see Chan 1997, 85; Rosato 2003; Rasler and Thompson 2016, 3; and Hegre 2014, 161-162). If the new and promising literature on foreign policy and the varieties of authoritarianism is to avoid this same fate, it is essential that scholars begin to distinguish among and empirically evaluate specific mechanisms that might be causing different kinds of authoritarian states to be similar to or different from one another, and similar to or different from democratic states.

Testing for all the mechanisms that Weeks has helpfully identified in the three categories noted above is likely to be beyond the scope of any single paper. By consequence, in the spirit of beginning a longer-term research program prompted by Weeks's important work, we focus below on one specific factor noted by Weeks that may cause democracies and machines to avoid starting military crises, namely, their potential similarity in wishing to avoid the economic costs that such conflicts may induce through the loss of trade.   Such a focus on trade is helpful, we suggest, not only because it is a factor noted by Weeks, but because trade integration has been emphasized by the United States as a pathway to promote peace with a key member of the interstate system, China.

Thus, we undertake in this paper a test of the sensitivity of democracies and various types of authoritarian regimes, including machines, to trade disruption as they decided in the years between 1950 and 1999 whether or not to initiate any type of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs). Like Weeks, we find that machines are similar to democracies in their overall low propensity to initiate militarized disputes. However, we find that only democracies consistently and substantially react to growing trade dependence with other countries with a reduced likelihood of starting military trouble. This pattern remains robust regardless of whether we focus on the initiation of all MIDs or those of the most severe type, namely, MIDs that result in fatalities.

These results do not draw into question the key empirical regularity reported by Weeks. However, they do raise questions about at least one of the possible pathways that Weeks identifies as linking both democracies and machines to a low propensity to initiate militarized conflicts with other countries. More research must be conducted to learn what might be causing democracies and machines to avoid foreign military disputes. In addition, from a practical viewpoint, these results cast doubt on whether the development and expansion of trade ties with authoritarian regimes--including machines such as that governing China--will prevent those regimes from resorting to military force in world politics.

Political Regimes, Domestic Constituencies, and the Costs of External Conflict

Domestic regime-type has become one of the most important factors in the scholarly investigation of international military conflict. The wide-ranging literature on this subject has largely conceptualized domestic regime type along a single dimension running from democratic to non-democratic (see, for example, Maoz and Russett 1993; Maoz 1997; Oneal and Russett

2001; Chiozza and Goemans 2011; Gartzke and Weisiger 2013, 2014). This measurement strategy may have overlooked important variations among types of authoritarian regimes.[1]

However, a recent line of inquiry has begun to explore what might be termed the "varieties of authoritarianism" around the world. One of the most important questions this new line of research is pursuing is whether different types of authoritarian governments differ systematically in their involvement in international conflict (Geddes 1999a, 1999b, 2003; Weeks, 2012; Geddes, Ezrow and Frantz 2011; Frantz and Ezrow 2011; Wright and Franz 2013; Colgan and Weeks 2015).

Following the path-finding work of Geddes (1999a, 1999b, 2003), scholars in this new line of inquiry have found the authoritarian regimes differ in their institutional features and supporting elites, and these differences have a material impact on the behavior of such regimes both at home and abroad. Geddes and more recently Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) distinguish among authoritarian states in terms of whether they are governed by single parties, the military, a personalistic leader/dictator, or a hybrid of two or more of the previous three types. Most importantly for the current discussion, variation in authoritarian regimes may be associated with variation in national proclivity to initiate military disputes (Ezrow and Frantz 2011; Frantz and Ezrow 2011). In particular, employing the Geddes categories and an early version of her data set, scholars found that authoritarian states led by civilian-based parties appeared to be somewhat less oriented to starting military disputes with other authoritarian states than were other types of autocratic regimes (Peceny, Beer, Sanchez-Terry 2002; Reiter and Stam 2003; Peceny and Beer 2003; Peceny and Butler 2004).

Slater (2003) subsequently amended Geddes's analytical categories and developed a four-

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[1] Recent scholarship is also productively investigating variation in the conflict behavior among democratic regimes (Baum and Potter 2015; Stein 2015).

fold typology of authoritarian states—namely, machines (civilian-party, leader elite-constrained), bosses (civilian-party, leader unconstrained), juntas (military, leader elite-constrained), and strongmen (military, leader unconstrained). Using this amended schema, and employing data taken from the Polity data set and the Banks Cross-National Time-Series data set, Lai and Slater (2006) found that, between 1950 and 1992, party-based authoritarian regimes, whether they were machines or boss-led, were less likely to initiate MIDs than were military governments, *and were no more likely to initiate military disputes than were democracies.*[2]

More recently, Weeks (2012) employs Slater's four-fold schema and re-conceptualizes Geddes's regime data as well as the Banks data set to categorize countries. She finds that, between 1946 and 1999, bosses, juntas, and strongmen were all more likely to initiate military disputes than were democracies. Most important, she also finds that machine-based authoritarian states do not initiate military conflicts at a rate different from democratic leaders, and both have rates materially lower than what is observed of bosses, juntas, and strongmen.

Weeks (2012, 331-333) identifies three broad categories of mechanisms that might cause democracies and machines to share a low propensity to inaugurate external conflicts. The first category concerns the costs of military conflicts regardless of the outcomes of such conflicts. Weeks argues that leaders in machines and democracies may be adverse to starting international conflicts given their direct costs, notably battlefield deaths, as well as their indirect costs, for example, losses of income, increases in taxes, destruction of infrastructure, and the loss of mutually beneficial commerce. Weeks also suggests that leaders in both types of regimes might share a sense of moral loss that attaches to the use of force. The second category of mechanisms

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[2]Sechser (2004) found using different data on domestic regimes that countries with strong civilian control over their respective militaries were less likely to initiate MIDs than were countries with weak control over their militaries or countries that had military-dominated governments.

relates to the particular costs associated with losing a military conflict. For example, leaders of both democracies and machines face constituents that may remove them from office following a defeat (Goemans 2000; Chiozza and Goemans 2011). The third category of mechanisms Weeks identifies concerns the benefits associated with not going to war. She suggests in particular that leaders in both democracies and machines might assign a comparably higher value to the status quo than earlier scholarship might have appreciated.

Weeks demonstrates in her 2012 paper empirically that machines and democracies share a similarly low propensity to launch military conflicts. However, she does not in that paper investigate whether one or another of the mechanisms enumerated above is bringing about that empirical regularity. Thus, it would seem to be appropriate in the next phase of work on domestic regimes and international conflict to inquire whether machines and democracies share a low propensity to start military conflicts because of one or another of the mechanisms identified by Weeks.

Testing for all the mechanisms that Weeks has helpfully identified is beyond the scope of any single paper. We choose to begin testing Weeks's mechanisms by focusing on regime type and trade dependence. Specifically, we address the question of whether democracies and machines are similarly inhibited from starting military conflicts as a result of the prospect of one particularly important loss from conflict: the prospect of losing commerce.

There are at least three reasons why we choose this focus. First, losing the benefits of trade is something to which Weeks draws our attention. In particular, Weeks suggests that, in machines, "Elites' economic interests are likely to be hard hit by a conflict, which can both destroy infrastructure *and disrupt trade*," and "it is not clear that autocratic elites are substantially more insulated from the direct or indirect material costs of fighting than are

ordinary citizens" (2012, 332, emphasis added). Second, as we will see below, there is a great

deal of scholarly literature on the basis of which we might expect that states with widely

different regime types ought to be inhibited about using force abroad for fear of losing the

benefits of trade. Third, the promotion by democracies of trade integration with countries ruled

by machines - such as China - has been at the heart of U.S. policy efforts to increase the

prospects of peace.

At the core of the literature on economic interdependence and military conflict is the

proposition that it is the sensitivity of domestic constituencies to the likely costs of trade

disruption arising from military conflict that causes political elites--dependent as they are on the

support of those constituencies--to be averse to launching military disputes against countries with

which there are extensive trading ties (see, for example, Polachek 1980, 1990, 1997;

Gasiorowski 1986; Rosecrance 1986; Oneal and Russett 1997, 1999, Russett and Oneal 1999,

2001; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003; Keskh, Pollins, and Reuveny 2004; Kim and Rousseau

2005; and Hegre, Oneal, and Russett 2010; and, for an overview of the specific matter of trade

and territorial disputes, Schultz 2015).[3]

Much of the early work on economic interdependence and military conflict did not

differentiate among different kinds of domestic political regimes and constituencies. However,

more recent work has sought to determine if the impact of interdependence on military conflict is

conditioned by domestic regime type (Gelpi and Grieco 2008).[4] That work began with the core

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[3] A parallel line of research has sought to estimate whether international financial integration is a
potent force for peace: see, for example, Gartzke, Li, and Boehmer 2001; Gartzke and Li 2003;
Rosecrance 1999; and Rosecrance and Thompson 2003; and, on the specific matter of territorial
disputes, Lee and Mitchell 2012.

[4] Scholars have examined the conditioning effects of a number of factors in addition to regime
type that might influence the impact of trade on peace, including whether the relevant countries

premises of Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow (1999, 2003): leaders wish to retain office; and countries differ in the range of citizens who select leaders (the selectorate) and in the minimum size of a coalition a leader requires to retain office (the minimum winning coalition). Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow suggest that leaders seek to garner such support either by providing private goods to coalition members, or by generating policy successes that are enjoyed by the entire citizenry. Democratic leaders, they argue further, face wider selectorates and need larger minimum winning coalitions than do autocrats, and thus are constrained to provide widely-shared public policy successes, including economic growth (2003: 101-102, 149-161).

Within the field of economics there is consistent support for the thesis that trade generally promotes the growth of per capita national income (Krueger 1997; Edwards 1993, 1998; Frankel and Romer 1999; Lawrence and Weinstein 2001; Singh 2010; Tekin 2012; Dawson and Sanjuán-López 2013; for a critique see Rodrik 2009). Democratic leaders might therefore be more concerned than authoritarian leaders about the deleterious economic effects of a breakdown of foreign trade as the result of a militarized dispute. In addition, conflict-induced interruptions of trade reduce the consumption-related utility enjoyed by consumers as a result of facing higher prices for goods and a smaller range of goods on the market. Authoritarian leaders, dependent on a smaller coalition, might by the use of private goods be able to insulate their supporters from such losses. Therefore, conflict-induced losses in consumption opportunities could be more costly politically for democratic leaders than for their authoritarian counterparts.

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have capitalist economies (Gartzke 2007; McDonald 2009, 2010), high levels of economic development (Hegre 2000; Mousseau 2000, 2003; Mousseau, Hegre, and Oneal 2003), high levels of the rule of law and especially adherence to contracts (Mousseau 2009, 2013), belong to common preferential trading arrangements (Mansfield and Pevehouse 2000), or have stable expectations that trade will continue into the future (Copeland 1996, 2014).

At the heart of this line of analysis is the idea that authoritarian leaders are generally better able than are democratic leaders to shield politically relevant constituents from the costs of military conflicts. However, as we noted above, one of Weeks's (2012) theoretical mechanisms directly challenges this claim by arguing that leaders in machines depend on constituents whom they cannot insulate from the costs of military conflict any more than can democratic leaders insulate their respective constituents.

We seek below to shed light on the possible link between trade, regime type, and conflict initiation through an analysis of the initiation by states of MIDs between 1950 and 1999. Our main finding is that, unlike democracies, machines do not respond to growing trade integration with other countries with a reduced likelihood of launching MIDs. In fact, we find very little differentiation across authoritarian regimes in terms of their responsiveness to trade in respect to their propensity to launch MIDs. These results indicate that democracy may be a necessary condition for the operation of the mechanism that it is the prospective economic costs of military conflicts that exercises a constraining effect on the propensity of states to launch foreign military conflicts.

Evidence and Methods

We analyze the relationship between regime type, trade dependence, and conflict initiation from 1950 to 1999. We began by constructing all dyad-years for state interaction over the full length of the dataset. We then transformed this data into directed dyads, so that each state in the dyad can be recorded as the potential initiator for one observation and the potential target for the other observation. After building all of the directed-dyads, we then merged all of our independent variables into the dataset and relied on multiple imputations to fill in missing

values. We imputed five separate values for each missing data point, resulting in five separate datasets. All coefficients that are presented in our analyses represent the average estimates across the five imputed datasets while the standard errors reflect the variance in the estimated coefficients across the multiple imputations.

Measurements

Initiation of Militarized Dispute

Our dependent variable is the initiation of a militarized dispute by a challenger state against a target state in a given year. Drawing on the Correlates of War Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) dataset, Version 4.1, we identified the first state to threaten or use military force as the initiator of a dispute. This is a binary measure where if a state initiates a dispute against a target in a given year the variable takes on a value of 1, zero otherwise.

In light of our interest in Weeks's important work, we follow her lead and focus in the first instance on the initiation of any type of MID. Then, following Gartzke and Weisiger (2014, 138), we extend our analysis to the initiation of MIDs that result in at least one combat death (fatal MIDs), because "the critical test of most theories of liberal peace is not whether nations threaten each other or experience isolated frontline clashes involving troops or minor functionaries, but whether national leaders intentionally instruct their militaries to act aggressively. Fatal MIDs are not a perfect representation of national intentions, but they avoid minor clashes, while including acts short of full-scale war."[5]

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[5] For additional arguments about the analytical utility of a focus on fatal MIDs, see, for example, Pevehouse and Russett (2006, 981). While an analysis of fatal MIDs is advantageous in terms of seeking to examine serious international disputes, an analysis of both fatal MIDs and all MIDs (and, if possible, the small set of COW-level wars) allows for checks on generalizability and model dependence—see, for example, Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum (2003), Oneal and Russett

Trade Dependence

Our measure of trade dependence employs the Barbieri and Keshk (2012) dataset on dyadic trade flows. Following Gleditsch (2002) we then impute missing values before calculating our measure of country trade dependence as the level of dyadic trade as a proportion of national gross domestic product (GDP). All trade and GDP values are measured in constant U.S. dollars for the year 2000. We have two independent variables relating to trade dependence. Initiator Dependence measures a potential initiator-country's exports to and imports from a potential target-country as a percentage of the potential initiator-country's GDP. We focus our discussion on the impact of this variable because it captures the sensitivity to trade disruption identified by Weeks's argument. We also control for Target Dependence, which measures a potential target-country's imports from and exports to a potential initiator-country as a percent of the potential target-country's GDP.

Regime Type

We rely on Weeks's own coding of regime-types (2012) since her dataset was specifically constructed to identify machine that she proposes should be sensitive to the trade-disruption costs of conflict to a degree comparable to democracies.[6] Weeks codes authoritarian

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(2005), Goldsmith (2007), Mousseau (2013), and Dafoe, Oneal, and Russett (2013).

[6] As noted above, Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) use an alternate typology of authoritarian regimes. Their category of "party" regimes is not equivalent to Weeks's machine-type party regimes. Specifically, Geddes, Wright, and Frantz do not distinguish between military and civilian leadership of party-based authoritarian regimes, while Weeks is centrally concerned with civilian-led party machines. Thus, the Weeks and the Geddes, Wright, and Frantz codings of party-based authoritarian regimes are in fact quite divergent from one another, with a correlation level of only 0.41. By consequence, we concentrate on the Weeks data set.

regimes on dimensions of personalism and militarism to develop six labels: machine, boss, junta, strongman, monarchy and other.[7] Machines are non-personalist (elite constrained) governments with civilian leadership or audiences (an important example is contemporary China).

In our analysis below, Machine is our primary variable of interest, for, as noted above, we are interested in ascertaining whether increased trade constrains the conflict-initiating behavior of machine-type authoritarian regimes in a manner similar to that observed in respect to democratic states. Boss-type regimes, like machines, are based on civilian leadership, but they differ insofar as they fall into the personalist regime-category (for example, Iraq under Hussein, or the Soviet Union under Stalin). Junta-type regimes include a military leader that is constrained by the military elite (for example, Argentina and Thailand), while strongman-type regimes are characterized by personalist military leaders (for example, Egypt under Nasser, Spain under Franco). While the coding for monarchies remains straightforward, the "other" regime category captures a broad range of authoritarian states that include foreign-occupied autocracies, warlords, provisional governments, and otherwise not-independent governments. For each regime type we construct a binary variable that takes on a value of 1 when a country falls into a specific regime-type, 0 otherwise.

Initiator Trade Dependence x Regime Type

This variable is the interaction term that tests our hypotheses for how trade may constrain dispute initiation in the presence of certain types of political institutions. This is constructed by multiplying the potential initiator's trade-dependence measure by the type of regime under consideration.

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[7] The "other" category captures all regimes with policy scores of 5 or below.

Control Variables

We also include several control variables that are standard for the study of militarized

conflict and are taken from the EUGene data management program (Bennett and Stam 2000).

Relative Military Capabilities are coded as the proportion of dyadic military capabilities

controlled by the challenger. We also include Difference in Alliance Patterns, which is measured

using the alliance similarity "S" score between each state and the United States. We also include

a dummy variable to reflect Major-Power Dyads. This measure is coded as 1 if one member of

the dyad is a major power (United States, Russia/USSR, China, Britain, France), 0 otherwise. We

also employ two measures to account for the geographic distance between countries in the dyad.

The first, Shared Border, is a dummy variable between the states in the dyad if they adjoin one

another, 0 otherwise. The second is the Natural Log of Distance between capitals of the two

states in the dyad. Finally, we correct for temporal dependence in time-series cross-sectional

analysis by including spline functions to account for the number of years of peace that have

elapsed between the two countries in the dyad. This correction is consistent with Beck, Katz, and

Tucker (1998).

Empirical Results

The results of our analyses of trade integration, MID initiation, and national political

regime type are displayed in Table 1. In these models we are estimating the impact of trade

dependence on the initiation of all MIDs (column 1) and fatal MIDs (column 2) for different

types of regimes as identified by Weeks (2012). Democracies are the excluded category in each

of these models. By consequence, the reported coefficients for the different types of autocratic

regimes and their interactions with trade dependence describe the impact of trade on the behavior

of these autocratic regimes relative to the effect of trade on democracies.

Turning first to the analysis of all MIDs, depicted in column 1, we can see that the

coefficients for the Strongman, Boss, Junta, and Other Autocracies are all positive and

discernible from zero at the .05 level of significance. These results suggest that regimes of these

four types are more likely than democracies to initiate a fatal MID when they are not dependent

at all on the potential target state for trade. The coefficients for Machine and Monarchy, on the

other hand, are statistically not significantly different from zero at the .05 level. Machines and

monarchical regimes do not differ significantly from democracies under these circumstances.

These results are consistent with Week's central finding (2012) that civilian-machine

authoritarian regimes are not significantly more conflict prone than democracies.

Table 1 About Here

Turning our attention to the impact of trade dependence, we can see in column 1 that our

estimate for the impact of the potential initiator's trade dependence on the potential target is

negative and statistically significant (b= -9.863, p<.01). Because democracies are the excluded

category in our measure of regime type in these models, the estimated coefficient for the

initiator's trade dependence reflects the impact of trade dependence on democratic potential

initiators. Consistent with Gelpi and Grieco (2008), this result indicates that trade dependence

had a negative impact on the propensity of democratic states to initiate MIDs of all forms with a

potential target. In contrast, the coefficients for the interaction between trade and all forms of

autocratic regimes identified by Weeks are all positive, which suggests that trade does not appear to have as strong a constraining effect on the conflict behavior of any of these types of authoritarian states as it does on democracies.

Specifically, we find that the coefficient for the interaction term, Dependence X Machine, is strongly positive, at 11.380 (p<0.01). In order to calculate the net impact of trade dependence on the initiation of MIDs by machines, we must add the coefficients for trade dependence together with its interaction with machine regime-types. When combined with the coefficient for the excluded category (democracies) we can see that the net impact of trade dependence on the propensity of machine regimes to initiate all forms of MIDs is actually positive at 1.517 (p<.62). Thus, employing Weeks's data we do not find empirical support for the argument that machine-governed authoritarian regimes will be deterred from initiating military conflict by a fear of trade disruption.

Calculating the net impact of trade dependence for each of the other categories of authoritarian states--that is, strongmen, bosses, monarchies, and the residual of other types of authoritarian regimes-- reveals that trade dependence does not constrain any of these types of governments from initiating militarized disputes. For example, looking at the regime type that analytically might be the most similar to machines, namely juntas, the coefficient for the interaction between trade and that type of regime is 11.100 (p<.01). Thus, the net impact of trade dependence on the conflict behavior of junta is 1.237 (p<.56); that is, the effect is essentially zero. Overall, no type of authoritarian regime appears to be systematically constrained by trade it considers the option to initiate MIDs.

The control variables in our analysis of MIDs in column 1 of Table 1 generally behave as one would expect given previous analyses of militarized dispute behavior. Potential initiators are

more likely to initiate against targets that are contiguous with them, and the likelihood of initiation declines with distance. The positive coefficient for Difference in Alliance Patterns indicates that states are more likely to initiate disputes against states with alliance patterns that are substantially different from their own. In addition, the positive coefficient for Major Power Dyad indicates that conflict is more likely between pairs of states when at least one of the two states is a major power. Finally, the positive coefficient associated with Relative Military Capabilities suggests that states are more likely to initiate some form of MID against relatively weaker as opposed to stronger targets.

Turning our attention to column 2 in Table 1, we continue to employ the Weeks regime-type data but now narrow our focus of analysis from the initiation by states of all MIDs to the initiation of a subset of such disputes, namely, fatal MIDS. We do this because, as noted above, scholars have suggested that fatal militarized MIDs may be a better measure of the willingness of states to run the risk of starting serious military conflicts with potential targets (Gartzke and Weisiger 2014, 138).

We focus once again on machines and their similarities and differences with democratic regimes. Consistent with Weeks's 2012 analysis and our own investigation above of all MIDs, machine-type authoritarian regimes have no higher a likelihood of initiating fatal MIDs than democratic states when trade dependence is zero. The coefficient in column 2 for Machine is actually negative (b= -0.372), but it is not discernible from zero at the 0.05 level of significance (p<.10). Once again, this results is generally consistent with Week's finding (2012) that civilian-machine autocratic regimes are not significantly more conflict prone than democracies.

Our results regarding the propensity of other types of autocratic states to initiate fatal MIDs when trade dependence is zero are generally consistent with our analysis of all MIDs, with

the exception that regimes in the Other Autocracy category are actually more pacific than democracies when they are not dependent on the target. This last result, however, is likely due to the fact that Week's "other" category is largely comprised of states undergoing severe internal turmoil. These state probably lack the capacity to or interest in initiating substantial external conflicts.

However, as with all MIDs, we find that while trade dependence on potential targets has a dampening effect on the probability that democratic states will initiate a fatal MID, we do not observe any pacifying effect of trade in connection to machines and their propensity to launch fatal MIDs. Specifically, our estimate for the impact of the potential initiator's trade dependence on the potential target is negative and statistically significant (b=-66.480, p<.01). Once again, because democracies are the excluded category in our measure of regime type in these models, this estimated coefficient for the initiator's trade dependence reflects the impact of trade dependence on democratic potential initiators. In contrast, we find that the coefficient for the interaction term, Dependence X Machine, is strongly positive. Specifically, the coefficient for the interaction between trade and machine regimes is 37.100. When combined with the coefficient for Initiator Dependence, we can see that the net impact of trade dependence on the propensity of machine-type regimes to initiate fatal MIDs is -66.480 plus 37.100 or -29.380 (p<.120). This coefficient is negative, in contrast to what we observed for all MIDs, but it is quite small relative to the impact of trade on democracies, and it is not discernible from zero at the .05 level.

Calculating the net impact of trade dependence for each of the other categories of authoritarian states--that is, strongmen, bosses, monarchies, and the residual of other types of authoritarian regimes--we see once more that, as with all MIDs, trade dependence does not

constrain any of these types of governments from initiating fatal militarized disputes. For example, looking again at juntas, the coefficient Dependence X Junta is 62.980 (p<.01). Thus, the net impact of trade dependence on the conflict behavior of a junta is 3.500 (p<.69); that is, the effect of trade on fatal MID initiation by juntas is essentially zero.

Once again, the control variables in our analysis of fatal MIDs in column 2 of Table 1 generally behave as one would expect given previous analyses of militarized dispute behavior. Potential initiators are more likely to initiate against targets that are contiguous with them, and the likelihood of initiation declines with distance. The positive coefficient for Difference in Alliance Patterns indicates that states are more likely to initiate disputes against states with alliance patterns that are substantially different from their own. In addition, the positive coefficient for Major Power Dyad indicates that conflict is more likely between pairs of states when at least one of the two states is a major power.

At first glance the negative coefficient on Relative Military Capabilities may be somewhat surprising, since in the analysis of all MIDs the sign of the coefficient for this variable was negative discernible from zero. However, this result is likely due to the fact that MIDs between highly unequal states are unlikely to escalate to the point that fatalities occur. Thus we found that powerful states are more willing to initiate all forms of MIDs against weaker ones, but the weaker states appear to avoid the escalation of disputes to the level at which fatalities occur.

The results in Table 1 provide us with a summary of varying effects of trade as well as their statistical significance, but they tell us very little about the substantive size of these effects. We therefore generate predictions regarding the impact of trade on the initiation of all MIDs and fatal MIDs using our models in Table 1. In order to generate these predicted effects, we focus on each of Weeks's regime-type categories, vary trade dependence from the zero to the 95th

percentile (which was 1% of the potential initiator's GDP), and then generate predicted

probabilities of MID initiation and fatal MID initiation, respectively, while holding all other

variables constant at their median or modal values. Then we repeat this procedure 10,000 times

while drawing new sets of coefficients from their estimated distributions and calculate the mean

expected effects and confidence intervals across the 10,000 simulations. Figure 1 depicts the

estimated effects of trade on the initiation of MIDs for each of Week's regime types as trade

moves from zero to the 95th percentile.

Figure 1 About Here

In Figure 1 the solid line represents the predicted probability of MID initiation by a

democracy as it becomes more trade-dependent on potential targets. The various dashed lines

represent the predicted probabilities of MID initiation by the different types of Weeks-identified

authoritarian regimes as they experience comparable increases in trade dependence on potential

targets.   Of special note is the heaviest-dashed line: it represents the predicted probabilities of

MID initiation by machine regimes. In order to ease the interpretation of the figure, we depict

the confidence intervals only for the estimated effect of trade on democracies since none of the

other effects are statistically significant. The light grey shaded area represents the 90%

confidence interval around the predicted impact of trade on democracies, while the dark grey

area represents the 95% confidence interval.

When trade is set at zero, democracies are relatively unlikely to initiate a MID. In fact,

democracies are the least likely regime-type to initiate a MID in this context, although the

differences between democracies, machines, and monarchies are neither statistically discernible

from zero at the 0.05 level nor are they substantially large.

Figure 1 presents visually the key finding in our all-MID statistical model in Table 1. That is, as bilateral trade increases from zero up to 1% of GDP, the only regime-type that experiences a decline in the annual probability of initiating a MID at a statistically significant level is that of democracies; all the other regime-types do not experience a statistically significant drop in their probabilities of initiating MIDs as they become more dependent on trade with potential targets. Specifically, the probability that a democratic regime will initiate a MID declines modestly but at a statistically significant level from just over 0.043% to just under 0.039%. This modest but significant effect of trade on democratic MID initiation is consistent with the findings of Gelpi and Grieco (2008).

While this marginal shift in the probability of initiation might seem small, we must recall that these predictions represent the estimated probability of a MID with a particular country in a specific year. As one aggregates these effects across many dyad-years, the substantive impact would be much larger. Moreover, these estimates must be viewed within the context of the very rare nature of MIDs. MID initiations occur in only 0.2% percent of our directed-dyad years. Models of rare events often represent the risk factors in terms of relative risk (i.e. the ratio of the risk of an event with a variable present to the risk when it is absent). Viewed in this way, by reducing the likelihood of initiating a MID from 0.043 % to 0.039%, trade reduces the relative risk that a democratic state will initiate a MID by about 10%.

As Figure 1 also indicates, the impact of trade on the conflict behavior of the various types of autocratic regimes is essentially zero. Most important for our purpose, a machine-state that does not trade with a potential target has a 0.045% probability of initiating a MID against that target; that value is 0.046% as the level of bilateral trade increases to 1% of GDP. That is,

there is no change on the probability that a machine launches a MID against a target country as its trade dependence rises from zero to 1% of the machine's national GDP.

We next generated predicted probabilities of initiation of fatal MIDs, using the procedures described earlier. Figure 2 depicts the estimated effects of trade on the initiation of fatal MIDs for each of Week's regime types as trade moves from zero to the 95th percentile.

Figure 2 About Here

The solid line once more represents the predicted behavior of democratic states, in this instance the their predicted probability of fatal-MID initiation as trade dependence grows on potential targets, and the various dashed lines represent the different types of autocratic regimes as they experience greater trade dependence with potential targets. As in respect to Figure 1, in order to ease the interpretation of Figure 2 we depict the confidence intervals only for the estimated effect of trade on democracies since none of the other effects are statistically (or substantively) significant. The light grey shaded area represents the 90% confidence interval around the predicted impact of trade on democracies, while the dark grey area represents the 95% confidence interval.

When trade is set at zero, democracies are relatively unlikely to initiate a fatal MID. However, the figure indicates that they are not the least likely to do so. In particular, machine regimes identified by Weeks are even less likely to initiate fatal MIDs than are democracies when trade between the initiator and potential target is zero, although this difference is not statistically significant. "Other" autocratic regimes are also less likely to initiate fatal MIDs, but this is likely due to the fact that most of these regimes are facing significant internal upheaval.

As bilateral trade increases from zero up to 1% of GDP, however, the annual probability that a democratic regime will initiate a fatal MID drops significantly from just over 0.016% to just under 0.008%. Once again, while this marginal shift in the probability of initiation might seem small, we must recall that these predictions represent the estimated probability of a fatal MID with a particular country in a specific year. Moreover, these estimates must be viewed within the context of the extremely rare nature of fatal-MID initiations, which occur in about 0.06% percent of our directed-dyad years. Thus by reducing the likelihood of initiating a fatal MID from 0.016% to 0.008%, trade reduces the relative risk that a democratic state will initiate a fatal MID by a substantial 50%.

As Figure 2 indicates, the impact of trade on the fatal-MID initiating behavior of the various types of authoritarian regimes continues to be very small.   In particular, a machine regime that does not trade with the potential target has a 0.011% probability of initiating a fatal MID; this value only declines to 0.008 as the level of bilateral trade increases to 1% of GDP. That is, trade dependence reduces the relative risk that a machine regime will launch a fatal MID by 27%, or about half the pacifying impact that trade has on the propensity of democracies to launch comparable MIDs. We also emphasize that, in contrast to what we found with democratic states, the predicted effect of trade on fatal-MID initiations by machine regimes is not statistically discernible from zero effect.

Conclusion

The results presented above do not bring into doubt Weeks's fundamental statistical finding (2012), namely, that machines are generally no more likely to initiate militarized disputes than are democracies. However, the results are not consistent with at least one possible causal

pathway Weeks identifies as to why machines and democracies display similarly low propensities to initiate militarized disputes, namely, a comparable aversion to the costs of trade disruption. It could be that both regime types are similar in a preference to avoid other types of economic costs, or other classes of costs such as the loss of human life. It is also quite possible that factors located within the two other categories of mechanisms identified by Weeks, namely, the costs of losing conflicts or the value of peace, are inducing similar conflict-initiation rates by machines and democracies.

Looking ahead, additional research is required to learn what might be uniting these two regime types in their comparable disinclination to launch military conflicts. As we noted in the introduction, until the field begins to so identify and test the mechanisms driving the foreign policy behavior of autocratic regimes - especially machines - in ways similar to or different from democracies, this new and promising literature on the varieties of authoritarian foreign policy faces the same obstacles that have inhibited the progress of the democratic peace literature. That is, Weeks's important finding regarding the foreign conflict behavior of machine regimes risks remaining a robust statistical result in search of an empirically grounded theoretical explanation.

Finally, these results raise doubts about a core belief that underpins the foreign policy of the United States, namely, that increased trade with China will render that country more peaceful. If the theoretical argument put forward by Weeks is correct, then growing trade with China--whose regime Weeks calls "the quintessential 'machine' for at least the last two decades" (2012, 333)-- should indeed translate into a more peaceful Chinese relationship with its trading partners. However, our results indicate that there is little reason to expect that increases in trade will, by themselves, press China in a more peaceful direction.

There are important reasons for the United States to engage in trade with China. Trade

with that country provides a great variety of products to American consumers - often at a lower price than would otherwise be available to them. However, U.S. policy makers should have only the most modest expectations that such economic ties – however profitable and mutually beneficial they are to all parties– will constrain the PRC from using military force as a tool to defend its interests or assert its influence. Moreover, U.S. leaders should be aware that while trade integration with China may not reliably constrain the military activity of the China when it concludes that its interests require the employment of force, it is possible that such integration will have a constraining effect on the United States in light of its own democratic structures and processes.

Table 1: Logit Analysis of Bilateral Trade, Regime, and Dispute Initiation: Weeks Data

	MID Initiation	Fatal MID Initiation
Initiator Dependence	-9.863*** (2.988)	-66.480*** (21.690)
Target Dependence	-3.499*** (1.053)	-6.608** (3.220)
Strongman	0.754*** (0.092)	0.794*** (0.159)
Boss	0.710*** (0.079)	0.911*** (0.137)
Machine	0.040 (0.091)	-0.372* (0.201)
Junta	0.414*** (0.116)	0.196 (0.223)
Other Autocracy	0.285*** (0.079)	-0.428** (0.172)
Monarchy	0.074 (0.122)	0.439** (0.180)
Dependence X Strongman	16.330*** (5.291)	66.990*** (22.440)
Dependence X Boss	10.340*** (3.360)	56.010** (22.640)
Dependence X Machine	11.380*** (4.255)	37.100 (32.910)
Dependence X Junta	11.100*** (3.626)	62.980*** (23.230)
Dependence X Other Autocracy	7.628** (3.774)	60.370*** (23.070)
Dependence X Monarchy	3.296 (6.963)	61.420*** (23.420)
Difference in Alliance Patterns	1.504*** (0.124)	1.154*** (0.226)
Major Power Dyad	1.446*** (0.061)	1.327*** (0.114)
Shared Border	3.062*** (0.064)	2.607*** (0.112)
Ln of Distance	-0.182*** (0.017)	-0.241*** (0.026)
Peace Years Spline 1	-2.292*** (0.156)	-2.303*** (0.295)
Peace Years Spline 2	-1.549*** (0.250)	-2.119*** (0.476)
Peace Years Spline 3	-4.038*** (0.265)	-3.597*** (0.455)
Peace Years Spline 4	0.140 (0.530)	1.373 (0.909)
Constant	-4.900*** (0.163)	-4.869*** (0.255)
N	883,712	883,712
Log Likelihood	-9,176.000	-3,329.000
AIC	18,401.000	6,706.000

*p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01

Figure 1: Trade Dependence and MID Initiation by Weeks Regime Type
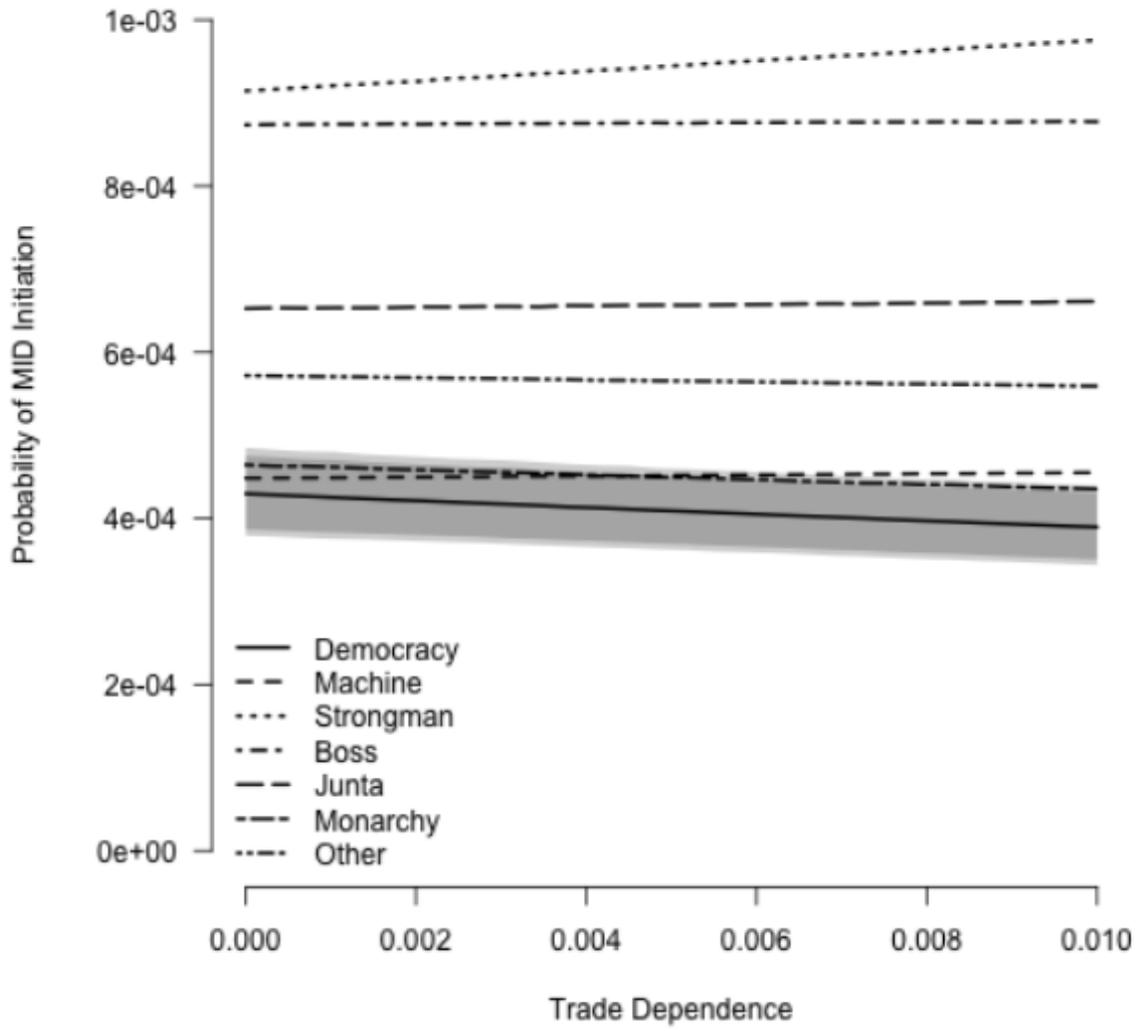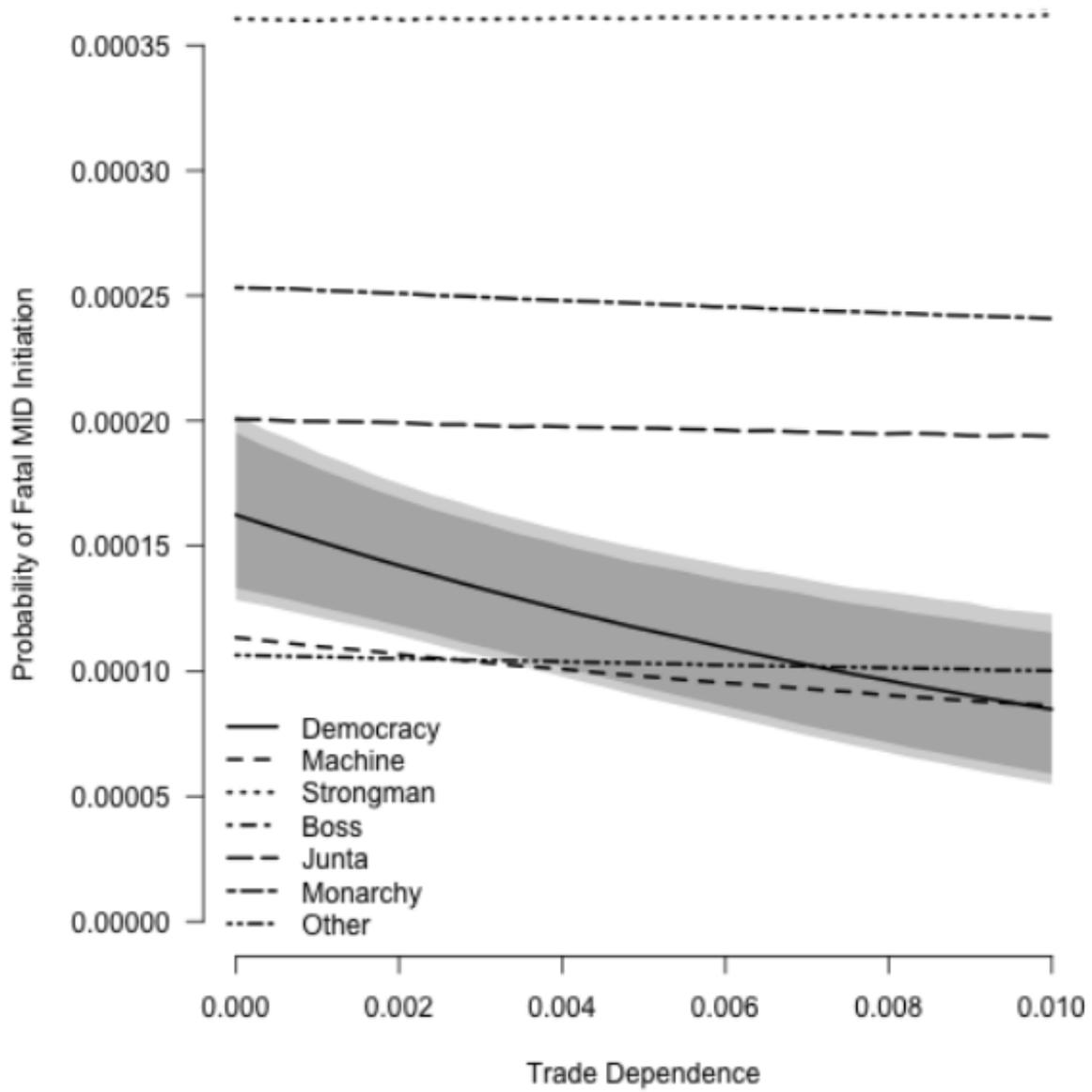
Figure 2: Trade Dependence and Fatal MID Initiation by Weeks Regime Type

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